

The Glory of the Kingdom

A Systematic Exposition of
the Biblical Kingdom of God

Kevin R. Quick

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Preface

Study of the biblical Kingdom of God has been an abiding passion of mine for the past thirty-eight years. This fruit of my study, *The Glory of the Kingdom*, is the result of my determined effort to rigorously yet carefully and correctly assemble, in logical and chronological order, all the major biblical doctrines of the Kingdom of God into one coherent and multifaceted model. Now, as I've found my personal pursuit of the Kingdom to be stimulating, absorbing and faith-strengthening, I am hopeful that this study will also be found by my readers to be helpful and encouraging in their own resolves to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33).

Before we launch into our technical study, I'd like to first mention a few personal details by way of introduction, including my personal story, an explanation of how this project developed over time, my personal goals for this study, and a few suggestions as to how I believe this study might be useful and/or helpful to others.

First, my personal story:

I'm a fifty-something-year-old mechanical engineer, a Bible-believing Christian, a former Jehovah's Witness and a married father of three.

I was raised in a nurturing and stable but non-religious middle-class home in upstate New York. By the time I had started college in the fall of 1976 at Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York, I had begun to explore some of the deeper issues of life. Having had little spiritual training as a child, I found myself developing a hunger for spiritual things, and I began my personal spiritual journey by studying eastern mysticism and practicing Transcendental Meditation. Also during my freshman year at college my grandmother sent me my very first copy of the Bible, and I began reading it.

After practicing TM for a year, my older brother by two years, Steve, approached me with the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses. He had been contacted in their door-to-door work, had been studying the Bible with them for six months, and was now suggesting that I do the same. Shortly thereafter, upon my return to college my sophomore year, I contacted the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Potsdam, and requested a "free home Bible Study." I began studying with the presiding overseer of the Potsdam congregation, and continued studying with him until I graduated from Clarkson with a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering two and a half years later, in the spring of 1980.

Upon graduation from college, because family life had by then become difficult due to my cessation of celebration of birthdays and all holidays,

and because I had made known to my parents that I would no longer accept blood transfusions, even in life-threatening situations, I decided to move far from my home state of New York. I moved to Manitou Springs, Colorado, where I continued to study, now with an “ex-Bethelite” (one who had served at Brooklyn “Bethel,” the world headquarters of Jehovah’s Witnesses) until I was baptized at the 1981 “Kingdom Loyalty” district convention in Denver.

I studied with the Witnesses for a total of three and a half years, was baptized, then served as a full-fledged, door-knocking Jehovah’s Witness for another three and a half years, for a grand total of seven years of involvement with them.

After six and a half years of involvement, and after having read the entire Bible through four times, I began having some unsettling doubts regarding some of Jehovah’s Witnesses’ key doctrines, including the year 1914 (the year Jehovah’s Witnesses believe the times of the Gentiles ended, and Jesus began ruling the earth invisibly from heaven), the identities of the 144,000 (“spiritual Israelites” who have a “heavenly hope”) and the “great crowd” (of “other sheep” who have an “earthly hope”) and the Christian’s personal relationship with Jesus. Since I had been such a diligent student, having studied Watchtower publications several hours every day for the preceding six years, the elders of my congregation (now in Hyde Park, New York; in 1983 I had moved back to New York to work for my father, vice president and sales manager of a machinery manufacturing company, as western regional sales manager) said that they couldn’t help me because “quite frankly, you understand our doctrine as well as we do.” So, I set out to settle these questions on my own. For the next six months, then, I studied the Scriptures intensively, averaging probably six hours of study per day. By the end of the six months I had collected and organized eight hundred passages of Scripture, divided into fifty foundational biblical topics/doctrines (see my free online book, *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witnesses*). To my great surprise, my painstakingly-wrought conclusions on all these doctrines served to confirm, not my Jehovah’s Witness theology, but rather historic evangelical Christian theology. Through this sixth-month study I discovered, among many other things, that the biblical Jesus possesses full deity and that the work that He performed on the cross is sufficient for us. I subsequently repented of my sins, renounced the Watchtower Society in my heart as a man-made and man-exalting counterfeit of true Christianity, and believed upon Jesus Christ as my all-sufficient Savior and Lord. Thereupon, I was spiritually regenerated or “born again.” (For a complete account of

my personal story, see my free online book *Pilgrimage Through the Watchtower*.)

While I was attending college in Potsdam and studying with the Jehovah's Witnesses, a Christian on my hall in my dorm learned of it and kindly invited me to his church. So, one Sunday I went with him to his (presumably evangelical, but I really can't recall) church, and unfortunately during that visit many of the unflattering things that the Witnesses had been telling me about "Christendom" were confirmed. Making little if any reference to Scripture, it seemed to me that the pastor did nothing more than tell some rather inane personal stories and tickle the ears of his flock. I heard nothing at all in his sermon about Jehovah God and/or His Kingdom. Phooey to that!

During those seven years that I was involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses, I can recall a dozen instances where I was personally witnessed to by Christians (I chronicle these in *Pilgrimage Through the Watchtower*). But in none of these instances was the Kingdom, obviously a major theme of the Bible and the subject of greatest interest to me, ever mentioned. For instance, I vividly recall one experience in Colorado when a Christian man and his wife invited me to their home for dinner and a discussion of the Bible. During our after-dinner discussion, the man was nearly brought to tears trying to show me Jesus in the Scriptures (bless his heart), while I kept asking him to please explain the Kingdom to me, to no avail. He was apparently sorely lacking in knowledge and understanding concerning the Kingdom. Recollections of experiences like that one have helped spur me on to write this book.

As a Jehovah's Witness I learned an eschatology (an understanding of the "last days") in great detail, but, unfortunately, it was a grossly defective one. However, since I was without any theological frame of reference, I had no way of knowing that it was defective. Hence, again, my motivation for writing this book. In this latter day and in this information age, no Christian should be in the dark concerning eschatology, the last days or the biblical Kingdom!

Through my six-month independent Bible study, I serendipitously discovered the beauty of the grammatical-historical method of Bible interpretation. Although I knew nothing at all at that time about biblical hermeneutics (the science of biblical interpretation), as Jehovah's Witnesses are taught nothing about it, I discovered on my own that when taken simply, at face value, the vast majority of Scripture makes perfectly good sense as written. I learned through personal Bible reading and study that all the foundational doctrines of the historic Christian faith, including the deity of

Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the necessity of being born again, the bodily resurrection of Christ (and of all people eventually) and eternal punishment are all based on a “literal” interpretation of Scripture. The reason why all conservative Christians are in agreement on these foundational doctrines is that they all take the Scriptures concerning them *literally*. Now, in my painstakingly thorough reevaluation of my biblical world view, in my naïveté, I even went so far as to take the *eschatological* passages literally, where possible, and lo and behold, even *they* made good sense when taken at face value! Specifically, taking *Israel* to consistently mean literal Israel, even in prophetic passages, resulted in a unique, yet consistent and plausible eschatology. As would be confirmed to me in all my future studies, in the Bible *Israel* always means *Israel*; it doesn’t ever mean Jehovah’s Witnesses, nor does it ever mean the church. *Israel* is the centerpiece of the entire biblical Kingdom of God program, and *Israel* will be the nucleus of the Millennial Kingdom.

Through my six-month study, which led me out of Jehovah’s Witnesses and into saving faith in Jesus, a plain-sense hermeneutic guided me out of heretical Jehovah’s Witness doctrine and into self-supporting, genuinely biblical, correct doctrine, including basic foundational doctrine (theology proper, christology, pneumatology, angelology, anthropology, hamartiology, soteriology and ecclesiology) as well as end-times Kingdom doctrine (eschatology). No “spiritualizing” of Scripture was necessary, nor was any replacement theology necessary. Rather, as I discovered, *the Bible makes perfectly good sense exactly as written!* Today I understand even more fully, and with even greater conviction, that it is only when we stray from the plain, literal sense of Scripture that our doctrine becomes corrupted, whether it be basic foundational doctrine or our doctrine of the eschatological Kingdom.

When I did my six-month independent study in 1984, the Bible presented to me, on its own, the very same understanding of the Kingdom that I hold to this day. To me, this is a powerful testimony both to the perspicuity of the written word of God and to the correctness of the future, literal, earthly, Jewish, Davidic Kingdom. My subsequent thirty-one years of further study have greatly deepened my conviction concerning the correctness of a literal, Israel-centric Kingdom to come, and have also confirmed and/or filled in for me thousands of logistical details concerning the overall Kingdom program.

Ever since leaving the Jehovah’s Witnesses, wherever I’ve lived I’ve been active in Bible-believing fellowships: an Evangelical Free church, a conservative community church, another Evangelical Free church, an inde-

pendent Bible fellowship, and presently a Calvary Chapel church. For my doctrine, however, I've not been beholden to any particular denomination, church or theology, but have been by conviction and by choice a conservative, Bible-believing and dispensational Christian. I've been active for the past thirty-one years in counter-cult ministry and apologetics, particularly in relation to Jehovah's Witnesses.

For work I am a mechanical engineer, a machine designer, and currently a machinery importer (you'll find my small, entrepreneurial machinery importing business, Quick Machinery Company, on the Web). I love good, well-designed machinery, machinery optimally designed and manufactured to accomplish its given task(s). And, no doubt, my love for well-designed mechanical systems and my natural drive to figure out how things work have contributed to my interest in the Kingdom of God, which is by far the most complex and ambitious yet efficient, harmonious and capable system that I've ever studied in detail. The more I learn about the Kingdom: the more clearly I perceive both its broad outlines and its intricate details, the more awestruck I find myself, and the more easily and naturally I find myself bending my mind, heart and knees to the Designer of this amazing system. *To God be the glory of the Kingdom!*

Little did I know thirty years ago that Jehovah's Witnesses are not the only people on the planet with a passion for the biblical and eschatological Kingdom of God. Instead, in fact, due to their extreme social and theological isolation, Jehovah's Witnesses have largely missed out on the massive amount of qualified and peer-reviewed scholarship concerning the Kingdom that's been done over the past one hundred-plus years.

After leaving the Jehovah's Witnesses, it didn't take long for me to discover the mother lode of things Kingdom: the leading dispensational scholars and their works. However, in an effort to make sure that I hadn't overlooked anything of importance, I was careful, especially in the beginning, to investigate a broad range of views on the Kingdom. I studied several systematic theologies and eschatological works by Covenant theologians (John Calvin, Charles Hodge and Lorraine Boettner), but found them lacking, resorting to replacement theologies and far-fetched allegorizations of passages that quite frankly reminded me of the self-serving interpretive tactics of Jehovah's Witnesses' Watchtower Society. On the other hand, I also discovered works by dispensational scholars that corresponded *exactly* with what I had already discovered on my own by simply reading the Bible and allowing it to mean what it plainly says, particularly regarding Israel's foundational and irreplaceable role in the Kingdom.

Over the past thirty-one years, along with my daily Bible reading and study, I've read and studied the major works of the past one hundred years' top dozen or so scholars in dispensational theology. It is from these dozen well-known and well-respected scholars that I quote primarily in this book. Through my copious (thousands of) quotations from these scholars' seminal works, I hope my reader will come to know, respect and hopefully even greatly admire these Godly men as I have, and I hope he or she will consider acquiring and reading some of their books directly. These dozen (plus one) scholars are, in chronological order:

George N. H. Peters

“George N. H. Peters (November 30, 1825 – October 7, 1909) was an American Lutheran minister and author of *The Theocratic Kingdom*. His premillennial views were in conflict with the majority of Lutherans who held postmillennial beliefs” (*Wikipedia*). In 1884 George Peters published *The Theocratic Kingdom*, his magnum opus, in which he laid out his premillennial understanding of the theocratic Kingdom program. Over the more than one hundred years since *The Theocratic Kingdom*'s first publication, his work has consistently received accolades from the world's top eschatologists. From Lewis Sperry Chafer (cited on the www.theocratickingdom.info web page): “The greatest work on prophetic interpretation ever written.” From J. Dwight Pentecost (also cited on the www.theocratickingdom.info web page): “...the most exhaustive, scholarly, reverent treatment of the questions of the kingdom of our Lord available today.” From Alva J. McClain (in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, p. 5): “...the massive treatise by George N. H. Peters under the title of *The Theocratic Kingdom* (1884).” Wilbur M. Smith, in the preface of the 1952 edition of *The Theocratic Kingdom*, calls it “...the most exhaustive, thoroughly annotated and logically arranged study of Biblical prophecy that appeared in our country during the nineteenth century.” From John F. Walvoord (in *The Millennial Kingdom*, p. 195): “premillennial doctrine... The classic work on this theme is George N. H. Peters' *The Theocratic Kingdom*, published by Kregel Publications in three volumes of over 2,000 pages.” George Peters is one of my personal heroes of the faith. *The Theocratic Kingdom* is presented in three volumes, each volume consisting of seven hundred pages of small type. In it Peters quotes over four thousand different sources! His work is not particularly easy to read, but I've personally found it to be tremendously edifying. I identify with Peters' passion for the Kingdom and with his very evident distress that so few of his fellow Lutheran brethren had yet caught such a profoundly life-changing glimpse of the biblical Theocratic Kingdom as he had. It is a shame that Charles Taze Russell, a contemporary of Peters and the

founder of Jehovah's Witnesses, didn't pay more attention to Peters' work. (You'll notice in our quotations throughout *The Glory of the Kingdom* that Peters was well aware of Russell (and Nelson Barbour) and that he ably and thoroughly refuted his heretical teachings.) Despite Peters' rare (and in my opinion unmatched) combination of exhaustive scholarship, elegant writing style and passion for his subject, it is difficult to find recent works that quote very extensively from George Peters, so I believe this is one area in which my study will be found to be unique, and hopefully appreciated, by the reader.

Sir Robert Anderson

"Sir Robert Anderson KCB (29 May 1841 – 15 November 1918) was the second Assistant Commissioner (Crime) of the London Metropolitan Police, from 1888 to 1901. He was also an intelligence officer, theologian and writer" (*Wikipedia*). Sir Robert Anderson developed an historical chronology of the first sixty-nine of Daniel's seventy weeks (Dan. 9:24-27) that is still used by dispensational scholars today (see our discussion of Daniel's seventy weeks in the section *The Times of the Gentiles* of our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*). His book *The Silence of God*, published in 1907, has helped many, including this writer, make sense of the very evident silence of God in this (Church Age) dispensation (see our discussion of the silence of God in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*).

Clarence Larkin

"Rev. Clarence Larkin (1850–1924) was an American Baptist pastor, Bible teacher and author whose writings on Dispensationalism had a great impact on conservative Protestant visual culture in the 20th century. His intricate and influential charts provided readers with a visual strategy for mapping God's action in history and for interpreting complex biblical prophecies" (*Wikipedia*). Clarence Larkin was a mechanical engineer, which probably explains why I personally have found his writing (and drawings) to be especially clear and easy to understand. He published his major work, *Dispensational Truth*, in 1920. In addition to several hundred pages of two-column text, *Dispensational Truth* contains many original charts and drawings that graphically lay out the dispensations and the sequence of prophetic events. Some of Larkin's ideas can be a bit speculative, so I've limited his quotations mainly to those that are not in disagreement with the views of the other scholars cited herein.

Charles L. Feinberg

“Charles Lee Feinberg (June 12, 1909 - August 22, 1995) was an American Biblical scholar and professor of Semitics and Old Testament. He was an authority on the Jewish history, languages and customs of the Old Testament and Biblical prophecies” (*Wikipedia*). Feinberg was a Hebrew Christian, and his writings offer valuable insights from a Jewish perspective. His major contribution to premillennial eschatology is his book *Millennialism: The Two Major Views*, first published in 1936 and revised in 1954, 1961 and 1980. The original title of this work was *Premillennialism or Amillennialism?*

Lewis S. Chafer

“Lewis Sperry Chafer (February 27, 1871 – August 22, 1952) was an American theologian. He founded and served as the first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, and was an influential founding member of modern Christian Dispensationalism” (*Wikipedia*). Chafer’s works quoted in this study include *Satan*, 1909, *The Kingdom in History and Prophecy*, 1915, *Grace*, 1922, *Major Bible Themes*, 1926, *Dispensationalism*, 1936, and *Systematic Theology*, 1947. Chafer’s *Systematic Theology* in eight volumes was one of my first major study projects after leaving the Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1984, and it served to greatly solidify my theology, including my eschatology, which again, I’d already acquired via mostly unaided independent Bible study.

Charles C. Ryrie

“Charles Caldwell Ryrie (born March 2, 1925) is a Christian writer and theologian who served as professor of systematic theology and dean of doctoral studies at Dallas Theological Seminary and as president and professor at what is now Philadelphia Biblical University. He is also noted for his advocacy of premillennial dispensationalism and as the editor of the popular Ryrie Study Bible” (*Wikipedia*). His works quoted (indirectly, mostly via Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum) in this study include *Dispensationalism Today*, 1965, and *Basic Theology*, 1986.

J. Dwight Pentecost

“J. Dwight Pentecost (born April 24, 1915) is a Christian theologian best known for his book *Things to Come*. He currently is Distinguished Professor of Bible Exposition, Emeritus, at Dallas Theological Seminary, one of only two so honored. He holds a B.A. from Hampden-Sydney College and Th.M. and Th.D. degrees from Dallas Theological Seminary. During his academic career he has taught biblical subjects for nearly half a century (Philadelphia College of Bible, 1948-55; Dallas Theological Seminary, 1955-

present). His nearly twenty books are written mostly for the general Christian reader” (*Wikipedia*). Pentecost’s major eschatological works include *Things to Come*, 1958 and *Thy Kingdom Come*, 1995, both of which are quoted from copiously in this study.

Alva J. McClain

Alva J. McClain (1888-1968) was founder and first president of Grace Theological Seminary. His eschatological works include *Daniel’s Prophecy of the 70 Weeks*, 1940 (revised 1964), *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, 1959, and *Romans: The Gospel of God’s Grace*, 1979. Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, commenting on *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, says “McClain has produced the most extensive work on the dispensational view of the Kingdom of God” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 398). With this I concur, and easily place *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, which is quoted frequently in this study, on the list of my top five all-time favorite books.

John F. Walvoord

“John F. Walvoord (May 1, 1910 – December 20, 2002) was a Christian theologian, pastor, and president of Dallas Theological Seminary from 1952 to 1986. He was the author of over 30 books, focusing primarily on eschatology and theology including *The Rapture Question*, and was co-editor of *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* with Roy B. Zuck. He earned AB and DD degrees from Wheaton College, an AM degree from Texas Christian University in philosophy, a ThB, ThM, and ThD in Systematic theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a LittD from Liberty Baptist Seminary” (*Wikipedia*). Walvoord’s works quoted in this study include *The Rapture Question*, 1957 (revised 1979), *The Millennial Kingdom*, 1959, *Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament*, 1983 (with Roy B. Zuck), and *Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament*, 1985 (with Roy B. Zuck). I greatly admire Dr. Walvoord as probably the most thorough and precise scholar that I’ve ever read.

Renald Showers

“Dr. Renald E. Showers is widely recognized as one of the most distinguished theologians in America today. His work is known around the world, and he is in great demand as a visiting professor in colleges and seminaries. He is a graduate of Philadelphia College of Bible, holds a B.A. in history from Wheaton College, a Th.M. in church history from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a Th.D. in theology from Grace Theological Seminary. He is a professor and international conference speaker for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., and a contributing editor for *Israel My Glory* magazine” (From *Maranatha Our Lord, Come!* back cover). In this study, I

quote from Dr. Showers' *Maranatha Our Lord, Come!*, 1995 (revised 2007). Showers' work reminds me of that of Dr. Walvoord in its technical precision and thoroughness.

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum

"Arnold Genekowitsch Fruchtenbaum (born September 26, 1943) is the founder and director of Ariel Ministries, an organization which prioritizes evangelization of Jews in the effort to bring them to the view that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah" (*Wikipedia*). Dr. Fruchtenbaum has lately become one of my all-time favorite Bible teachers. A Hebrew Christian, he brings a much-needed Jewish perspective to his students' understanding of both the Old and New Testaments. As well as his books listed below, I've also found his on-line *Come and See* discipleship audio files to be of great value. Fruchtenbaum's works quoted in this book include *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, 1982 (revised 1984), *Israelology*, 1989 (revised 2001), and *The Eight Covenants of the Bible*, 2005.

Norman L. Geisler

"Norman L. Geisler (born 1932) is a Christian apologist and the co-founder of Southern Evangelical Seminary outside Charlotte, North Carolina, where he formerly taught. He holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Jesuit Loyola University. Geisler is well known for his scholarly contributions to the subjects of Christian apologetics, philosophy, and moderate Calvinism and is the author, coauthor, or editor of over 60 books and hundreds of articles" (*Wikipedia*). I've read several of Dr. Geisler's books, including his four-volume *Systematic Theology*, 2005, which is quoted frequently in this study. Dr. Geisler is considered by many to be the world's most competent living Christian apologist. He has taught this writer much about the origins and reliability of our current Bible, the foundations (prolegomena) of logical thought and argumentation (including how to identify bad argumentation such as self-defeating statements), and the logical necessities of some of the Bible's more difficult teachings (such as eternal punishment; see our chapter *The Lake of Fire*), all from a solidly conservative biblical Christian standpoint.

Barry E. Horner

"Barry E. Horner (D. Min., Westminster Theological Seminary, California; M. Div., Western conservative Baptist Theological Seminary) is pastor of Christ's New Covenant Church in Sahuarita, Arizona" (From *Future Israel* back cover).

As I read these scholars' books over a period of twenty-six years, I highlighted passages in them that I found to be particularly helpful or personal-

ly enlightening. All the quotations in this book have originated in these previously-highlighted phrases or sentences. Therefore, each quotation in this book represents a moment of personal insight and/or inspiration in my ongoing understanding of the biblical Kingdom. I hope my reader will find these quotations to be as enlightening and inspiring to him or her as they have been to me.

In January of 2009 I began transcribing these (thousands of) quotations into an outlining program on my computer. (By the way, how did Peters, Chafer, et al., ever manage without computers?). As I did so, and as I arranged the quotations into logical, topical and chronological order, the outline for this book gradually emerged.

In addition to transcribing and collating the scholars' quotations, I also read through the Bible several times, collecting all the verses that I could find pertaining to the Kingdom. I added these verses to my (now outline-formatted) database of Kingdom information, placing them in order alongside the quotations from the scholars. Once all the data had been entered and organized, the result was a surprisingly complete picture of the Kingdom! Then, I read through the Bible again, keeping my resulting outline in mind and marveling at how my evolving Kingdom outline was now greatly aiding me in framing and clarifying the details of what I was reading.

I've believed for over three decades now that personal Bible reading is the most important facet of Bible study that we can do. Through it the Holy Spirit speaks to us through the Scriptures, enlightening our minds and our hearts. There's no substitute for it! I greatly encourage my reader to read the Scriptures directly every day. It has been my experience that over time, as we read, the biblical Kingdom will increase for us in clarity, coherence, detail, power and glory. It is important for us, too, to be continually making sure that our view of the Kingdom has its origin in God's mind, as expressed in the Scriptures, rather than in the fallible minds of theologians, regardless of how Godly and/or brilliant those minds might be. All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable (2 Ti. 3:16). Our Teacher, the Holy Spirit (John 14:26) searches all things and knows the things of God (1 Cor. 2:10-12). It behooves each one of us, therefore, to have a consistent program of daily Bible reading.

In this exposition of the Kingdom nothing has been forced or strained, at least intentionally; this study exhibits how all the pieces of the puzzle fell together for me, simply and naturally. None of the puzzle pieces (the plain words of Scripture) needed altering, and no connections between adjacent pieces needed trimming or forcing. I have found this model, this vision of the Kingdom to become more clear and more accommodating of all Scrip-

ture with time; not more confusing or more problematic (as was my experience with the Jehovah's Witness kingdom model, which self-destructed for me after seven years of careful study and independent Bible reading).

My initial purpose for this study was to make sense of life and the world around me. With the passage of time I eventually developed as my lofty goal the apprehension and articulation of the over-arching Kingdom of God program, the systematization of the Kingdom in such a way that it would unify and explain all of the Bible's major themes. "...that natural bent of the human mind, best exemplified in the systematic philosophers, which impels men to search for a single principle or idea that will explain everything else" (McClain, *GK*, p. 3). I sought to build a model of the Kingdom that would stand on its own merits: a model that needed no forcing or twisting of Scripture in its formation, a model that would stand on its own without needing any man-made philosophy or esoteric knowledge to hold it together. And in this, by the grace of God, I believe I have succeeded.

Again, this study was originally assembled for my own personal use, and it has served me well in that capacity over the past several years, both for personal instruction and as a quick-reference database for on-line apologetics. However, I believe it could now also be of help to several different groups of people: to people in general, to Jehovah's Witnesses, to people who are studying with Jehovah's Witnesses, to former Jehovah's Witnesses, to the church and to the Tribulation saints.

People in general are confused regarding the major issues of life. They are asking, "Where did we come from? Why are we here? Can we make sense of human history? Is there a purpose for life? If God is good, then why is the world in such a mess? Does God care? When and how are the world's problems ever going to be solved?" This study answers all of these questions from a solidly biblical standpoint. It suggests that yes, we *can* make sense of human history, past, present and future (see our discussion of how our doctrine of the Kingdom explains human history in our chapter *Presuppositions and Premises*), and it points out that not only does God have a Plan for us, but that He has already told us all about it, if we will only hear Him!

Unfortunately, Jehovah's Witnesses will be forbidden by their leaders from reading this book. However, many Jehovah's Witnesses have become disenchanted with the Witness world view and lifestyle, especially in recent years. Therefore, a few brave Jehovah's Witness souls may just choose to take a look at what we're suggesting, despite the prohibitive instructions from their hierarchy. This will be especially true if this work happens to find its way into the rumor circuit amongst the Witnesses, as a few other

key apologetic works have done over the past couple of decades. If read by Jehovah's Witnesses, this study will encourage them to trust the biblical Jesus for salvation, which if done, will result in their genuine regeneration (being "born again"). If this occurs with just one Jehovah's Witness, I will consider this work to have been a complete success, having resulted in something of infinite value. This study will also help encourage Jehovah's Witnesses to leave the man-made Watchtower system in favor of the real, biblical Kingdom of God. It will serve to strengthen their convictions such that they'll have the backbone necessary to withstand the slander, the shattering of families and the shunning that will certainly come their way once they make a public declaration of their decision to trust and follow Jesus rather than the Watchtower Society. However, I don't expect this book to incite a mass defection from the Watchtower organization, at least not immediately, due to the deep-seated personal issues and cultic dynamics involved that, in the real world, generally take precedence over doctrinal issues. However, I would certainly be pleased to be proved wrong on this! Instead, my hopes are currently set more on a possible mass enlightenment and repentance amongst Jehovah's Witnesses during the Tribulation period, when prophetic Scripture (i.e., Matt. chapter 24 and Rev. chapters 6-18) will be having literal fulfillment before their very eyes. But then again, the supernatural blindness that Jehovah's Witnesses already exhibit regarding the glory of the gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4) might possibly just become that much more acute during the Tribulation period when the "strong delusion" (2 Thess. 2:11, NKJV) is in full swing. We will see.

People who are not yet Jehovah's Witnesses but who have only been studying with them for a short time (short enough that all outside help has not yet been perceived by them to be satanic opposition to "the truth" and therefore rejected) will be better-equipped to objectively compare our doctrine with the Bible, with the goal of determining which of the two systems adheres more closely to what the Scriptures actually teach. In comparing our system with that of the Watchtower Society, in some areas (such as in the chronology and events of the Tribulation period and in the governmental structure of the Millennial Kingdom) they will find more detail in ours than theirs, and in all areas we believe they will find in ours a much closer adherence to the plain (and intended) sense of Scripture. They will be encouraged to take Scripture at face value, and in so doing, they will be rendering superfluous (and indeed counterproductive) the dictates of Jehovah's Witnesses' "faithful and discreet slave." And, we believe they will find herein a better, more biblical Kingdom, with a better hope for themselves and for those they love who were and/or are willing to trust Jesus as Savior.

Sadly, because of the intensive and extensive intellectual and emotional conditioning that they had received at the hands of their leaders, including, for instance, the conviction that no spiritual truth exists outside the Watchtower organization, the majority of *former* Jehovah's Witnesses have become either agnostic or atheist in their world views. They've been so badly burned by their former (false) religion that they often exhibit vicious, knee-jerk rejection of anything that smacks of the Bible or of Christian religion. For many, if not most former Jehovah's Witnesses, the Bible has been shattered into ten thousand pieces, and because of the personal trauma that they've experienced, which they still associate with the Bible, they just don't have the stomach for trying to make sense of it any more. For many of these people, perhaps there's nothing that we can do, but for others who still retain some interest and/or respect for the Bible itself, this book will show them, if they have the patience to hear us out, how the Bible fits together in a way that they've never seen before, and likely have never even imagined.

For the church, I hope this study will help clarify our purpose for the present and our vision of the future. Most believers know that when we die we'll go to heaven. But then what? Surely there's more to the program than that! Indeed there is, and this study elucidates the biblical answers to the question "and then what?" I hope this study will also help shake Christians from their general apathy concerning Christ's return. This study concerns the "solid food" (1 Cor. 3:2, Heb. 5:14) of Scripture. May it therefore serve to help each of us grow to maturity in our faith: to increase our knowledge of and confidence in the Scriptures, to increase our understanding of and appreciation for the Person and Work of Jesus Christ our Lord, and generally broaden and deepen our biblical world view. May it give us confidence and ability in our witness to those around us, and may it better equip us to give the cultists knocking on our doors reasons for the hope that is in us (1 Pet. 3:15).

Finally, after the Rapture of the church, I expect that there will be some, possibly many, who, already somewhat familiar with our doctrine, will then pay closer attention to what we are saying. We know that during the Tribulation period a "great multitude" will be saved (Rev. 7:9, 14). Perhaps as these people recognize the fulfillment of Bible prophecy during the Tribulation, this book will help some searching souls fit the pieces of the Kingdom puzzle together, and will encourage them to stand strong in their allegiance to their coming King despite their likely impending martyrdom (Rev. 6:9-11).

We're living in unprecedented and exciting times. Computer and Internet technologies have made knowledge abundant and easily accessible (cf.

Dan. 12:4). We each have the ability now to learn in great detail about anything and everything that interests us. At the time of this writing, the world is suffering from ever-increasing geopolitical, socioeconomic and religious upheaval. Israel is in her land, and is surrounded by enemies who have publicly sworn to wipe her off the map. There is a growing sense among many that something of biblical proportions is about to happen in our world. Some are wondering about the possibility of divine intervention should things get too badly out of control. To that question we would unhesitatingly answer “Yes!” We would also point out that God has already told us about that intervention in great detail. Indeed, God has a master Plan, and that master Plan is the subject of this book. That Plan is the one unifying and sense-making principle of life and of human history: it is the biblical *Kingdom of God*. In our age of fiercely competing world views, I hope the reader will give our contentions some careful consideration, before these issues become settled once and for all by almighty God Himself, to His eternal glory. May our God be pleased to use this book, should He see fit, to help each of us better navigate this life and the unprecedented challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Introduction

This work is divided into four major sections: 1. *Introductory Considerations*, in which we will lay down the historical, philosophical and biblical foundations and presuppositions of our study, 2. *The Biblical Kingdom*, which is the major part of this work: an inductive biblical study of the Kingdom of God, 3. *Summary, Conclusion and Applications*, in which we will summarize the findings of our study and will suggest appropriate responses to what we've learned, and 4. *Reference*, which includes a bibliography, a glossary, a history of revisions to this work, and distribution and contact information. Subject and scripture indexes have been omitted, as this book has been prepared specifically for electronic distribution; electronic versions of this book can be searched via e-readers' search functions.

Section 1, *Introductory Considerations*, contains five chapters: 1. *Five Views of the Kingdom*, 2. *The Kingdom in Church History*, 3. *Presuppositions and Premises*, 4. *Biblical Hermeneutics* and 5. *Five Facets of the Kingdom*.

In chapter one, *Five Views of the Kingdom*, we will discuss five major views of the Kingdom of God, which views collectively represent those of the vast majority of professing Christians, and will make suggestions as to why so much confusion exists among Christian and pseudo-Christian communities concerning the nature of the Kingdom. Three of the views that we will discuss are views within Covenant theology: Covenant postmillennialism, Covenant amillennialism and Covenant premillennialism. The fourth view is the dispensational view, and the fifth view is that of Jehovah's Witnesses. We'll review each view's definition, history, adherents, hermeneutics and teachings. As we do, we'll point out why it is the position of this writer and of this work that the dispensational view is the most correct one.

In chapter two, *The Kingdom in Church History*, we will discuss premillennialism in Old Testament times, the chiliasm or premillennialism of the early church, historical opposition to chiliasm, chiliasm in the dark ages, the eschatology of the Reformers, the history of premillennialism following the Reformation, and premillennialism today. We'll demonstrate that the idea of a future earthly Kingdom with a Jewish Messiah sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem did not originate in modern times, or even in recent centuries, but rather was revealed, taught and believed in Old Testament times. We'll trace the history of the chiliasm of the early church from the foundational Jewish church, on through the biblical period, through the Apostolic Fathers, and through the first three centuries of the

church's history. We'll discuss the opposition to chiliasm that began in the early centuries of the church and which flowered and thereafter dominated in medieval and later centuries. We'll discuss the instruments of this opposition, the history of the opposition and the sad consequences of the opposition. We'll examine the perseverance of chiliasm through the dark ages, the eschatologies of the Protestant Reformers, premillennialism following the Reformation, and the prevalence of premillennialism today.

In chapter three, *Presuppositions and Premises*, we'll list and discuss the presuppositions regarding reality, truth and the Bible that undergird our conservative, biblical worldview and will state our premises concerning the Bible and the biblical Kingdom: premises that we will endeavor to prove beyond reasonable doubt throughout the remainder of the study. Our presuppositions concern the reality of the world and of God, the objective and exclusive nature of truth, and the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. Our premises concern the reality of the possibility of our correctly understanding Scripture, and the spiritual and intellectual tools that we suggest must be possessed and utilized by the student when developing a correct understanding of the Bible, including a correct conception of the Kingdom. Our premises will also concern the Kingdom itself: its purpose, people, structure and nature, and its relations to the Bible, theology, God, man and history.

Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation, especially of biblical interpretation, and it is the subject of chapter four, *Biblical Hermeneutics*. In this chapter we will examine some foundational hermeneutical principles and will suggest some basic rules for the correct interpretation of Scripture. In particular, we will define and recommend the grammatical-historical method of biblical interpretation. We'll suggest several reasons why a discussion of hermeneutics is necessary, and we'll review some basic biblical facts that should influence our Scripture interpretation, including the existence of both literal and non-literal Scripture, the symbiotic relationship between the Old and New Testaments, unique dispensational facts concerning the gospels, and some facts regarding prophetic Scripture that have particular relevance to our exposition of the Kingdom. We'll suggest some basic rules for correctly interpreting Scripture, such as using the normal rules of language, allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture, solving simple problems before more complex ones, using clear passages to interpret more obscure ones (and not vice versa), and not going beyond what is written. We will recommend the grammatical-historical method of Scripture interpretation, which encourages a "plain sense" interpretation of the Bible. We will offer approximately one hundred reasons why we believe the grammatical-

historical method of Scripture interpretation is the correct method, or to put it another way, one hundred reasons why we believe the Bible means what it plainly says, including what it says about Israel and the Kingdom.

Sometimes, passages of the Bible concerning the Kingdom may not readily fit together, and in some cases they might even appear to be contradictory. We have found that the most effective way to reconcile all Scripture passages related to the Kingdom is to recognize that while there is only one biblical Kingdom of God, there are at least five *facets* of this Kingdom. We'll explore these five facets in chapter five, *Five Facets of the Kingdom*. These five facets of the Kingdom are 1. The Universal or Eternal Kingdom, 2. The Spiritual Kingdom, 3. The Theocratic or Mediatorial/Monarchical Kingdom, 4. The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom, and 5. The Mystery Kingdom.

Having presented our foundational introductory material in Section 1, we'll then proceed to construct our vision or model of the Kingdom in Section 2, *The Biblical Kingdom*. This section, which comprises the bulk of our work, is an inductive Bible study contained in twenty-three chapters: 6. *God and Creation*, 7. *The Fall*, 8. *A Kingdom Needed*, 9. *Conscience, Government and Promise*, 10. *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 11. *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*, 12. *Covenants of the Kingdom*, 13. *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*, 14. *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*, 15. *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*, 16. *Rejection of the King*, 17. *Postponement of the Kingdom*, 18. *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*, 19. *The King of the Kingdom*, 20. *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*, 21. *The Rapture of the Church*, 22. *The Great Tribulation*, 23. *The Second Coming of the King*, 24. *Inauguration of the Kingdom*, 25. *The Millennial Kingdom*, 26. *A Final Rebellion*, 27. *The Lake of Fire* and 28. *The Eternal Order*.

Our study of the biblical Kingdom will begin with chapter 6, *God and Creation*. In this chapter we'll discuss God, creation and the first age or dispensation of human history, the age of Innocence. We'll begin with a brief discussion of God's nature and attributes. From there, we'll suggest some biblical reasons why God chose to create anything at all, what His vision for His creation was, and why He created *this* world, with all its attendant troubles. Then, we'll examine mankind's original idyllic Kingdom and God's first covenant with mankind, the Edenic Covenant.

In chapter seven, *The Fall*, we'll first consider some philosophical concepts related to evil, and will then examine the fall of Satan, angels and man from their original states of sinlessness. After defining evil, we'll explore the origin of evil and will suggest answers to the question of why evil was and is allowed by God. We'll consider Satan's fall, and will discuss his nature, atti-

tude, purpose and works. We'll consider the fall of the angels. Then, we'll discuss the fall of man, both the *fact* of his fall and the deep and wide-ranging *effects* of his fall.

Because of the fall of man into sin and death, a Plan authored by God has now become necessary to rectify the situation, as we delineate in our chapter eight, *A Kingdom Needed*. As the eradication of sin and its effects (including death) is demonstrably beyond the capabilities of fallen man, a Kingdom is needed to do what only God can do. This Kingdom, if it is to reverse the effects of sin in all affected spheres, must be effectual in various ways in each of these spheres: in relation to sin itself, Satan, individuals, mankind, all of creation, all created beings, and God. We will demonstrate that God's far-reaching Kingdom Plan, as revealed in Scripture, is ideally and most capably suited to meet all the needs in all these spheres.

In chapter nine, *Conscience, Government and Promise*, we'll examine the second, third and fourth ages or dispensations in human history, namely, those of Conscience, Human Government, and Promise (or Patriarchs). In our discussion of the age of Conscience, we'll examine God's second covenant with mankind, the Adamic Covenant, and mankind's history from Eden to the Flood. In our discussion of the age of Human Government, we'll examine God's third covenant with mankind, the Noahic Covenant, and mankind's history from the Flood to the tower of Babel. In our discussion of the age of Promise (or Patriarchs), we'll examine God's fourth covenant with mankind, which was His first covenant with Israel, the Abrahamic Covenant, a foundational covenant in God's Kingdom program. We'll also trace the patriarchs' history from Abraham to Israel's exodus from Egypt, especially as it relates to the outworking of the Kingdom program.

In chapter ten, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, we'll examine the bases and the development of the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel. We'll identify the bases of the Theocratic Kingdom as God's second and third covenants with Israel, namely the Mosaic and the Palestinian Covenants. We'll then examine the divine purposes, theocratic structure, miraculous establishment and historical development of the theocracy from Moses' administration on through Israel's occupation of Palestine, through the period of the judges, and on into the Davidic monarchy.

We'll discuss the decline and fall of the Jewish theocracy in our chapter eleven, *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*. We'll see how Israel's decline began with Solomon's failures and continued with the rupture of the Kingdom under the leadership of his son Rehoboam. We'll see how the decline fulfilled the prophet Samuel's predictions, and how and what the Hebrew prophets prophesied during the decline. We'll see how, after

the theocracy had declined to the point of no return, the Kingdom fell, in fulfillment of the Hebrew prophecies. We'll study the resulting "times of the Gentiles," including their purpose, signature events and duration. Our study of the times of the Gentiles will include discussions of the prophesied succession of world powers, Daniel's seventy weeks, and the Hebrew prophets' prediction of eventual restoration of the theocracy.

We'll discuss the biblical covenants in chapter twelve, *Covenants of the Kingdom*. We'll begin with a review of some basic principles regarding the biblical covenants, including their importance, their purposes and their characteristics, such as the difference between conditional and unconditional covenants. We'll then examine in some detail God's eight covenants with mankind: the three covenants that God made with mankind in general, the Edenic, Adamic and Noahic Covenants, and the five covenants that He made specifically with Israel, the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants. We'll pay particular attention to the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel, the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants, as they collectively form the covenantal basis for Israel's future restored Theocratic Kingdom.

In chapter thirteen, *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*, we'll survey the Hebrew prophets in relation to the eschatological (future) Kingdom of God. In this chapter we'll demonstrate that when taken plainly or at face value, the Hebrew prophets clearly foretell a future literal, earthly, theocratic, Jewish Kingdom. Hundreds of passages will be cited from the historical books, the Psalms and the Hebrew prophets, with minimal commentary, to prove this point. One of our purposes for this chapter will be to demonstrate to the reader how simple and self-evident the correct interpretation of Old Testament prophecy concerning the Kingdom usually is.

What sort of Kingdom were the first-century Jews, the Jews of Jesus' day, expecting? This will be the subject of chapter fourteen, *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*. We'll first consider the first-century Jewish understanding of the (Davidic) Kingdom, which was, of course, based on the Jewish covenants and prophecies of the Old Testament, and we'll show how this understanding differs greatly from today's popular "spiritual" kingdom idea. We'll show that the first-century Jews simply had no basis for belief in any kind of future Kingdom other than a literal, earthly one. We will then demonstrate that this literal, earthly, Davidic Kingdom was indeed the Kingdom expected by the first-century Jews. We will suggest that the opening chapters of the New Testament assume a Jewish understanding of this covenanted and prophesied Kingdom, and that these chapters cannot be well understood without recognizing this.

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” Such was the introductory Kingdom message of John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy. To what “Kingdom” were they referring in their preaching? This will be the subject of our chapter fifteen, *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*. We’ll prepare to answer this question by first considering some introductory biblical information, including the relationship between the Old and New Testaments and the purposes of the four gospels. Then, we’ll take a close look at exactly how the Kingdom was announced and offered by John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy. Then, we’ll make our case that the Kingdom offered to the Jewish nation was indeed the previously covenanted and prophesied theocratic, Davidic Kingdom.

With Messiah on the scene, personally announcing and offering the Kingdom to the nation Israel, a national decision was required of Israel. Morally unprepared for the Kingdom, tragically, the nation, through its leaders, chose to reject Jesus as Messiah, as we will see in chapter sixteen, *Rejection of the King*. We’ll explore some of the reasons why the Jews rejected Jesus as King, and will see how, after His rejection, Jesus’ ministry changed in several ways, such as Jesus’ self-identification, the purpose of His miracles, His message, and His style and method of preaching.

Now, since Jesus the Messiah has come, does that mean that the Kingdom has therefore come? And/or, perhaps, has the covenanted and prophesied Jewish Kingdom been *transformed* into something else? Or, has the Jewish Kingdom been merely *postponed*? We’ll explore these various possibilities in chapter seventeen, *Postponement of the Kingdom*. Now, if the Kingdom has come, *when* did it come? Had it come prior to Jesus’ First Advent? Or, did it come *during* Jesus’ First Advent? Had it come prior to Jesus’ ascension, or possibly just after His ascension? Had it come by the time the New Testament epistles were written? Has it come yet? And/or, has the Kingdom been *transformed*? If it has been transformed, what new form has it taken? Is the Kingdom now the gospel of the Kingdom? Or, is it perhaps repentance, faith, obedience to God or union with Christ? Is it a spiritual kingdom, a personal, present salvation, a spiritual reign of God in the heart? Is it Jesus’ present authority? Is Jesus reigning as King now, on David’s throne? Is the Kingdom now the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society? Or, is the Kingdom now the church? Or, has the Kingdom not been transformed at all? Could the Kingdom possibly still be what it’s always been, namely a future, earthly, Jewish Kingdom? Could it be that the Kingdom has neither come yet, nor been *transformed*, but rather merely *postponed*? We will answer yes, the Kingdom has only been postponed. We will, therefore, discuss at some length the Scriptural statement, cause, conse-

quences, such as Israel's present blindness and an extension of the times of the Gentiles, and objectives, such as Israel's punishment and the gathering of the members of the church, of the Kingdom's postponement.

We'll present further evidence that the Theocratic Kingdom had not yet come in the first century, and had not been transformed but had merely been delayed, in our chapter eighteen, *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*. This evidence will be provided from the four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the New Testament epistles and the Revelation. Evidences from the gospels will be provided by Jesus and by others including the soldiers at the time of Jesus' arrest, the Jews at the time of Jesus' trial, Pontius Pilate, the chief priests, scribes and elders, the penitent thief on the cross, Joseph of Arimathea and the men on the road to Emmaus. Evidences from the Acts of the Apostles will include Jesus' commands to the apostles, a number of the events in Acts, and the testimony of the apostles in Acts. Evidences from the New Testament epistles will be provided by Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude. We will also provide numerous evidences for the future, earthly, Jewish Kingdom from the highly Kingdom-focused book of Revelation.

We'll take a close and detailed look at the King of the Kingdom, Jesus the Christ, in our chapter nineteen, *The King of the Kingdom*. We'll examine Jesus' qualifications for the Kingship, His career, His offices, His titles and His glory. In examining His qualifications for Kingship, we'll consider His deity and humanity, submissiveness, incarnation, innocence, obedience, character, perfection, miracles and suffering. We'll review His career, including His incarnation, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, glorification, receipt of all power and authority, present session, return, and the exercising of power in the Kingdom. We'll consider His three offices: those of Prophet, Priest and King. We'll examine the significance of many of His titles as they relate to the Kingdom, including Immanuel, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Son of David, the Lamb of God, the Lion of Judah, the Messiah or Christ, the King of the Jews, the King of Kings and the Morning Star. We'll consider the glory that Jesus exhibits at every stage of His career: before His incarnation, at His incarnation, in heaven now, at His Second Coming, and in the Millennial Kingdom. We'll demonstrate how, in so many ways, Jesus Himself is the glory of the Kingdom! We will also offer some evidences that Jesus was in no way a deception: that He was neither deceived nor a deceiver, that He was not an invention of His disciples, and that the four gospel accounts were not concocted by later writers.

In chapter twenty, *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*, we'll take a look at the current "mystery" form of the Kingdom. We'll consider the Mystery Kingdom's identity, purposes, career and characteristics. Concerning

the identity of the Mystery Kingdom, we'll carefully define the Mystery Kingdom and will identify the church's place within it. We will identify what the church is not, such as Israel and the Kingdom, and what she is, such as the spiritual seed of Abraham and the bride of Christ. We'll demonstrate from Scripture that she is an organism, not an organization, and that she is identifiable. We'll discuss the "mystery" nature of the church, and will identify the four elements that comprise her mystery. We'll discuss the current purposes of the Church Age, including the calling out from among the Gentiles a people for God's name, the espousing of a bride to Christ, the incitement of the Jews to jealousy, and the selection and preparation of kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom. We'll suggest that the current purpose of the church is *not* to entertain church members or others, nor is it to Christianize the world. We'll also discuss the ultimate, future purposes of the church, including her being Christ's wife, exalting redeemed men and displaying the infinity of God's grace. Regarding the career of the church, we'll discuss the church's chronology and her developmental details as described in the "mystery" parables of Matthew chapter thirteen and in the letters to the seven churches of Revelation chapters two and three. We'll emphasize that God is gathering the church *now*, and that the door to membership in Christ's body is presently open and will remain open until the Rapture of the church. We'll then discuss the characteristics of the Church Age, including its disconnectedness from prior and subsequent dispensations, its centering in Jesus' death, the unity exhibited by the spiritually regenerated members of Christ's body, the absence of any centralized, authoritative church government, its mixture of good and evil and truth and error, its absence of angelic manifestations and spectacular miracles, and its conspicuous and pervasive silence on God's part.

In chapter twenty-one, *The Rapture of the Church*, we'll discuss the Rapture of the church, including its definition, Scriptural fact, identity, participants, types, purposes, characteristics and chronology. We'll define the Rapture via three primary passages of Scripture: John 14:1-3, 1 Cor. 15:51-53 and 1 Thess. 4:13-18. We'll then corroborate these three passages with many others that confirm the rapture concept, and will demonstrate that the Rapture is in many ways differentiated from Christ's Second Coming. We'll identify who will be taken up in the Rapture. We'll consider several types, or patterns of the Rapture, such as Enoch, Elijah, and the Jewish wedding tradition. We'll discuss the purposes of the Rapture, both for those taken up and for those left behind. We'll consider several characteristics of the Rapture, such as its mystery, its instantaneous occurrence and its unexpectedness. We'll take a close look at the chronology of the Rapture, includ-

ing its timing and its duration. We'll take a particularly detailed look at its timing, which we expect to be pretribulation (occurring *before* the Tribulation period) and believe to be imminent (it could happen at any moment). We'll consider the various attitudes that people have toward the Rapture, particularly professing Christians, and will draw attention to the many Scripture passages that encourage believers to eagerly anticipate it.

We'll discuss the future Tribulation period in chapter twenty-two, *The Great Tribulation*. We'll discuss the biblical fact of the Tribulation, as well as its purposes, characteristics, chronology, sociological systems, characters and events. We'll take a look at the many biblical passages that describe the Tribulation period, including the remarkably parallel accounts in Matthew chapter twenty-four and Revelation chapter six. We'll consider the purposes of the Tribulation in relation to Israel, such as Israel's purging and her national salvation, and in relation to the Gentile nations, such as the allowing of evil to have its greatest-ever manifestation and the purging of the nations' evil rulers and people in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom. We'll discuss the characteristics of the Tribulation including its deception, sin, trials and tribulation, anti-Semitism, persecution of believers, and progressively severe wrath of both God and Satan, and destruction. We'll discuss the chronology of the Tribulation, including its timing and duration. We'll demonstrate that it must occur after the Church Age and before the Millennial Kingdom. We'll show from the Bible that its duration will be exactly seven years, that it is Scripturally divided into two halves of three and one half years each, and that it will conclude with Christ's return to earth. We'll examine the sociological systems of the Tribulation, including its global government, global economy and global religion. We'll identify the characters of the Tribulation, both evil and good. We'll describe the evil characters, such as Satan, demons, the Antichrist, the false prophet, the apostate church and lost mankind, and the good characters, such as the two witnesses, the 144,000 and the Tribulation saints, including the great multitude of Revelation chapter seven and the sheep of Matthew chapter twenty-five. We'll describe the ideologies and the events in preparation for the Tribulation, and the events of the Tribulation itself. We'll discuss in chronological order the events of the first half of the Tribulation: Antichrist's confirmation of a covenant with Israel, the Lamb's taking the title deed of the earth and the preparation for the eviction of earth's usurpers from His realm, Elijah's preparation of Israel, the prophesying of the two witnesses and their death, resurrection and translation, the sealing of the 144,000, the seven seal judgments, the first six of the seven trumpet judgments, the fall of ecclesiastical Babylon the Great, and the salvation of the great multi-

tude. Then we'll discuss the events of the middle of the Tribulation: Satan's casting out of heaven to the earth, Antichrist's blasphemy, his defiling of the temple in Jerusalem, his breaking of the covenant with Israel and his absolute rule, Israel's persecution, exile from the land and gathering at Bozrah, the mark of the beast, and the seventh of the seven trumpet judgments. Finally we'll discuss the events of the last half of the Tribulation: the trampling of the holy city (Jerusalem) for forty-two months, "this good news of the Kingdom" preached, angelic proclamations made, the marriage of the Lamb (in heaven), the seven bowl judgments, the breaking of Israel's will, the removal of Israel's blindness, Israel's recognition of Jesus as Messiah, Israel's repentance, reception of the Holy Spirit, forgiveness and regeneration (salvation), Israel's pleading for Christ's return, the gathering of all nations against Israel, the commencement of the campaign of Armageddon, and the fall of the city (political and economic) Babylon.

The Tribulation period will close with Christ's Second Coming. In chapter twenty-three, *The Second Coming of the King*, we'll study this event in detail including its factuality, necessity, importance, Person, purposes, characteristics, timing, location, destination and events. We'll also take a look at peoples' differing attitudes toward the Second Coming. We'll examine Scriptural evidence that suggests that the Second Coming is a necessary event in God's overall Kingdom program, and that it will in fact be one of the two most important events in humankind's history. We'll see that the Jesus who comes the second time will be the same One who came the first time, and we'll take a look at some of the titles of the King that apply to Him at His Second Coming. We'll consider some of the many purposes of the Second Coming, all of which are related to the Kingdom in some way, such as the public revealing of Christ with His bride and with the angels, the saving of Israel, the conquering of the Antichrist, the dashing of the nations to pieces, the binding of Satan, the purging of all unrepentant sinners from the world, the ending of the times of the Gentiles, the restoration of the Theocratic Kingdom, the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom, and the fulfillment of Israel's covenants and prophecies. We'll discuss how the Second Coming will be possible, certain, literal, bodily, visible and glorious. As to its timing, we'll demonstrate that the Second Coming is yet future, and that it will occur at the end of the age, just prior to the Millennial Kingdom. We'll pinpoint the location of the Second Coming and its subsequent destination. We'll discuss the events of the Second Coming, including cataclysmic natural phenomena, the sign of the Son of Man, Christ's appearance in the sky, His defeat of Antichrist and his army, and His setting foot on the Mount of Olives.

In chapter twenty-four, *Inauguration of the Kingdom*, we'll discuss several events that will occur in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom. We'll consider Antichrist's resurrection and casting into the lake of fire, the binding of Satan, the judgment of both Israelite and Gentile Tribulation survivors, and Israel's possession of the promised land. In preparation for our studies of the resurrections, we'll take a look at the intermediate state of the dead, both of believers and unbelievers. We'll then discuss the multi-stage first resurrection, which will include the resurrections of the church, the Tribulation saints, the Old Testament saints and (possibly) godly Gentiles. Then, we'll discuss the official inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom with the celebratory marriage feast of the Lamb.

In chapter twenty-five, *The Millennial Kingdom*, we'll take a close and careful look at the capstone of God's theocratic Kingdom program, the Millennial Kingdom. We'll discuss the bases for our belief in it, its purposes, its timing and its duration, and we'll have a detailed discussion of the earth, the human race, government, nations, culture and life in the Millennial Kingdom. We'll consider several bases for belief in the Millennial Kingdom, including Israel's covenants, Old Testament prophecy, Jewish tradition and Jesus' teachings. We'll take a look at the purposes of the Millennial Kingdom, with the understanding that the Millennial Kingdom is not the desired end in itself (the desired end being the Eternal Order), but rather an effective means to that end. Regarding the timing of the Millennial Kingdom we'll see that it occurs after Jesus' Second Coming, and regarding its duration we'll see by definition and from Scripture that it will be one thousand years. We'll give an extended description of the Millennial Kingdom. We'll discuss the renovation of the earth and the salvation, rejuvenation and repopulation of the human race. We'll take a look at the perfect government that will rule the Millennial Kingdom, including Jehovah's visible reign as King from Jerusalem in the Person of Messiah, accompanied by the believers who will reign with Him. We'll consider the structures of the two branches of government, Jewish and Gentile, including their chains of command. We'll see how these structures result in government that is supernatural, lawful, righteous, just and balanced. We'll discuss the nations of the Millennial Kingdom, both Jewish and Gentile. We'll note Israel's restored and blessed condition, including her rebuilt and exalted city Jerusalem, a millennial temple, a memorial, ceremonial and temporal sacrificial system, a millennial river, Jewish feasts observed, borders enlarged and covenants fulfilled. We'll see that Israel's life and culture will be spiritual: regenerated, reconciled to God, restored, united, forgiven, healed, exalted, righteous, holy, joyful and peaceful. We'll see that as a nation Israel

will be populous, productive, prosperous and glorious—a beacon of light and goodness to the world. We'll see that the Gentile nations, too, will be blessed, with no more war between them, as they clearly and gladly recognize Israel's preeminence in the Kingdom. We'll note that some Gentiles will help build and serve in the millennial temple, and that all Gentiles will worship the King, with their representatives annually observing the feast of tabernacles in Jerusalem. We'll see that culture in the Millennial Kingdom will be diverse, and life will be peaceful, spiritual, joyful and good. We'll see that life will be supernatural, with miraculous events and angelic visitations being commonplace. However, as this will not yet be the Eternal Order, we'll note that even with all this spirituality and goodness, there will still exist some sin and death.

We'll see in chapter twenty-six, *A Final Rebellion*, that at the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom Satan will be released from the abyss for a short period of time, and will instigate a final rebellion against Christ and His Kingdom. From this episode we'll see that even within a perfect environment the fallen human heart will still have a propensity to rebel against God, and that fallen man will still act according to this propensity if given the opportunity. From this vantage point in our study we'll retrospectively review all of the previous ages or dispensations of human history, and will clearly see that this propensity of fallen man toward evil is one of the major themes of the Bible, and that this propensity always results in tragedy, from which only the grace and supernatural power of God can rescue man.

In chapter twenty-seven, *The Lake of Fire*, we'll see that before the Eternal Order can commence, sin and death must be finally and entirely defeated. In this chapter we'll discuss several events that must precede the Eternal Order, including the translation of the millennial saints, the resurrection of lost mankind, the passing away of the present heaven and earth, and the Great White Throne judgment. We'll take a close and sobering look at the lake of fire, including its reality, nature, occupants, purposes and necessity. We'll also discuss reasons why we often have difficulty accepting the doctrine of the lake of fire.

Finally, in chapter twenty-eight, *The Eternal Order*, we'll discuss several final events that will take place in preparation for the Eternal Order, such as Christ's handing the Kingdom over to His Father, God's creation of a new heaven and a new earth, and the descending of the New Jerusalem out of heaven to earth. Then we'll discuss the final, ultimate consummation of the Kingdom of God program: the glorious Eternal Order.

We hope this brief summary has whetted our reader's appetite for the detailed study of the Kingdom of God that follows. Welcome aboard!

Section 1: Introductory Considerations

Chapter 1: Five Views of the Kingdom

What are the most commonly-held views concerning the Kingdom of God, and how did they originate? The answers to these questions will give us some perspective on the wide range of views that currently exists within Christendom, and will also help us to understand just how our view fits in (or conflicts with) with the major competing views.

Five Major Views

In the broadest sense, the most common views of the Kingdom can be divided into two camps, based on the two underlying theologies that support them. These two underlying theologies, both of which are orthodox¹, are *covenant* theology and *dispensational* theology. While dispensational theology is always premillennial² in its eschatology³, covenant eschatology is divided into three standard eschatological camps: *postmillennial*⁴, *amillennial*⁵ and *premillennial*. Therefore, we have a total of four standard eschatologies to compare: covenant postmillennial, covenant amillennial, covenant premillennial and dispensational. Then, there is also a fifth, heretical⁶ theology and eschatology that has its own, unique view of the Kingdom, namely, that of Jehovah's Witnesses. We'll spend some time on this fifth view, too, because Christians are being challenged by it on a daily basis via door-knocking Jehovah's Witnesses, and because this writer, due to his past involvement with Jehovah's Witnesses, has had considerable experience with it.

But again, the main theological conflict *within* Christendom today in relation to the Kingdom is between covenant theology and dispensational theology. We'll therefore be spending most of our time comparing these two systems: covenant theology which includes its three different eschatological divisions, and dispensational theology. After that, we'll also take a brief look at the Kingdom according to Jehovah's Witnesses.

1 "Orthodox" means conforming to the basic foundational doctrines of historic Christianity.

2 In premillennial eschatology, Christ returns *before* the millennium.

3 Eschatology is the branch of theology concerning "last things" such as the Rapture of the church, the Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrections and judgments, and the Millennial Kingdom.

4 In postmillennial eschatology, Christ returns *after* the millennium.

5 In amillennial eschatology, there is no Millennial Kingdom.

6 "Heretical" means not conforming to the basic foundational doctrines of historic Christianity.

The Two Primary Areas of Disagreement

While there are numerous secondary differences between covenant and dispensational theology, the two primary areas of disagreement between them relate to understandings of God's covenants (agreements) with mankind, and particularly God's future purpose for the nation Israel. In a nutshell, covenant theologians believe that God has made one over-arching "covenant of grace" with mankind that spans all generations, that the church is now the "new Israel," and that the nation Israel has no future purpose in God's Kingdom program, whereas dispensationalists recognize eight separate and distinct covenants that God has made with different groups of people at different times, which correspondingly divide human history up into a number of different *dispensations*, that Israel and the church are always separate in Scripture, and that the nation Israel has a major role yet to play in the outworking of God's Kingdom program. Throughout this chapter we'll be exploring these ideas in some detail.

The First Three Views: Covenant

Covenant theology is based on the idea that God has made one eternal, over-arching covenant, or contract, or agreement, with mankind. This covenant is in the form of a decree of God, made beyond or outside of time, for the salvation of fallen men. We'll explore this idea of an eternal "covenant of grace" further when we examine the specific teachings of covenant theology below.

Covenant theology was not formalized as a system of theology until relatively recently. According to Dr. John Walvoord, "Covenant theology is of comparatively recent origin... covenant theology as such is not in the historic creeds of the church, was not taught explicitly by Calvin or the other Reformers" (*MK*, p. 88). Dr. Norman Geisler specifies, "Classical covenantalism was formulated by Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669), was embraced by Charles Hodge (1797-1878) and most Reformed theologians, and was articulated by Oswald Allis (1880-1973). According to this position, the Old Testament covenants made with Israel are fulfilled in the New Testament church, God's 'spiritual Israel,' rather than a literal fulfillment in national Israel" (*ST*, 4:500).

In order to make Old Testament prophecy concerning Israel have fulfillment in the church, covenant theology uses a spiritualizing hermeneutic⁷. "Covenant theology is built upon a spiritualizing method of interpreting the Scriptures. In order to make the various covenants of the

⁷ Hermeneutics is the science of biblical interpretation.

Old Testament conform to the pattern of the covenant of grace, it is necessary to interpret them in other than their literal sense” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 90).

As we mentioned briefly above, covenant theology is based upon the idea of one over-arching “covenant of grace,” an eternal decree of God’s that spans all generations of mankind. “The point of distinction in covenant theology, then, is not simply an assertion of a covenant of grace in the broad sense of the offer of grace to man, but the doctrine that the covenant of grace is an important and determinative aspect of the eternal decree and is in fact the central purpose of God” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 89). “In his effort to show that all Old Testament covenants are ‘in reality one and the same covenant’... Dr. Allis... his determination to establish an absolute covenantal unity throughout the Bible” (Dr. Alva McClain, *GK*, p. 158). “As is generally true with Covenant Theology, Boettner reduces everything in the plan of God to the plan of salvation” (Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 49). However, “A form of Covenant Theology which would thread all of Jehovah’s purposes and undertakings upon His one attribute of grace could hardly avoid confusion of mind in matters related to His varied objectives” (Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, *ST*, 4:311). As Dr. Fruchtenbaum points out, “It is not true that there is only one covenant of grace. The ‘covenant of grace,’ as defined by Covenant Theologians, is never even seen to exist in the Scriptures. A straight reading of Scripture shows that God made several covenants. These were not always made with the same people (e.g., the Noahic Covenant with Gentiles, the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants with Jews), nor did they have the same provisions. In fact, sometimes the provisions were contradictory (e.g., all foods were permissible under the Noahic, but not under the Mosaic)” (*I*, p. 262). It is therefore not surprising that “Like other Covenant theologians, Boettner nowhere in his work even tries to prove that such a covenant [the covenant of grace] exists” (*ibid.*, p. 47).

Covenant theology teaches that the nation Israel has been replaced (or “fulfilled”) by the church, and has little if any future purpose in God’s Kingdom program. It teaches that if national Israel is to be saved and/or restored at all, it is only as it will be incorporated into the church. “Covenant Premillennialism believes in both a national salvation and a national restoration of Israel. Postmillennialism believes in a national salvation, but not a national restoration of Israel. Amillennialism rejects both” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 314).

In covenant theology, the church is the “new Israel.” “The concept of the Church being the new Israel is so ingrained in Covenant Theology that it is very often used as a base to interpret the meaning of Scripture”

(Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 248). The church is then supposedly comprised of the elect of all periods of human history. “From the covenant theology usually embraced by amillenarians comes the concept of the essential unity of the elect of all dispensations” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 80).

Covenant theology teaches that the Law of Moses is still in effect, at least partially. “All Covenant Theologians feel that the Law of Moses is still in effect” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 282). “All schools of Covenant Theology insist that the Law of Moses is still in effect, but they are always forced to make major adjustments and even rewrites of the law, which Dispensationism does not need to do” (*ibid.*, p. 510). “The failure by Covenant Theologians of all stripes to recognize the unity of the Law of Moses leads to very subjective determinations as to which commandments are to be followed and which are not. This confusion is, in turn, reflected in Covenant Theologians’ confusion between Israel and the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 63). “What all Covenant Theologians conveniently ignore is that the law was given to Israel and not the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 641).

Rather than expecting a future, literal, earthly Kingdom, covenant theology recognizes only a “spiritual” kingdom. “[According to Covenant theology,] the kingdom that Jesus offered was not a literal earthly kingdom, but a spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of salvation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 312).

We’ll now consider in some detail the three covenant eschatologies: postmillennialism, amillennialism and premillennialism.

By definition, *postmillennialism* teaches that Christ will return *after* the millennium; *after* the church has herself established the kingdom of God in the world. “...postmillennialism is the doctrinal belief that Christ will return after (post) the millennium and usher in the eternal state with the final judgment of men and angels” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 18). “In general, therefore, the postmillennial concept of the millennium is a rule of the Spirit of God in the heart, beginning in the past and continuing in the future in ever increasing power. Christ is now on the throne in heaven and will never have an earthly throne” (*ibid.*, p. 28). “Postmillennialism is distinguished from amillennialism by its optimism, assurance of the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God in the world, and its relative fulfillment of the millennial idea on the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 33).

Postmillennialism was systematized approximately three centuries ago by the heretical theologian Daniel Whitby. “Daniel Whitby (1638-1725) is commonly given the credit for the rise of postmillennialism” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 19). “Whitby himself was a Unitarian. His writings bearing on the Godhead were publicly burned and he was denounced as a heretic. He was

a liberal and a freethinker” (*ibid.*, p. 22). “*Postmillennialism*. Originating in the writings of Daniel Whitby (1638-1726), a Unitarian controversialist of England” (*ibid.*, p. 7). “While some of Whitby’s writings were publicly burned as heresy, particularly his views on the Trinity, many conservative theologians rapidly embraced and propagated his viewpoint on the millennium. Postmillennialism today is not commonly held, and the controversy that continues is principally between amillennialism and premillennialism” (*ibid.*, p. 8). “...postmillennialism is the most recent of millennial theories” (*ibid.*, p. 18). “All seem to agree that postmillennialism is quite foreign to the apostolic church. There is no trace of anything in the church which could be classified as postmillennialism in the first two or three centuries. The millenarianism of the early church was premillennial, that is, it expected the return of Christ before a millennium on earth” (*ibid.*, p. 19).

Among postmillennialism’s most influential advocates were Charles Hodge and Loraine Boettner. “Charles Hodge... postmillennial” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 209). “Charles Hodge’s *Systematic Theology*, first published in the nineteenth century, has become the classic for both Covenant Theology and for Postmillennialism” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 29). “Boettner stands almost alone among modern scholars still defending conservative Biblical postmillennialism” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 35).

Postmillennialism makes liberal use of a *spiritualizing* hermeneutic. “In order to find fulfillment of millennial promises in the present age, it is necessary for them to follow an allegorical or figurative system of interpretation in great areas of Biblical prophecy. This method has historically subverted not only prophecy but every important doctrine. Without question the real issue in the millennial controversy is right here. Practically all scholars agree that a strictly literal interpretation of prophecy leads to the premillennial concept of the millennium, while if the figurative method be employed Scripture may be interpreted in favor of other views. Postmillennialists quite frankly accept the figurative method as necessary to their interpretation” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 24). As a side note, not long after leaving the Jehovah’s Witnesses, as I was filling in and firming up my eschatological understandings, I read Lorraine Boettner’s classic defense of postmillennialism, *The Millennium*. As I read Boettner’s interpretations of Old Testament prophecies given to Israel, I was often surprised by his fanciful allegorical interpretations, not a few of which rivaled those of the Watchtower Society in their ingenuity.

Postmillennialism’s signature teaching is the idea that the world is getting better and better. “Postmillennialism is distinguished from amillennialism by its optimism, assurance of the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of

God in the world, and its relative fulfillment of the millennial idea on the earth” [quoting John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Issue in Modern Theology*, Bibliotheca Sacra, 106:165] (Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 386). “...the concept was pleasing to the liberal and skeptic. If they did not believe the prophets, at least they believed that man was now able to improve himself and his environment” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 23). “As postmillennialism had risen in an atmosphere of scientific and educational progress, so it declined in an atmosphere of war and world chaos” (*ibid.*, p. 35). “Some basic tenets of Postmillennialism... the world is growing better...” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 18)

Postmillennialism teaches that the church is the “new Israel,” and that ethnic Israel will be saved only by being incorporated into the church. “The essentially postmillennial idea that Israel will be incorporated in the church and her promises fulfilled to her in a spiritualized sense seems to be gaining popularity” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 102). Postmillennialists see future *salvation* for Israel, but not future *restoration*. “Postmillennialists deny that there is to be a final restoration of Israel into the land” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 98). “While denying a national restoration of Israel, Postmillennialists have generally believed in a national salvation of Israel” (*ibid.*, p.106). “Proponents of Postmillennialism believe in the national salvation of the Jews before the second coming of Christ” (*ibid.*). “Hodge’s outline of the future is simple. First, Israel’s blindness will continue until there is a mass turning of Gentiles to Christ. Second, after this mass turning of Gentiles, Israel’s blindness will be removed and she will be saved as a nation” (*ibid.*, p. 108). “Shedd repeats his view of the chronology of future events: first, there must be the conversion of the Gentile world as a whole; and, second, then will come the conversion of the Jews as a whole. He also emphasizes that there is no specific timing for these events. Obviously, if the first event must precede the second, and the second event must precede the second coming, then the Millennium is a long, long way off” (*ibid.*, p. 113). “The Covenant Postmillennialists’ acceptance of a national salvation of ethnic Israel allows for a greater development of Israelology than Covenant Amillennialism, but its denial of a literal restoration to the land results in a lesser development than Covenant Premillennialism or Dispensationalism” (*ibid.*, p. 119).

Regarding the Mosaic Law, postmillennialists believe that at least some of the Laws are binding on the church. “As a Covenant Theologian, Hodge confuses Israel and the Church and, therefore, also confuses which commandments apply to Israel and which apply to the Church” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 66).

Regarding the conversion of the world, postmillennialists believe that this will occur prior to Christ's return. "The Whitbyan theory of the conversion of the world previous to the Second Advent" (George N. H. Peters, *TTK*, 3:171)

Postmillennialists believe that the millennium precedes Christ's Second Coming. "Postmillennialists set forth a spiritual Kingdom in the hearts of men" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 18). "Postmillenarians hold that the Kingdom of God has been in existence from the beginning of the world. Christ came to reveal it more clearly and to extend it throughout the world" (*ibid.*, p. 26). "Postmillennialists, then, believe that the 'Millennium' began with the first coming and will terminate with the second coming. It is not limited to a literal one thousand years, but is the entire 'period of the gospel dispensation'" (*ibid.*, p. 15).

By definition *amillennialism* denies that there will ever be a literal, earthly Millennial Kingdom. "...amillennialism, which is a negation without an orderly theological system" (Dr. Charles L. Feinberg, *M*, p. 102). "*Amillennialism*. This, the most popular modern view of the millennium... Its most general character is that of denial of a *literal* reign of Christ upon the earth... It may be summed up in the idea that there will be no more millennium than there is now, and that the eternal state immediately follows the second coming of Christ" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 6). "Among amillennialists who are classified as conservative, there are, then, two principal viewpoints: one which finds fulfillment in the present age on earth in the church; another finding fulfillment in heaven in the saints" (*ibid.*). "The principal unifying factor which dominates amillennial interpretation is its negative note, its denial of an earthly reign of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 67). "William E. Cox, an Amillenarian, accepts the following definition of Amillennialism, though it was penned by a Dispensationalist: 'A good definition of amillennialism comes from the pen of one of its severest critics. "Its most general character is that of denial of a *literal* reign of Christ upon the earth. Satan is conceived as bound at the first coming of Christ. The present age between the first and second comings is the fulfillment of the millennium. Its adherents are divided on whether the millennium is being fulfilled now on earth (Augustine) or whether it is being fulfilled by the saints in heaven (Kliefoth). It may be summed up in the idea that there will be no more millennium than there is now, and that the eternal state immediately follows the second coming of Christ. As they freely recognize that their concept of the millennium is quite foreign to the premillennial view they have been given the title *amillennial* by most writers'" (John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, p. 6)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 123). "Amillennialism is 'a-' or 'no millen-

nium.’ By this they mean there will be no literal kingdom on this earth. As Cox points out, ‘amillenarians do not deny the existence of a millennium.’ The problem is that ‘a more suitable term has not been found to describe amillennialism so as to distinguish it from premillennialism and postmillennialism.’ What they believe is that the Millennium exists now in this present age” (*ibid.*). “Negatively, there will be no Millennium on earth as described by either Premillennialists or Postmillennialists. Positively, whatever Millennium there will be must be placed before the second coming” (*ibid.*, p. 125).

As to the recent history of amillennialism, “Amillennialism has had a great rise in popularity in the last several decades, largely because of the collapse of the postmillennial position, of which the majority of theologians were followers. Since amillennialism depends on the same spiritualizing principle of interpretation as postmillennialism and viewed the millennium as an interadvent era preceding the second advent, as did postmillennialism, it was a relatively simple matter for the postmillennialist to shift to the amillennial view” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 387).

Amillennialism has more adherents than any other eschatological view. “...amillennialism without question the majority view of the church” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 10). “Amillennialism... They would be in the comfortable fellowship of most of the Reformers, the Roman Church, and modern liberal theologians. They could at least unite on a negative—they did not believe in a literal millennium or kingdom on the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 36). “The major segment of Covenant Theology today is amillennial” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 5). Recent proponents of amillennialism include Berkhof and Allis. “To dismiss the Old Testament evidence as Allis does is to ignore a massive amount of Scripture” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 210).

Amillennialism depends on the combining of disparate terms (such as Israel and the church) and on a spiritualizing hermeneutic for its defense. “It is well to notice how often amillenarians equate one term with another and use them interchangeably. That is forced upon them by their uniformitarian approach and their constant oversimplification of things that differ” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 207). “Failure to let the Bible mean what it says seems to point out the fact that the Covenant Amillennialist fails to see God’s purposes in relationship to the very people that these prophecies were spoken to or of” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 219). “Covenant Amillennialists are... enslaved to allegorization” (*ibid.*, p. 216).

It is telling that there have not been produced any signature eschatological works in defense of amillennialism. “At this hour no monumental work exists which sets forth a system known as amillennialism” (Feinberg,

M, p. 101). “The literature on the subject of the amillennial approach to the Scriptures, compared with the numerous works on the premillennial position, is rather scanty” (*ibid.*, p. 193).

As does covenant postmillennialism (and covenant premillennialism), covenant amillennialism assumes the existence of an over-arching “covenant of grace.” “In this school of thought, the covenant of grace becomes the all-pervasive covenant. All other ‘covenants’ are merely facets or outworkings of this one covenant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 140). However, “Covenant Amillennialists in the works cited in this study never try to prove the existence of such a covenant. They merely assume its existence and go from there” (*ibid.*, p. 142). “Berkhof is typical of those who build a large superstructure on a covenant he never proves exists” (*ibid.*).

Amillennialism sees no future restoration of national Israel. “As amillenarians deny any future dispensation after the present age, they also deny any future to Israel as a nation” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 81). “Cox, *Amillennialism Today*, p.34: ‘Israel’s national promises all have been either fulfilled or invalidated because of unbelief.’ This is standard Covenant Amillennialism” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 177). “Covenant Amillennialism has an even less developed Israelology than Covenant Postmillennialism because it uses the allegorical method of interpretation, especially in the area of Israel and prophecy, to a greater extent than Covenant Postmillennialism does” (*ibid.*, p. 229). “Covenant Amillennialism allows for the least development of Israelology when compared with the other two schools of Covenant Theology” (*ibid.*, p. 231).

However, because amillennialism does not require the church to convert the world before Christ returns, as postmillennialism does, it is able to accommodate the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ. “Amillennialism, like Premillennialism, allows for a belief in the imminency of Christ’s return, which Postmillennialism does not” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 133).

Amillennialism often uses two passages in support of its idea that the Kingdom is only spiritual; not physical or political. The first of these is John 18:36: “Jesus answered, ‘**My kingdom is not of this world.** If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm’” However, as Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, “Amillennialists interpret the statement *not of this world* to mean that Christ’s kingdom will not be *in* this world. A denial of the kingdom being *of* this world is for them a denial of the kingdom being *in* this world. That this cannot be so is clear by a comparison with the previous chapter. In John 17:11 Jesus said that His disciples *are in the world*. Yet in John 17:14 and 16, the disciples *are not of*

the world. Speaking of Himself, Jesus said, *I am not of the world* (17:14, 16); but several times He did say that He was *in* the world (17:11, 12, 13). Obviously, from the context of the Gospel of John alone it is possible to be *in* the world without being *of* the world. Not to be *of* the world means the believer is no longer *of* this world's nature, though he may very well be *in* the world still. By the same token, Christ's Messianic Kingdom may be in the world, but will not be of this world's nature" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 192). The other passage is Luke 17:20-21: "Now having been questioned by **the Pharisees** as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or, "There it is!" For behold, **the kingdom of God is in your midst [within you, KJV]**'" However, Jesus was here saying that "the kingdom of God is in your midst," not because the Kingdom was in his listeners in some mystical or spiritual way, but rather because He, the King of the Kingdom, was at that moment in their midst. We know this because "When Jesus said the kingdom is within you, He was speaking to unbelieving Pharisees (v.20)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 193). The Kingdom would therefore not have been "in" them.

In contrast with postmillennialists, amillennialists do not expect the conversion of the world prior to Christ's return. "The allegorical interpretation by the Amillennialist also places the Millennium between the first and second comings; but he does not see the period ending with a golden age prior to the return of Christ. In fact, the exact opposite will be true" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 126). "Amillennarians would be like the postmillennarian in that both believe the millennium precedes the second coming of Christ. They would be like the premillennarian in that both believe good and evil will exist side by side until the end of the world" (*ibid.*, p. 129). However, following Augustine, they still do not expect a future, literal, earthly Millennial Kingdom. "The Augustinian view: He taught that the millennium is to be interpreted spiritually as fulfilled in the Christian Church" (*ibid.*, p. 133).

The third eschatological view among covenant theologians is *premillennialism*. Covenant premillennialists believe that Christ will return *prior* to a millennial Kingdom on earth. "George Eldon Ladd of Fuller Theological Seminary is one of the most prolific writers among Covenant Premillennialists today... He, like many Covenant Premillennialists, prefers to call his view 'Historic Premillennialism.' He defines this position as follows: 'Premillennialism is the doctrine stating that after the Second Coming of Christ, he will reign for a thousand years over the earth before the final consummation of God's redemptive purpose in the new heavens and the new earth

of the Age to Come. This is the natural reading of Revelation 20:1-6.” [quoting George Eldon Ladd, ‘Historic Premillennialism,’ in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, ed. by Robert G. Clouse, p. 17] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 234).

Indeed the most well-known proponent of covenant premillennialism in recent years has been George E. Ladd (1911-1982). “The most prolific spokesman for the view of Covenant Premillennialism is George Eldon Ladd” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 235).

Regarding covenant premillennialism’s hermeneutics and views on the timing of the Rapture of the church, Dr. Fruchtenbaum says, “Because Covenant Premillennialism is less consistent in its method of interpretation of prophecy (spiritualizing the Old Testament, yet literalizing many parts of the Book of Revelation), there are three separate schools within Covenant Premillennialism. A minority are pre-tribulation⁸, and they are represented by Faith Theological Seminary. Another minority are mid-tribulation⁹, and they are represented by Covenant Theological Seminary. The majority are post-tribulation¹⁰, and they are represented by Fuller Theological Seminary” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 244).

Covenant premillennialists believe that national Israel will be restored, *maybe*. “LaSor insists that: ‘There are countless prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Israel and the land of promise which have not been fulfilled in the christian church, and, in (his) opinion, can never be fulfilled in the church. They can be fulfilled only in Israel...’ Herein lies the crucial difference between Covenant Amillennialism and Covenant Premillennialism” [quoting William Sanford LaSor, *Israel: A Biblical View*, pp. 56-57] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 247). “[According to Covenant premillennialism] The re-establishment of Israel as a nation is evidence that God has not cast away His people; however, this is as far as Covenant Premillennialists are willing to go to give any theological significance to the Jewish State. It is possible that the rebirth of Israel is part of God’s purpose, but on this they are not sure” (*ibid.*, p. 313).

Covenant premillennialists believe, as do all covenant theologians, that the church is the “new Israel.” However, they at least recognize that there are difficulties with this view. “For him [Ladd], as for all Covenant Theologians, Old Testament prophecy does not speak of Israel but of the Church”

8 Pretribulationists believe the Rapture of the church will happen before the Tribulation begins.

9 Midtribulationists believe the Rapture of the church will happen mid-way through the Tribulation.

10 Posttribulationists believe the Rapture of the church will happen at the end of or after the Tribulation.

(Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 235). “Ladd admits that between the Old and New Testaments there are ‘two different stories: the story of the nation Israel and the story of the church,’ (Ladd, *Last Things*, pp. 7-9) and for Ladd this is a ‘dilemma.’ The dispensationalist does not view it as such but accepts the two entities of Israel and the Church to be just that: two separate entities for which God has a separate plan” (*ibid.*, p. 254).

Again, while all covenant premillennialists recognize that Christ will return *prior to the Millennial Kingdom*, there is some disagreement among them as to the timing of His return in relation to the Tribulation period, with the majority position being *posttribulational*. “There are a minority of Covenant Theologians who are pretribulational and a minority of others, like Buswell, who are midtribulational; but the majority are posttribulational. To some degree, it is a Covenant Theologian’s Israelology that determines whether he is postmillennial, amillennial, or premillennial. In a similar way, among Covenant Premillennialists, one’s Israelology also determines whether he is Pretribulationist, Midtribulationist (as Buswell), or Posttribulationist (which is Ladd’s position)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 295). “The Covenant Premillennialist who is also a Posttribulationist believes that the Church will go through the Tribulation. The evidence is based on the fact that the Scriptures clearly teach that Israel will go through the Tribulation; and since they identify Israel with the Church, they conclude that the Church will go through the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 314).

As we demonstrated above, covenant premillennialists believe that national Israel will be restored, *maybe*. However, because they combine Israel and the church, they do not foresee a future literal, earthly, Jewish Kingdom. “Ladd, as a Covenant Theologian, cannot accept a millennium for Israel based on Old Testament prophecy because he does not, like the dispensationalist, keep Israel and the Church distinct. He writes: ‘Ryrie correctly identified myself as a nondispensationalist because I do not keep Israel and the church distinct throughout God’s program.’” [quoting George Eldon Ladd, ‘Historic Premillennialism,’ in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, ed. by Robert G. Clouse, p. 20] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 234).

The Fourth View: Dispensational

The fourth view of the Kingdom is that of *dispensationalism*. The fore-runners of modern-day dispensationalism were *chiliasm* and *millenarianism*.

Chiliasm dates from the first century. As explained by George Peters, “Chiliasm or Millenarianism (the former word derived from the Greek, and the latter from the Latin, expressive of a thousand years) is most generally

used to denote the doctrine of the Pre-Mill. Advent of the Messiah, and His personal reign on earth, at least during the thousand years” (*TTK*, 1:459). And Dr. Walvoord, “Practically all students of the early church agree that premillennialism, or, as it is also called, chiliasm, was the view held by many in the apostolic age. It is the oldest of the various millennial views. Chiliasm, from the Greek word *chilias* meaning *one thousand*, is the teaching that Christ will reign on earth for one thousand years following His second advent” (*MK*, p. 5).

Regarding *millenarianism*, Peters notes “...the distinctive teaching of Millenarianism, viz.: that of the personal Advent followed by the Kingdom of the Theocratic King here on earth introducing the promised Mill. glory” (*TTK*, 1:487). “The fundamental position which distinguishes Millenarians from all others, is this: No Millennium without the personal coming and intervention of the same identical Jesus who ascended to heaven” (*ibid.*, p. 552).

The modern, fully-developed theology of chiliasm, or millenarianism, is known as *dispensationalism*. The term *dispensation* is taken from Ephesians 1:10 in the King James Version: “That in the **dispensation** of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him” The term *dispensation* is also found at 1 Cor. 9:17, Eph. 3:2 and Col. 1:25 in the KJV (and also in the NKJV). For a definition of dispensationalism, we turn to Dr. Fruchtenbaum: “To understand what Dispensationalism is, one must define the term ‘dispensation’ as used by Dispensationalists. Clarence E. Mason, Jr., Dean of the Philadelphia College of the Bible, defines it as follows: ‘The word *dispensation* means *literally a stewardship or administration or economy*. Therefore, in its *biblical usage*, a *dispensation* is a divinely established stewardship of a particular revelation of God’s mind and will which is instituted in the first instance with a new age, and which brings *added* responsibility to the *whole* race of men or that portion of the race to whom the revelation is particularly given by God. Associated with the revelation, on the one hand, are promises of reward or blessing for those responding in the obedience of faith while on the other hand there are warnings of judgment upon those who do not respond in the obedience of faith to that particular revelation. However, though the time period (*age*) ends, certain principles of the revelation (*dispensation* or stewardship) are often carried over into succeeding ages, because God’s truth does not cease to be truth, and these principles become part of the cumulative body of truth for which man is responsible in the progressive unfolding revelation of God’s redemptive purpose. *Some* of these principles are carried over *intact* (as,

e.g. conscience, human government, Abrahamic covenant) and *some* are passed on *adjusted* (law, church) to the age(s) which follow(s)” [quoting Clarence E. Mason, Jr., *Dispensationalism Made Simple*, p. 19] (*I*, p. 318). “A concise definition of a dispensation is this: A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God’s purpose” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, p. 29] (*ibid.*, p. 321). “Dispensationalism views the world as a household run by God. In this household-world God is dispensing or administering its affairs according to His own will and in various stages of revelation in the process of time” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, p. 31] (*ibid.*, p. 323). Dr. Geisler also defines “dispensation” and mentions that dispensationalists have traditionally recognized seven dispensations in Scripture: “*Dispensation* is a biblical term. Speaking of Christ’s coming kingdom, Paul affirmed ‘that in the *dispensation* of the fullness of the times He might gather together... all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth’ (Eph. 1:10 NKJV). A dispensation is a ‘divine order of affairs’ or a ‘period of administration.’ It is a specific time in the unfolding drama of redemption wherein God ordains a specific arrangement of events and commands for a specific purpose” (*ST*, 3:160). “Relying upon the traditional seven dispensations, God’s purpose to defeat evil seems to go something like this: In each age or period from Adam through Christ’s return, God orchestrates a different condition, with a different test, to see whether human beings will obey Him. Each time they fail—under almost every conceivable condition. The sum total of the dispensational examinations demonstrates that it is always wrong to disobey God and that complete obedience to Him is the only true path to eternal satisfaction” (*ibid.*, p. 161). George Peters speaks of the dispensations: “We leave God to tell us the nature of the dispensations, and find that this one is to be succeeded by one more glorious that includes this very restoration” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:52). Dr. Feinberg recognizes seven dispensations and gives a brief summary of their common structure and purpose: “In each of the seven dispensations in time God is working out His purpose to reveal experimentally and practically that man can never become right before God in his own strength or through his own deeds. Each age reveals God’s plan worked out in four particulars: first, a special test; second, a grievous failure; third, a righteous judgment; and fourth, a gracious intervention” (*M*, p. 151).

Three men commonly credited with having major roles in the development and systematization of modern dispensationalism are John Darby, C. I. Scofield and Lewis Sperry Chafer, as pointed out by Dr. Geisler: “Tra-

ditional (classical¹¹) dispensationalism is found in the writings of John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), C. I. Scofield (1843-1921), and Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871-1952)” (*ST*, 4:499). Over the past century, leading proponents of dispensationalism have included L. S. Chafer, “The major spokesman for Dispensationalism in the first half of this century [the 1900’s] was Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of the Dallas Theological Seminary” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 319), Charles Ryrie, “Perhaps the leading spokesman for Dispensationalism since Chafer is Charles Caldwell Ryrie, a student of Chafer’s and a graduate and former professor of Systematic Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary” (*ibid.*, p. 320), and John Walvoord. “Revised¹² dispensationalism is represented by John Walvoord (1910-2002) and Charles Ryrie (b. 1925)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:499). Other leading proponents of dispensational theology over the past century have included Clarence Larkin, Charles Feinberg, J. Dwight Pentecost, Alva McClain, Arnold Fruchtenbaum and Norman Geisler. Today, almost all evangelical Christians are dispensational to some extent. As Dr. Geisler explains, “Virtually all evangelical scholars are ‘dispensationalist,’ even those who disavow the label” (*ST*, 3:161). “All evangelicals are in some sense dispensationalists, as no one believes, for instance, that our present relationship with God is identical to Adam and Eve’s pre-Fall relationship with Him in the Garden” (*ibid.*, 4:414).

We’ll present more detailed histories of chiliasm, millenarianism and dispensationalism in our next chapter, *The Kingdom in Church History*.

The primary hermeneutical principle of dispensationalism is that Scripture should always be taken at face value, and understood literally or plainly, unless there is good reason within the text itself for doing otherwise. As Chafer explains, “The outstanding characteristic of the dispensationalist is the fact that he believes every statement of the Bible and gives to it the plain, natural meaning its words imply. This simple plan has changed the Bible from being a mass of more or less conflicting writings into a classified and easily assimilated revelation of both the earthly and heavenly purposes of God, which purposes reach on into eternity to come” (*D*, 97%). Geisler summarizes, “Charles Ryrie [in *Dispensationalism Today*, p. 85]... ‘Classical dispensationalism is a result of consistent application of the basic hermeneutical principle of literal, normal, or plain interpretation. No other

11 Classical dispensationalism teaches that there are two new covenants: one for Israel and one for the church.

12 Revised dispensationalism teaches that there is only one new covenant, given to Israel for future fulfillment by Israel, but whose spiritual blessings are presently enjoyed by the church. “Revised dispensationalism... it holds that there is only one new covenant, which, while having a later fulfillment in national Israel, has a present application to the church” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:499).

system of theology can claim this” (*ST*, 4:456). Fruchtenbaum agrees: “Dispensationalism is a natural conclusion derived from a literal hermeneutic consistently applied” (*I*, p. 916). Fruchtenbaum adds, “Regardless of how Christians may have understood the verse throughout history, Dispensationalists feel no obligation to continue in a tradition if that tradition is in error” (*ibid.*, p. 211). And, “The obligation of theology is to determine what the Scriptures do teach, regardless of where this may lead or what sacred cows may need to be sacrificed” (*ibid.*). We’ll explore these principles in more detail in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.

The three basic teachings of dispensationalism are that the plain, obvious meaning of Scripture is the intended and correct meaning, that Israel and the church are two separate entities with two separate but complementary programs, and that the ultimate purpose of all things, including the history of mankind, is not man’s salvation but rather God’s glory. Feinberg summarizes these three points: “To sum up, the three basics of dispensationalism are: (1) differentiation between Israel and the church; (2) the normal, literal hermeneutical principle; and (3) the underlying purpose of God in history as His glory, not primarily the salvation of man (Rom. 11:36 [‘For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.’])” (*M*, p. 79). Fruchtenbaum concurs and elaborates, “What, then is the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism? The answer is threefold: (1) a dispensationalist keeps Israel and the Church distinct... This is probably the most basic theological test of whether or not a man is a dispensationalist, and it is undoubtedly the most practical and conclusive. A man who fails to distinguish Israel and the Church will inevitably not hold to dispensational distinctions; and one who does, will. (2) This distinction between Israel and the Church is born out of a system of hermeneutics which is usually called literal interpretation. Therefore, the second aspect of the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism is the matter of plain hermeneutics. The word *literal* is perhaps not so good as either the word *normal* or *plain*, but in any case it is interpretation that does not spiritualize or allegorize as nondispensational interpretation does. The spiritualizing may be practiced to a lesser or greater degree, but its presence in a system of interpretation is indicative of a nondispensational approach. Consistently literal or plain interpretation is indicative of a dispensational approach to the interpretation of the Scriptures. And it is this very consistency—the strength of dispensational interpretation—that irks the nondispensationalist and becomes the object of his ridicule. (3) A third aspect of the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism... concerns the underlying purpose of God in the world. The covenant theologian in practice makes this purpose salvation, and the dispensation-

alist says the purpose is broader than that, namely, the glory of God. To the dispensationalist the soteriological or saving program of God is not the only program but one of the means God is using in the total program of glorifying Himself. Scripture is not man-centered as though salvation were the main theme, but it is God-centered because His glory is the center. The Bible itself clearly teaches that salvation, important and wonderful as it is, is not an end in itself but is rather a means to the end of glorifying God” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 43-46] (*I*, p. 324).

Consistently applying these three principles, dispensationalists recognize that in Scripture, human history is divided up into seven unique dispensations. Chafer points out that “The dispensationalist does not create these differences as he is sometimes accused of doing. The conflicting principles, in the text of Scripture, are observable to all who penetrate deep enough to recognize the essential features of divine administration. Instead of creating the problems, the dispensationalist is the one who has a solution for them” (*D*, 45%). Walvoord points out three obviously differing dispensations: “dispensationalism... particularly as revealed in three important dispensations of law, grace, and kingdom” (*MK*, p. 223). And Fruchtenbaum points out that all Christians recognize more than one dispensation: “All four systems recognize that there is more than one facet of God’s kingdom program. Minimally, all see at least two facets: a present form of the kingdom and a future form of the kingdom” (*I*, p. 605).

Dispensationalists usually identify *seven* dispensations in human history. They are the dispensations of 1. Innocence (from creation to the Fall; see our chapter *God and Creation*), 2. Conscience (from the Fall to the Flood; see the *Conscience* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*), 3. Government (from the Flood to Abraham; see the *Government* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*), 4. Promise (from Abraham to Moses; see the *Promise* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*), 5. Law (from Moses to Pentecost; see our chapter *The Theocratic Kingdom*), 6. Grace (from Pentecost to the Second Coming; see our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*), and 7. Kingdom (from the Second Coming to the Final Rebellion; see our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*). We’ll have a summary and review of the seven dispensations at the end of our chapter *A Final Rebellion*.

Dispensationalism is distinguished from all other theologies by its understanding of *Israel*. “Again, it is Israelology that is the main distinguishing characteristic between Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 7). “There are three marks of a Dispensationalist. The first is a consistent distinction between Israel and the Church. This is the

key. It is this, more than anything else, that distinguishes Dispensationalism from all three schools of Covenant Theology... It is this point that allows Dispensationalism to develop a full-blown Israelology while the others cannot" (*ibid.*, p. 325). Dispensationalists are adamant that Israel is not the church. Chafer points out, "The Word of God distinguishes between earth and heaven, even after they are created new. Similarly and as clearly it distinguishes between God's consistent and eternal earthly purpose, which is the substance of Judaism; and His consistent and eternal heavenly purpose which is the substance of Christianity, and it is as illogical and fanciful to contend that Judaism and Christianity ever merge as it would be to contend that heaven and earth cease to exist as separate spheres. Dispensationalism has its foundation in and is understood in the distinction between Judaism and Christianity" (*D*, 35%). And, dispensationalists understand that Israel is to be restored in the future. Chafer continues, "At the beginning of this thesis it was stated that the doctrinal differences herein discussed are due to the fact that the two schools of interpretation involved stand on widely divergent premises. The dispensationalist believes that throughout the ages God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to the earth with earthly people and earthly objectives involved, which is Judaism; while the other is related to heaven with heavenly people and heavenly objectives involved, which is Christianity. Why should this belief be deemed so incredible in the light of the facts that there is a present distinction between earth and heaven which is preserved even after both are made new; when the Scriptures so designate an earthly people who go on as such into eternity; and a heavenly people who also abide in their heavenly calling forever? Over against this, the partial dispensationalist, though dimly observing a few obvious distinctions, bases his interpretation on the supposition that God is doing but one thing, namely, the general separation of the good from the bad, and, in spite of all the confusion this limited theory creates, contends that the earthly people merge into the heavenly people; that the earthly program must be given a spiritual interpretation or disregarded altogether. The advocates of this interpretation oppose every earthly feature of the divine program. They disregard or ignore the earthly covenants and promises; they spiritualize or vaporize the vast body of Scripture bearing on the Davidic throne and kingdom; they present no specific reason why Christ was born as the Son of David; and they recognize no earthly glory or purpose in His second advent. According to their system, Christ comes again to end the world, but, unfortunately for these conceptions, the world does not end then or ever" (*ibid.*, 98%).

Regarding the church, again, dispensationalists keep Israel and the church *separate*. “Ryrie, a Dispensationalist, writes: ‘What, then, is the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism? ...A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the Church distinct’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 6). We’ll have more to say on this in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.

Regarding salvation, dispensationalists believe that in every generation men are saved by grace through faith, but they also recognize that the *content* of their faith differs from dispensation to dispensation. “Ryrie [in *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 123-124] explains salvation in Dispensationalism as follows: ‘The *basis* of salvation in every age is the death of Christ; the *requirement* for salvation in every age is faith; the *object* of faith in every age is God; the *content* of faith changes in the various dispensations. It is this last point, of course, which distinguishes dispensationalism from covenant theology’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 326).

Regarding the Mosaic Law, dispensationalists make a clean break from the Law for Christians. “Dispensationalists would claim that with the death of Christ the entire law was rendered inoperative” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 167). And, “To call a period of time the Dispensation of Law does not deny that there was grace, anymore than calling a period of time the Dispensation of Grace denies that there is law during that period. The difference is that Dispensationalists base this point on the fact that two separate and distinct covenants are involved, the Mosaic and the New Covenants, and not merely two administrations of the same covenant of grace. The Dispensationalist at least does not have to either ignore or explain the obvious differences between the two” (*ibid.*, p. 155). We’ll examine the purpose of the Mosaic Law in our chapter *The Theocratic Kingdom*, and will consider its relation to the church in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.

Dispensationalists do not believe that it is God’s purpose for the church to convert and Christianize the entire world, but rather only to “...take out of them [the Gentiles] a people for His name” (Acts 15:14). We’ll have more to say on this in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.

Regarding the millennium, “dispensationalists are consistently premillennial” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 78). “If Biblical prophecy in general teaches anything clearly, it is that Messiah will come in great glory at the end of the present age to establish His Kingdom over all the earth; and this is the firm core of Premillennialism” (McClain, *GK*, p. 476).

It is this writer’s conviction that dispensationalism is more correct, and therefore more God-honoring, than all three systems of covenant theology. Dispensationalism honors God by allowing Him to say in Scripture what He actually means, and by accepting His word just as He has inspired it, with-

out spiritualizing its plain meaning away. Dispensationalism honors the covenants that God has made with mankind by accepting them precisely as written, and by trusting that as history progresses God will continue to faithfully execute them to the letter. It honors Bible prophecy by interpreting all prophecies plainly, and by confidently expecting fulfillment of each prophecy by the same people group to whom they were originally given. And, dispensationalism glorifies God in His salvation of men and in every detail of His graciously-revealed Kingdom program as it unfolds throughout history.

The Fifth View: Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses' view of the Kingdom is an amalgamation of dispensational and covenant premillennial ideas, with a few unique inventions of their own added, all erected upon a foundation of thoroughly heretical doctrine. Jehovah's Witnesses foresee a literal, earthly Millennial Kingdom to come, but one that's devoid of national Israel. Their Israelology is a unique variant of replacement theology¹³, wherein Israel is replaced not by the historic Christian church, as is normally held by replacement theologians, but rather by their own Jehovah's Witness organization.

Dispensational features of Jehovah's Witness' eschatology include a (sometimes) literal hermeneutic, the understanding that the Mosaic Law belongs only to a past dispensation, earthly survivors of the future Great Tribulation, and a literal, earthly Millennial Kingdom. We say they employ a *sometimes* literal hermeneutic because while they do, to their credit, understand biblical *history* literally, and they interpret some facets of yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecy literally (for instance that there will be a future Millennial Kingdom), they deny the literal fulfillment of biblical prophecy regarding Israel's future. Because they replace Israel in yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecy with their own people, the remnant of Israel becomes the "anointed remnant" of Jehovah's Witnesses, persecution of Israel during the Tribulation becomes persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses, Israel in the Millennial Kingdom becomes Jehovah's Witnesses in the Millennial Kingdom, etc.

Covenant theology's influence on Jehovah's Witnesses' eschatology is apparent in the Witnesses' employment of a spiritualizing hermeneutic when interpreting yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecy originally given to Israel, the idea that God is forever finished with national Israel, and the teaching that

¹³ Replacement theology is the teaching that Israel has been permanently replaced by another group, a "new Israel." Most replacement theologians believe Israel has been replaced by the Christian church.

Israel has been replaced by the *ekklesia*, or church, or in Jehovah's Witness terminology, the "Christian congregation," in Jehovah's Kingdom program. As an example of their spiritualizing hermeneutic, they understand the 144,000 persons "sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel" of Rev. 7:4 to be, not literal Israelites, but "spiritual Israelites," which supposedly refer to 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses, the only Christians who will ever go to heaven, whose destiny is to rule the earth (invisibly) with Christ during the millennium. (The other 99.7% of Jehovah's Witnesses expect to survive the Great Tribulation and live forever on earth.) Then, the issue becomes further complicated in that in their interpretation of Bible prophecy "Israel" doesn't *always* refer to the *ekklesia*, (the spirit-anointed "Christian congregation"), but sometimes refers to Jehovah's Witnesses as a whole, and sometimes refers to the earthly class of Jehovah's Witnesses during the millennium. The Watchtower Society's allegorized interpretations of prophecy are often so fanciful that it's no wonder that Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Bible cannot be understood without their help!

A major reason why Jehovah's Witness' eschatology is so faulty is that it has been constructed upon a foundation of man-made, grievously heretical doctrine. Jehovah's Witnesses' "accurate knowledge," as they call it, denies nearly every major orthodox Christian doctrine, including the deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the trinity, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the conscious intermediate state of the dead, the possibility of conscious existence and torment in Hades, the necessity of being born again, the bodily Rapture of the church, the visible return of Christ, resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous (they deny the resurrection of many of the unrighteous), death followed by judgment, and eternal punishment.

Jehovah's Witness doctrine, including their view of the Kingdom, does not glorify God, but rather defames Him. It presents Jehovah as a covenant-breaking God, who has no intention of keeping either the Abrahamic, Davidic or New Covenants that He has made with Israel. Instead of glorifying God, and humbling itself before His word, Jehovah's Witnesses' Watchtower organization glorifies itself, claiming that the Bible is not sufficient: that the Bible cannot be understood without its tutelage, that no one can please God outside of it, and that no one can be saved who refuses to submit to it. The Watchtower organization is attempting to usurp the Kingdom from the two groups to whom it has been covenanted and promised, namely, Israel and the church. Personally, this writer believes there are many severe lessons that Jehovah's Witnesses as a group have yet to learn, lessons that they likely will not learn this side of the Tribulation. My prayer,

though, is that individual Jehovah's Witnesses who are willing (Rev. 22:17) would repent of their trusting in a man-made religious system (Ps. 118:8) and their own good works and "integrity" (Rom. 3:9-12), come to the biblical Jesus (John 1:1, 5:39-40), believe on Him (John 6:29, Acts 16:31), and find salvation (John 3:16, 6:47, 8:24, Eph. 2:8-9), entrance into the Kingdom (John 3:3, Col. 1:13), and rest for their souls (Matt. 11:28).

Why the Confusion?

So, here we have five major views of the Kingdom. Why the differences? Why the confusion? Why doesn't everyone just read the Bible and agree on what it means? We suggest three basic reasons: counterfeit systems, ignorance of Scripture and inconsistent hermeneutics.

Counterfeit Systems

As we've seen by example in this chapter, this world has no shortage of *counterfeit systems* of theology and erroneous views of the Kingdom. This fact often makes the search for truth difficult for those seeking the genuine Kingdom of God. Needless to say, acquiring the correct view of the Kingdom is especially difficult for those who commence their search while themselves trapped in these counterfeit systems, especially if questioning the system's status quo threatens severe punishment by those who run the system¹⁴. But it is this writer's testimony that recognizing counterfeit systems of theology and counterfeit Kingdoms in favor of the genuine is possible for those willing and able to go the distance. Arnold Fruchtenbaum says regarding counterfeit systems, "The nature of a counterfeit is to look like the genuine. Counterfeit money is not obviously phony money because it looks very much like the genuine. Many may have handled counterfeit money and not known it because few are trained to detect the difference between the counterfeit and the real thing. It takes those who have been so trained to be able to tell the difference. However, counterfeits do tend to have a flaw about them. Perhaps the wrong type of paper was used, the wrong type of ink or the wrong design in some obscure corner of the bill; but it is never an obvious phony. The flaw can only be determined if one has a good knowledge of the genuine. The same thing holds true in the spiritual realm. The first order of business is to know the genuine, and the genuine is contained in the written Word of God. It is the believer's obligation to study

¹⁴ Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, practice disfellowshipping and severe shunning of any who dare question the teachings of their "mother" organization. A Jehovah's Witness who embraces the biblical Jesus and/or the biblical Kingdom will, without question, be disfellowshipped and ostracized by all his Jehovah's Witness family and friends.

the Word and know God's program and God's way of doing things today. Then one will be able to recognize the counterfeit because of one's knowledge of the genuine. In the same way, Satan's counterfeit program looks very much like the real program of God contained in the pages of Scripture. Satan's program will not have obvious flaws in it. Therefore, believers must be trained in the Scriptures to be able to discern the difference between the real and the counterfeit" (*FM*, p. 558).

Ignorance of Scripture

The problem of counterfeit systems of theology and therefore counterfeit kingdoms is exacerbated by ignorance. First and foremost, the problem for most people is *ignorance of Scripture*, especially ignorance of the biblical covenants and prophecies: "The history of the Church conclusively shows, that just as Chiliasm in its purity prevailed, in that proportion were the covenants upheld and exalted as signal landmarks; and just as the Origenistic, Popish, and Mystical interpretation extended so were these covenants ignored as non-essential, or else spiritualized so as to make them scarcely recognizable" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:326). "Men, whose special business it is to proclaim the Word of God, are found in large numbers, who have never made the prophecies a careful and serious study" (*ibid.*, 3:200). This is generally due to lack of education. Clear teaching regarding the covenants, prophecy and the Kingdom is often entirely missing from theological training. "Systematic Theology, as set forth generally in textbook, is without recognition of the divine program of the ages" (Chafer, *ST*, 1:xiii). But thankfully, especially in this age of "increased knowledge" (Dan. 12:4), in-depth biblical research, electronic data storage and instant data transfer and communication, correct doctrine concerning the Kingdom is both readily available and easily accessible.

Inconsistent Hermeneutics

Probably the most fundamental reason for this confusion on the nature of the Kingdom is a simple failure to hold to a consistent hermeneutic. This, in turn, results in a failure to distinguish between Israel and the church. "Our reasons, as the reader must have observed, lie deeper than mere inferences from isolated passages, or mere deductions from a portion of Scripture stripped of its grammatical meaning; they are founded in the solemnly, oath-attested Covenant, in the plain, grammatical meaning of the Word, in the general analogy of the Scriptures, and in the accredited faith of the apostolic churches" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:346). For a thousand different reasons, people just don't want to believe what the Bible says, so they spiritualize it

and interpret it to *mean* something other than what it plainly *says*. We'll have much more to say on this in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.

Chapter 2: The Kingdom in Church History

In this chapter, we'll take a brief look at the history of theology as it relates to chiliasm, or premillennialism. We'll start with a very brief overview of the eschatological Kingdom of the Old Testament, which was the foundation upon which the eschatology of the first-century church was built. We'll explore the chiliasm of the early church, first tracing its history through the church's first three centuries. We'll hear what the Apostolic Fathers had to say regarding the Kingdom to come. Then, we'll examine the history of opposition to chiliasm, including the instruments and consequences of this opposition. Then, we'll trace chiliasm as it struggled for survival through the dark ages, was ignored for the most part during the Protestant Reformation, began to germinate soon after the Reformation, then came to full bloom again in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Carefully tracing the doctrine of the chiliastic or premillennial Kingdom throughout the twists and turns of church history brings to light many persuasive evidences for the validity of the doctrine. George Peters summarizes, "In conclusion, a brief résumé of our historical argument, to show its connection, is in place. The evidence in support of each step is ample and conclusive. Indeed, no other doctrine has a more clear and decisive proof in its behalf drawn from historical ground than this one. 1. We have shown that the Jews, before and at the First Advent, held to it, professing to derive it from covenant and prophecy. 2. Then we prove that John the Baptist and the disciples both entertained and preached the doctrine. 3. Next, that the doctrine was still held after the death of Jesus. 4. Extended evidence is given that the apostles, after the ascension and after the day of Pentecost, still adhered to it. 5. It is proven that our doctrine was generally, if not universally, received by the early churches, East and West, North and South. 6. This doctrine was perpetuated by the followers and successors of the first teachers. 7. That it was only changed and opposed under the Gnostic and Alexandrian influences. 8. That the Papacy materially aided in crushing the doctrine, because obnoxious to her teaching, claims, etc. 9. That, thus almost exterminated under Papal influence, there was a revival after the Reformation, since which time it has again been taught by able and devout sons of the church" (*TTK*, 1:555). Walvoord adds, "Such is the historical context of modern premillennialism. Rooted in the Old and New Testaments, a product of literal interpretation, nurtured by the apostles and the early church, eclipsed for centuries by the dark shadows of pagan philosophies and allegorizing methods of interpretation, emerging once more as a dominant strain in Biblical theology in these eschatological times, premil-

lennialism is more than a theory, more than a doctrine. It is a system of Biblical interpretation which alone honors the Word of God as infallibly inspired, literally interpreted, and sure of literal fulfillment. It has stirred the coals of evangelicalism, created interest in Biblical study, and constituted a preparation of God's people for the coming of the Lord for His saints. Premillennial truth has been an inestimable blessing to those who have received it. To them the Bible has become a living book to be interpreted in its ordinary sense. It is significant that the Bible study movements have usually been premillennial, and institutions which emphasize the study of the text of Scripture, as illustrated in the Bible institute movement, have often been an integral part of the premillennial movement" (*MK*, p. 126).

Premillennialism in Old Testament Times

The chiliastic idea of a future earthly Kingdom with Messiah sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem did not originate in recent centuries, or even within church history. It was first revealed, taught and believed in Old Testament times. As Clarence Larkin points out, "In short, 'Post-Millennialism,' as advocated in our day [1920], is barely 200 years old, while 'Pre-Millennialism' dates back to the days of Isaiah and Daniel" (*DT*, p. 5). (We'll have much to say on the Old Testament prophets' view of the Kingdom in our chapter, *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*.) Then, as we'll demonstrate in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*, it was this very same theocratic, Davidic Kingdom that John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy announced as "at hand" during the early part of Jesus' ministry.

Chiliasm of the Early Church

For the first three centuries of her history, the Christian church was almost exclusively chiliastic, or premillennial. This will become apparent as we take a historical look at the eschatological teachings of the church, beginning with her first decade of existence, through the remainder of the biblical period to the end of the first century, on through the second century where we'll take a look at the eschatological writings of the apostolic fathers, then on through the third century.

The First Decade

The first ten years of church history were exclusively Jewish. Dr. Fruchtenbaum points out, "During the first decade of Church history, the Church was Jewish, and Christianity was Hebrew only. What few Gentiles there were in the early Church were originally proselytes to Judaism before they became believers in Christ. Gentiles, as Gentiles, were not to be found

in the Church until Acts ten with Cornelius” (*I*, p. 637). The exclusive Jewishness of the earliest church is evident from the biblical record. First, forty days after His resurrection and just prior to the birth of the church at Pentecost, Jesus told His disciples that they would be His witnesses first “in Jerusalem,” then in “all Judea and Samaria,” and only after that, “to the remotest part of the earth.” “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria**, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:6–8). This is not surprising because, as Paul points out later, “For I say that **Christ has become a servant to the circumcision** on behalf of the truth of God **to confirm the promises given to the fathers**” (Rom. 15:8). Second, those in Jerusalem at the birth of the church were “Jews and proselytes.” “Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both **Jews and proselytes**” (Acts 2:10). Third, on Pentecost, the men to whom Peter preached His first sermon were Jews: “**It is you [Men of Israel] who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers**, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ **For you first**, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways” (Acts 3:25–26). Fourth, God’s stated purpose at that time was to “grant repentance to Israel.” “He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, **to grant repentance to Israel**, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). As Sir Robert Anderson confirms, “How fallacious is the popular belief that the Jerusalem Church was Christian. In fact, it was thoroughly and altogether Jewish” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 84). Regarding the (inherited) eschatology of these earliest Jewish believers, Peters summarizes, “It is corroborated by the church history of the earliest period, informing us, without any dissent, that, so far as known, all the Jewish believers held precisely the views that we are defending” (*TTK*, 1:445). Interestingly, Peters sees this “Jewishness” of the earliest church as strong evidence for the early origin of the New Testament: “The student is directed to a proof that this subject affords in behalf of the early origin of the Gospels. In looking at the opening of the New Test., the subject-matter of the Kingdom, how it was introduced and retained its ‘Jewish forms’... The Alexandrian school could not possibly, with their ideas of the Kingdom, have originated the Gospels, and this is true of all the later peri-

ods assigned. Thus e.g. the later origin of the Gospels is sufficiently disproven by the exclusive preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom to the Jewish nation” (*ibid.*, p. 197).

The Biblical Period

During Paul’s missionary journeys, as he traveled from city to city, he always spoke “to the Jew first.” For example, “Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, **where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures**” (Acts 17:1–2). He later wrote: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, **to the Jew first** and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16) and “but glory and honor and peace to every man who does good, **to the Jew first** and also to the Greek” (Rom. 2:10). Now, is there any evidence in Scripture (or anywhere else, for that matter) that in Paul’s discussions with the Jews, that any controversy ever arose regarding the nature of the Kingdom, something that certainly would have occurred had Paul taught that the Jewish Kingdom hope had been nullified, or that their covenanted and prophesied Jewish Kingdom had now been transformed into a “spiritual” Kingdom? We know of the church’s controversies during the biblical period, because they’re recorded in the Bible. We know, for instance, about the controversies concerning Gentiles first being allowed into the church at the time of Cornelius (Acts 10) and concerning whether or not Gentile believers were required to be circumcised and observe the Mosaic Law (Acts 15). It is quite telling, therefore, that there is actually not a single hint in the entire New Testament of any controversies concerning the eschatological Jewish Kingdom. The only logical explanation for this is that the Jewish eschatological ideas that were current at that time (see our chapter *Expectation of the Kingdom*) were transferred without controversy from the Jewish expectations of the day, via Jesus and the (Jewish) apostles, into the newborn Christian church (a transfer that will be confirmed in our chapter *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*). As Walvoord asserts, “The New Testament bears no record whatever of a millennial dispute” (*MK*, p. 38). And, “One of the most eloquent testimonies to premillennial truth is found in the absolute silence of the New Testament, and for that matter the early centuries of the church, on any controversy over premillennial teaching. It is admitted that it was universally held by the Jews. It is often admitted that the early church was predominantly premillennial. Yet there is no record of any kind dealing with controversy. It is incredible that if the Jews and the early

church were in such a serious error in their interpretation of the Old Testament and in their expectation of a righteous kingdom on earth following the second advent, that there should be no corrective, and that all the evidence should confirm rather than deny such an interpretation. The general context of the New Testament is entirely in favor of the premillennial viewpoint. The amillennial interpretation has not one verse of positive testimony in the New Testament and can be sustained only by spiritualizing the prophecies of the Old Testament as well as the teaching of the New” (*ibid.*, p. 118). Peters agrees, “The doctrine of the Kingdom, as preached by the apostles, was received by the early churches. This is not only reasonable, but shown to be a fact, from the apostles having no occasion during their entire ministry to censure any orthodox believers or churches for misapprehending, or holding to a false view of, the Kingdom. The decided and convincing impression is made by the apostolic writings that these first Christian churches were not ignorant of—but correctly understood—the important and cardinal subject of the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:449). “Dr. Auberlen (*Dir. Rev.*) has boldly and truthfully declared that Jesus, the Prophets, and the apostles were express Chiliasts” (*ibid.*, p. 267).

The First Century

The majority of theologians and Bible students today would likely agree that of all the eras of the Christian church, the earliest church had the purest doctrine. This is our position, as well. “In virtue of their nearness to the Christ and apostles... The tradition, therefore, which really possesses most weight in deciding questions pertaining to the Kingdom, is that of the first and second centuries” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:131). “Surely if Church authority has any special weight in establishing the true faith, it certainly ought to be found in the Church which had the advantage of the teaching of the apostles, elders, and their immediate successors” (*ibid.*, 3:249). Now, it is indisputable that the first-century church was chiliastic. “...the intensely Chiliastic position of the Primitive Church. How can the reader account for this, unless our view of the Kingdom is the correct one” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:443). The Mosaic Law had been abrogated, but not the expectation of the Millennial Kingdom. “The extreme Jewish idea of the continued obligatory observance of the Mosaic ceremonial law was combated by the early Chiliasts, as e.g. evinced in their opposition to the Ebionists, but this was done without discarding doctrines founded on covenant and prophecy, and remaining untouched by the abrogation of the Judaic ritual” (*ibid.*, p. 487). The first-century church looked forward to the millennial age. “...the inaccuracy of ‘the end of the world’ believed in (for the early Christians had no idea of the

modern view of such an end, but looked for the end of the age or dispensation, to be followed by another more glorious under Christ)” (*ibid.*, p. 460). It is a curious fact that the Romans confounded the Jews and the Christians. “...how strangely the Jews and Christians of Rome were confounded with each other.’ This is explained by the simple fact that so long as the Early Church clung to the literal belief of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, there was much that was common to both (however they disagreed respecting the Mosaic ritual being still binding), but as the Gentile believers drifted from this belief, an antagonism sprung up and continued” (*ibid.*, p. 407). The first-century church was confirmed in its literal eschatological expectations by the destruction of Jerusalem. “The destruction of Jerusalem greatly confirmed the church in its Millenarian faith, for such a literal fulfillment of Christ’s predictions led to an increased belief in His near coming and Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 471). The apostles must have taught chiliasm. “It is simply impossible to account for the [chiliastic] belief without lowering the credibility and authority of the first teachers of the church, unless we accept of it as legitimate and the natural outgrowth of a correct teaching” (*ibid.*, p. 451). The first-century church only knew a literal hermeneutic. “The primitive believers, the nearest to the apostles, had no idea that this language was to be taken figuratively” (*ibid.*, 2:218). “Rushdoony admits there was Premillennialism taught in the early Church but dismisses it as ‘a result of Judaizing influences,’ though it may have just as easily and perhaps more likely resulted from seeking to read the Scriptures normally and to interpret them literally” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 105). Extrabiblical sources indicate that the primitive church was chiliastic. “George N. H. Peters lists fifteen advocates of premillennialism for the first century indicated as such outside the Scriptures themselves” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 39). “...the first century is barren of any real support to the amillennial viewpoint” (*ibid.*, p. 43). “The notable testimony of Papias, who was associated with the Apostle John, is of special weight. Papias who lived in the first century and the beginning of the second lists as adherents of premillennialism Aristio, John the Presbyter and the Apostles Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John, and Matthew. He certainly was in a position to know their views, and his testimony is an important link in sustaining the fact that the disciples continued in the Jewish expectation of a kingdom on earth... In contrast to these clear evidences, not one adherent, not one line of evidence is produced sustaining the idea that any first-century Christians held Augustinian amillennialism—that the interadvent period was the millennium. Further, there is no evidence whatever that premillennialism was even disputed. It was the overwhelming-majority view of the early church”

(*ibid.*, p. 119). Premillennialists are honored to hold this same view today. “The Gospel of the Kingdom that we hold is precisely the one held by the Primitive Church” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:229). “Any theory, no matter by whom advocated, that introduces so fatal an antagonism between primitive and present faith, is to be discarded as irreconcilable with the truth” (*ibid.*, p. 231).

The Second Century

All the evidence from the second century confirms a continuing premillennialism in the church. “Peters lists Pothinus, Justin Martyr, Melito, Hegesippus, Tatian, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and Apollinaris as second-century premillennialists” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 43). “The second century, like the first, is devoid of any testimony whatever for amillennialism except at its close” (*ibid.*). “For 150 years after the crucifixion of Christ, the amillenarians have only one disputed exponent—Barnabas—who is commonly conceded by many amillennialists and most neutral scholars to be premillennial. Such is the void that faces those seeking evidence for amillennialism” (*ibid.*, p. 44). “The second century like the first bears a sustained testimony to the premillennial character of the early church. Even the amillenarians claim no adherents whatever by name to their position in the second century except in the allegorizing school of interpretation which arose at the very close of the second century” (*ibid.*, p. 120).

The Apostolic Fathers

As a group, the eschatology of the Apostolic Fathers was decidedly chiliastic. “It is admitted by all scholars, that the Apostolic Fathers and many of their successors endorsed it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:25). “...the works of the early fathers, even going back to the Didache, which evidence establishes the fact that Chiliasm, with those dispensational divisions which belong to it, was the orthodox faith of the early church and was far from the heresy that some writers represent it to have been” (Chafer, *D*, 8%). “Along with justification by faith and almost every other vital doctrine, chiliastic expectation was lost in the Dark Ages. That it was held by the early church Fathers is evident beyond doubt” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:270). In fact, Chiliasm was the eschatology of *all* the Apostolic Fathers. “...lists of Millenarian Fathers given in Brooks’s *El. Proph. Interp.*, Seiss’s *Last Times*, etc. They include—with the reasons given—Barnabas, Clement, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Melito, Irenaeus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, ranging from A.D. 70 to about A.D. 192” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:451). “Chillingworth (*Works*, p. 347)... says: ‘It appears manifest out of this book of Irenaeus that the doctrine of the Chiliasts was in his judgment apostolic

tradition, as also it was esteemed (for aught appears to the contrary) by all the doctors, and saints, and martyrs of, or about, his time; for all that speak of it, or whose judgments in the point are any way recorded, are for it; and Justin Martyr professeth, that all good and orthodox Christians of his time believed it, and those that did not, he reckons among heretics” (*ibid.*, p. 483). “Some authors, with all their candid concessions, attempt (as e.g. Bush, *On Mill.*, p. 12, etc.) to make the impression that the very early Fathers were divided into two parties, one holding to a literal, the other to a spiritual, interpretation of the Kingdom. But, unfortunately for themselves, in the enumeration they are not able to present on the side of the latter a single one of the earliest Fathers. To illustrate: we give the Fathers cited by Bush himself as follows: on the literal side Barnabas, Justin, Irenaeus, Cyprian, Tertullian, Lactantius, with Bh. Bull, and Lardner as apologists for them;—on the spiritual side, Origen, Epiphanius, Genadius, Augustine, Jerome, and Dionysius. The ordinary reader not conversant with dates is apt to be deceived, regarding these as contemporary, when the truth is, that the Spiritualists only arose in the third and following centuries” (*ibid.*, p. 490). “Now let the student reflect: here are two centuries (unless we make the exception stated at the close of the 2nd), in which positively no direct opposition whatever arises against our doctrine, but it is held by the very men, leading and most eminent, through whom we trace the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 496). “Amillennarians and postmillennarians have not only no positive evidence in favor of their position but no evidence that there was even a reasonable minority in the church contending against premillennialism. Apparently none of the orthodox fathers thought of challenging this important doctrine in the first two centuries” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 121).

Individually, regarding *Justin Martyr*, “Chiliasm... Justin Martyr positively asserts that all the orthodox adopted and upheld it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:480). “Justin Martyr (*Dial. with Trypho*, ch. 80) gives the general view held when he says: ‘But I and others, who are right-minded Christians on all points, are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead (or as Newton, of the flesh), and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare,’ quoting Isa. 65:17-25; Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8 and the Apoc. in confirmation” (*ibid.*, 2:235). “Justin Martyr (c. 100-c. 165)... ‘there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged, [as] the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare’” [quoting Justin Martyr, *Dialogue of Justin*, 80] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:568) and *Irenaeus*, “Irenaeus (*Adv. Hoer.*, 8 v. c. 35)... declares that when ‘Antichrist’ has reigned his allotted period ‘then the Lord

shall come from heaven, in the clouds with the glory of His Father, casting him and that obey him into a lake of fire, but bringing to the just the times of the Kingdom, that is, the Rest or Sabbath, the seventh day sanctified, and fulfilling to Abraham the promise of the inheritance” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:214). “Irenaeus (c. 125-c. 202)... ‘the promise of God, which He gave to Abraham, remains steadfast... The predicted blessing, therefore, belongs unquestionably to the times of the kingdom, when the righteous shall bear rule upon their rising from the dead; when also the creation, having been renovated and set free, shall fructify with an abundance of all kinds of food, from the dew of heaven, and from the fertility of the earth... and that all animals feeding [only] on the productions of the earth, should [in those days] become peaceful and harmonious among each other, and be in perfect subjection to man” [quoting Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5.32] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:568) and *Lactantius*, “Lactantius (*Div. Insti.*, B. 7, Chs. 24 and 26, and *Epit.* of same, Ch. 71), who has two renewals of the earth, one at the commencement of the one thousand years, and another at its close” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:503). “Lactantius so briefly and tersely expresses the general opinion of the early age that we quote it: ‘Those that shall be raised from the dead shall rule over them that are alive, in the manner of judges.’ So Irenaeus, Justin, Barnabas, and a host of others” (*ibid.*, p. 574). “Lactantius (c. 240-c. 320)... ‘they who shall be alive in their bodies shall not die, but during those thousand years shall produce an infinite multitude, and their offspring shall be holy, and beloved by God; but they who shall be raised from the dead shall preside over the living as judges... the prince of the devils... shall be bound with chains, and shall be imprisoned during the thousand years... Throughout this time beasts shall not be nourished by blood, nor birds by prey; but all things shall be peaceful and tranquil... When the thousand years shall be completed, the world shall be completed, the world shall be renewed by God, and the heavens shall be folded together, and the earth shall be changed, and God shall transform men into the similitude of angels, and they shall be white as snow; and they shall always be employed in the sight of the Almighty, and shall make offerings to their Lord, and serve Him for ever. At the same time shall take place that second and public resurrection of all, in which the unrighteous shall be raised to everlasting punishments” [quoting Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 7.26] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:569). and *Barnabas*, “Barnabas... his argument respecting the covenant being fulfilled in the seventh chiliad” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:525) and *Tertullian*, “the early Fathers all believed that those who had part in the first resurrection would enjoy the New Jerusalem in Messiah’s Kingdom, as e.g. Tertullian

has it, 'in a city of divine workmanship, viz., Jerusalem brought down from heaven,' which he tells us 'John saw,' etc." (*ibid.*, 3:39)

The First Three Centuries

Summarizing, then, the first three centuries of church history, "Cut off the believers of this very kingdom as they existed and testified in the first, second, and third centuries, and *where would be the Church*" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:25)? "How it comes, if the prevalent modern notion of the [Davidic—*ed.*] covenant is correct, that the early Christians (who had the advantages of apostolic, inspired teaching, or were close to it) held to the grammatical sense of the covenant and fully believed with the Jews that the Messiah would come (again, as to Jesus) to restore the Davidic throne and Kingdom? Upon what supposition can it be satisfactorily explained, excepting the one that they were correct" (*ibid.*, p. 318)? "Chiliasm was the ruling belief in the first three centuries of the church... belief in Christ's Coming to establish His Kingdom on earth in glory formed the essential object and anchor of their hope. They recognized the World-Power as one in the service of Satan, and they looked for no deliverance from it save by His Coming... Before the end of the first century, Chiliasm was the common belief in the Church that had been gathered from the heathen... all the writers on the subject down to Jerome were express Chiliasts, excepting Origen and his school" (*ibid.*, p. 449). "The early Church in its entire range was Chiliastic, and eagerly looked, longed, and prayed for the expected Kingdom still future. Enemies and friends, historians and theologians, frankly acknowledge this distinguishing characteristic of that period" (*ibid.*). "...unbelievers, opposers, critics, historians, commentators, and believers, uniting in the same testimony. We here assert that no writer has yet been able to present the prevailing modern views as entertained by any writer of the Primitive church... during the three first centuries it prevailed universally, its only opponents being the Gnostics" (*ibid.*, p. 450). "Dr. Smith (*N. Test. His.*, p. 723, *On Rev.*) remarks: 'The interval between the Apostolic age and that of Constantine has been called the Chiliastic period of Apocalyptic interpretation'" (*ibid.*, p. 484). "The Gentile Christian churches down to the third century (until Caius, Origen, and Dionysius), received it [Millennialism] just as freely and entertained it just as heartily as the Jewish Christian" (*ibid.*, p. 486). "It appears from the testimony of history that Chiliasts—under the pressure of persecution from which they earnestly sought deliverance, and under the misapprehension that Antichrist was already exhibited in the Roman power, hoped for the speedy Advent of Christ and the coming of the Kingdom. Now, this view of the Roman Empire, and this hope of a speedy

anticipated deliverance caused them to feel unwilling to engage in wars of conquest, or even to enter into the civil service of the Empire. This feeling and resultant conduct, based, rightly or wrongly, upon their view of the Empire and its expected destruction under the coming Messiah and Kingdom, was naturally most offensive to the Roman Emperors and their adherents, and also to that portion of the clergy who were for conciliating the existing temporal power. This became the more so, when the church began to realize the protection of the State preparatory to a union of the two, and the reaction without due discrimination, made Chiliasm itself offensive” (*ibid.*, p. 502). McClain sums up, “The Millennial Kingdom Idea... Here the Kingdom of God appears as a government of God to be established on earth at the Second Coming of Christ, who will reign with His risen and glorified saints over the nations in a literal kingdom for ‘a thousand years.’ That such was the almost universal belief of the early Church is now generally conceded by scholars who are able to read history with a minimum of theological prejudice. Archibald Robertson [*Brampton Lectures*, p. 119] says this view ‘prevailed in the Church generally for two centuries and a half, and in the Western Church for four centuries... until the time of Augustine.’ As a matter of fact, Augustine himself shared this belief at first, but later changed his mind, with momentous consequences to the Christian Church” (*GK*, p. 8).

Opposition to Chiliasm

Opposition to chiliasm, while almost entirely absent the first two centuries of the church’s history, began to arise toward the middle of the third century. The principle source of this opposition was the “spiritualizing” Alexandrian school of theology centered in Alexandria, Egypt. A “spiritualized” kingdom was soon thereafter promoted by Augustine (who, curiously, was consistently literal in his interpretation of Scripture pertaining to all other doctrinal subjects) and was used to great self-advantage by the medieval church.

Apostasy Was Predicted

Future apostasy in the church had been predicted by the apostles. “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that **after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them**” (Acts 20:28-30). “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy comes**

first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction” (2 Thes. 2:3) “But the Spirit explicitly says that **in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons**, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth” (1 Tim. 4:1-3). “But realize this, that **in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power**; and avoid such men as these. For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so **these men also oppose the truth**, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards the faith... But **evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived**” (2 Tim. 3:1-13). “For **the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths**” (2 Tim. 4:3-4). “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And **many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words**; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep” (2 Pet. 2:1-3). George Peters concurs, “the apostle tells us that ‘the mystery of iniquity’ began to work in his day, and that it would ultimately burst forth with increased and growing power. The leaven then working would extend and manifest itself in perverted doctrine—doctrine antagonistic to that once proclaimed and believed. That form of doctrine of a later growth which supersedes and takes precedence of the earlier form, should undoubtedly be more subject to the suspicion of being a perversion than the primitive view” (*TTK*, 1:463). “...the predicted defection from the truth (as e.g. 2 Thess. 2, 2 Tim. 4:3, 4, etc.), and the warnings given to us to

return to the truth as previously imparted” (*ibid.*, p. 492) “It is a sad commentary on human frailty that no important doctrine existed which did not suffer, more or less, from this spirit of Rationalism and Apostatizing... The same still holds true to-day, for the most determined opponents that we have are those who endeavor to bend religious doctrine to some favorite system of philosophy” (*ibid.*, p. 502). “The historical fact that Millenarianism was thus crushed is far from being dishonorable to us. Indeed, we rather glory in the occurrence, as indirect proof of the truthfulness of our position, seeing that as a defection from the truth was predicted by the apostles to take place, that very form of doctrine departed from—provided once generally held, and contained (even in the literal sense) in the Word—it must be regarded as approaching the nearest to sound doctrine” (*ibid.*, p. 520).

Instruments of Opposition

The instruments of opposition to chiliasm, or premillennialism, are myriad. These instruments are, however, unanimous in their rejection of the Kingdom as presented in the plain text of Scripture. “It requires an immense amount of assurance and pride (without questioning the honesty and motives of the parties) to think that we know far more than Peter, John, Paul, etc., when all our knowledge of divine things is based on that given by them” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:204). “There have always been those, as Justin Martyr testifies with regard to his day, who oppose the plain teaching of the Bible on the millennial question. Modern denials move in one of three directions. They belittle the Scriptures bearing on the theme; they belittle the subject itself; or they belittle the scholarship of those who defend chiliasm” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:271).

These instruments of opposition to chiliasm/premillennialism include: *Men’s hearts*, “The root of infidelity is in the heart and not in the head” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:654) “The Sec. Advent of Jesus, which, if received, at once establishes that Jesus is also divine, is rejected by these men because, if accepted, it imposes the condition of accountability to Him, and enforces the authority of scriptural demands upon the heart and life, and this a worldly, fleshly heart cannot entertain” (*ibid.*, 3:529). “...turning in upon its own actings, instead of out upon God’s; making man’s interior self the great region of research, not God’s manifested self; dealing with spiritual truths as with abstractions or ideas, not as connected with Divine personality and life... Dwelling in the region of their own thoughts, they have lost the power to grasp, and the taste to appreciate the thoughts of God” [quoting H. Bonar, *Prophetical Landmarks*, pp. 191-193] (Barry Horner, *FI*, p. 170).

Men's minds, "Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not **God made foolish the wisdom of the world?** For since **in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God**, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1:20–21). "For **the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God**. For it is written, 'He is THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS'" (1 Cor. 3:19) "Alas! What absurdities are engrafted on God's Word by the assumed superior reason of man" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:687). "Sometimes even long refutations appear which contain no appeal whatever to the Scriptures, the more remarkable seeing that our constant reference is to the Word" (*ibid.*, 3:255). *Eloquence*, "...a human opinion, without the least Scriptural basis, eloquently and even forcibly expressed, and thus the more likely to mislead" (*ibid.*, p. 346). *Scholarship*, "...the profound (?) learning of modern theologians" (*ibid.*, 2:515) *Inadequate views of the Kingdom*, "Dr. Shedd... the 'spiritualizing' method... He only resorted to it under the spell of his very narrow and inadequate notions about the Kingdom" (McClain, *GK*, p. 143). *Philosophy*, "philosophies, hostile to the Bible... the only bond that really unites them is the same spirit of hostility to the Bible evinced by each of them" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:280). "Christian theologians of every age have been influenced to one degree or another by the prevailing philosophy of their day" (Geisler, *ST*, 2:87). *Platonism*, "...the Neo-Platonic school of Alexandria (Comp Kingsley's *Schools of Alexandria*, Neander's *Ch. History*, etc.), which diverges from the biblical statements in exalting the divine and ignoring the human: for as Augustine long ago stated, there is a wide difference between the two representations, in that the Platonist utterances simply affirm the divine nature of the Logos (Philo's 'Divinity articulate'), while the Scriptures insist, as forming 'the Christ' an incarnation, humiliation, suffering, death, resurrection, exaltation, return of the Son of Man, etc., relating to this earth. The objection, then, to such works is this: they swallow up the distinctive Christ and covenanted work in the divine" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:448). "To embrace the Augustinian dichotomy between materiality and spirituality and impose it on the OT canon is to fly in the face of the Hebrew hope of spiritual materiality" (Horner, *FI*, p. 212).

Science, "...no conflict need exist between science and the Bible" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:498). "Such scientific unbelief is only preparatory to the predicted Naturalism and Humanitarianism which will culminate in the last Antichrist" (*ibid.*, p. 509). "Spencer (*First Principles*) holds to the possibility of an ultimate reconciliation between science and religion, but only when religion is willing to abandon fundamental biblical ideas" (*ibid.*, p. 510).

Naturalism/Materialism, “We are confident of one thing, viz., that the Supernatural Saviour of the Bible is the only one adapted to save us from the conclusions of Shopenhauer, Von Hartman, and others—that there is and ever will be an uninterrupted continuance of evil under natural law, and that misery grows with consciousness, intelligence, and knowledge” (*ibid.*, p. 475). “We would rather take the biblical account of man and the destiny offered to him than the gross materialism of Voght which makes thought merely ‘a secretion of the brain,’ and of Moleschott, which destines him for ‘manure for the ground’” (*ibid.*, p. 497). “...the prediction of Herbert Spencer (*The Study of Sociology*)... that ‘the humanity of the remote future will have but one religion, i.e. a natural one’” (*ibid.*, p. 509). *Evolution*, “The doctrine of evolution, with its support of natural selection, may find and has its supporters among Christian Theistic writers, but the conclusion engrafted upon it is of a nature so hostile to the direct teaching of the creative and Supernatural in the Bible that all believers in Holy Writ must recoil from it” (*ibid.*, p. 507). “[theistic evolution]... a diluted... recognition of the Creator” (*ibid.*, p. 508) *Humanism*, “The threats already uttered against Christianity by representatives of large classes of men; the hatred with which the Bible and its doctrines are received; the fanatical following of reason when its deductions are palpably founded upon unproven premises; the laudation and glorification of humanely concocted schemes for the amelioration and exaltation of the race; the widening denial that the world needs Divine interposition and a Divine Redeemer; the elevation of Materialism, Naturalism, Spiritualism, Humanitarianism into the commanding posture of promising Redemption; the sure and steady breaking down of the religious barriers by the interposition and substitution of natural law and the consequent increase of laxity of morals—these are just the indications that we ought to see, if Antichrist’s approach draws nigh” (*ibid.*, 2:722). “God knows human nature better than we do” (*ibid.*, p. 731) “...human nature... is capable of any act when under the influence of passion and selfishness” (*ibid.*, p. 732). “Honest and sincere men, earnestly desirous for the good of others, are doomed to a bitter disappointment, owing to the depravity of man” (*ibid.*, p. 771). “Antichrist... ‘The Kingdom of Man is at hand’—such will be the good tidings of great joy which he will proclaim, which his servants and forerunners are proclaiming already” (*ibid.*, 3:156). “...a religion or worship of humanity and nature, being... Rationalistic, Humanitarian, or Naturalistic... All, however, are forced to admit that emancipation thus promised is immeasurably below the high standard promised in the Holy Scriptures, since it cannot as God’s Word, hold out a perfect deliverance to the individual (as e.g. victory over death), to nature (as e.g. from

its convulsions), or to the race (as e.g. its restoration to an Edenic condition)" (*ibid.*, p. 207). "There is nothing so sad under the sun as intelligence fettered by unbelief, as reason bound by pride, as the intellectual nature held irresponsive to the moral, as man attempting to stand alone without the counsel and aid of his Maker" (*ibid.*, p. 289). *Liberalism*, "'Liberal' theologians, caring very little about preserving the integrity of the Bible (having themselves no faith in its special inspiration), cordially strike hands with unbelief and fritter away the Supernatural" (*ibid.*, p. 508) "Liberals were outdoing each other in the race to see who could disbelieve the most" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 8). "*Tolerance*," "The Bishop of Oxford at a missionary meeting in England made some remarks (reprinted in the *Guardian*, Aug. 23d, 1865) so apt (as 'the footfalls of the coming of the great Antichrist') that we reproduce them. After stating that it was his belief that the last attempt against the truth would come not so much in open denial as in a kind of admission while sapping the distinctive features of truth, and describes it as 'universal toleration,' 'a deep respect for religiousness everywhere, always providing that it is not that troublesome thing which, by being believed, affects men's conduct, is any limitation upon their thoughts, or even troubles what is called the course of society. That they will all agree to put out. I have no doubt myself that unbelief contains within itself the seed of the most intensely hating persecution the world has ever yet seen. Instead of being tolerant, I believe it is the very perfection of intolerance. I believe that the very moment it has achieved its own victory, toleration will be the thing above all others it will hate with an intensity short only of the hatred the evil spirit himself has for the simple faith of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It must be so, I think, because unbelief in whatever form it comes is the exaltation of the human intellect and the human will over the voice of revelation and revealed knowledge. It is thwarted to the utmost the very moment that it is met and confronted by the mighty rock of revealed truth. The stream flows on with the most delicious smoothness when there is nothing to thwart it. "Let us love one another. Let us be tolerant of each other's views. If you choose to worship the devil, worship him if you only do it quietly. If you choose to worship an anti-devil, do so if you do so quietly. Let us go on altogether in our worldly ways and worldly thoughts, holding nothing that may be disagreeable or troublesome. Anything disagreeable in religion is such a shocking thing." Well, then comes in the most disagreeable thing possible, the revelation of an absolute truth which says: "We will have nothing to do with this fellowship of evil. You are leading men into absolute destruction; you are promising them liberty and making them slaves; you are handing them over to the devil under the pretense of liberty and

emancipation from their shackles;” and forthwith these men turn upon this stern declaration of the eternal verity of God with all the hatred of the human heart which the greatest rebel himself can stir up within it.’ Thus extremes meet: on the one hand, intense, selfish bigotry and exclusiveness, and on the other, a tolerance which ignores the plainest precepts and most fundamental truths. It is sad, that many professed preachers, pretending to be evangelical in sentiment (as e.g. Rev. Murray) affiliate with unbelief, and tell us that the Christianity of the past and present must give place to ‘a new religion of feeding the poor, visiting the sick, reforming the vicious, ministering to the insane,’ etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:145) *Bigotry*, “Any position, however absurd to reason and fact, is allowable, provided it can be made to degrade the Bible teaching” (*ibid.*, p. 499). *Nihilism*, “In a speech made at Geneva in 1868, Michael Bukunin, who has been called the father of Nihilism, asserted: ‘The first duty of mankind, is to obliterate from the heart any belief in a God’” (*ibid.*, p. 154) *Cultural development*, “Every nation as it has advanced in age and strength also advanced in luxury and vice, immorality and infidelity” (*ibid.*, p. 207) “We may well conclude with the words of Van Oosterzee (Lange’s *Com. Luke*, p. 269): ‘There is a heaven-wide distinction between the eschatological expectations which the friends of modern liberalism cherish, and those which are called forth by this teaching of our Lord. It is commonly supposed that in the proportion in which the principles of humanitarianism, culture, free thought, and the like, are more widely diffused, the world will become ever increasingly wiser, better, and happier. The Saviour here opens to us a very different view of the times immediately before the end. Of culture and the false semblance of external secular enlightenment, there will then undoubtedly be as little lack as in the days of Noah and Lot. But instead now of the great mass becoming continually better and more earnest, we have to expect, on the other hand, according to the Saviour’s words, a time of carelessness, hardening, and carnal security, just like that which preceded the destruction of the ancient world and the ruin of Sodom. These are the perilous times in the last days, of which Paul also speaks, 2 Tim. 3:1; and all which in the Apoc. is prophesied of the great apostasy of the last period of the world, is only a wider expansion of the theme here (Luke 17:20-38) given’” (*ibid.*, p. 209). *Self-sufficiency*, “The false faith, now already so prevalent, in man as his own Saviour” (*ibid.*, 2:722)

Religion, “...a sentimental religion, from which everything evangelical has been carefully eliminated” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:726). “...misguided zeal and unenlightened piety can, without pity, bestow as an alleged act of self-protection the most fearful deaths” (*ibid.*, p. 731) *Pantheism*, “...the enticing

Pantheistic and mystical regions in which man is changed into God” (*ibid.*, 3:540) “...Pantheistic, Impersonal God, with none of the necessary requisites to meet the heart, longings, practical wants, etc., of a suffering humanity” (*ibid.*, p. 560). *Spiritualism*, “The truth is, that whatever esteem may be professed for the Bible in behalf of Spiritualism, the animus is seen in the constant efforts made to lower its inspiration, credibility, and authority” (*ibid.*, p. 147). “...dangerous—because it draws nearer by its admissions of the Supernatural, etc., to the nature and wants of man than many other systems of unbelief do, and hence binds him the more effectually in its embraces” (*ibid.*, p. 290). “The simplicity of such a procedure—a simplicity gratefully accepted by the ancient pious Jews and by the Primitive Church—is not suited to the mystical, spiritualistic tendencies of the age” (*ibid.*). “...materiality is not ultimately to be transcended, but rather transformed... Through the triumph of sovereign grace, both human and nonhuman aspects of creation, animate and inanimate, will be greatly blessed beyond the state of things prior to the transgression of Adam and Eve” (Horner, *FI*, p. 214). *Gnosticism*, “...Chiliasts were exceedingly hostile to the Gnostics” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:561). *Mysticism*, “...mysticism, in all its forms, with its higher inner light and lowering of written revelation before spiritual contemplation, has ever disastrously—in Romanism and Protestantism—manifested its scorn at Chiliasm” (*ibid.*, 1:517) *Monasticism*, “The institution of monkery exerted a powerful influence in causing the rapid decline of our doctrine” (*ibid.*). “...the earlier favorers of monasticism, like Jerome, while rejecting our doctrine, were still unwilling to brand it as a heresy; this spirit of toleration, with increasing bigotry and ignorance, finally ceased” (*ibid.*).

Popes, “...the heresy of Chiliasm, which Pope Damasus had condemned” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:48) “Popery... The most precious promises relating to the future were prostituted to cover up its lust after aggrandizement” (*ibid.*, p. 573). “Genebrand and Baronius are pointed out as designating the tenth century as containing popes ‘more like apostates than apostles’” (*ibid.*, p. 676). *Church councils*, “The authority of Councils in the interest of hierarchical tendencies materially aided in obscuring the doctrine of the Kingdom. Indirectly, by exalting and confining the kingship of Christ to His Divine nature, and correspondingly lowering the human, forgetting that the covenanted kingship is given to ‘the Son of Man’ who is of the Davidic lineage. This resulted mainly from the Arian and other controversies respecting the natures of Christ, when one extreme led to its opposite” (*ibid.*, 1:518). “After the Council of Nice, none gave utterance to anything in sympathy with Chiliasm” (*ibid.*). “We confess, that we are not great admirers of a Council called and presided over by such a man as Constantine... Our doc-

trine is not based on Councils” (*ibid.*) *State churches*, “Origen was the first one who made the Church the mystic Kingdom of God (see p. 112, *Voice of the Church*, by Taylor). Others followed in his interpretation; and if we narrowly examine history it will be found that two things materially aided in entrenching and extending this notion of Origen’s. The first was the Hierarchical encroachments which such an opinion sustained and flattered. The second was the fact that religions everywhere, among the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Asiatics, etc., were firmly united with the State, thus paving the way for a similar union and the exhibition of the Christian religion in a sphere not inferior to Pagan” (*ibid.*, p. 611). “It is a sad truth, that if we once admit that the visible church, in any one of its forms, is the Kingdom of Christ on earth, we close the doors to the exclusion of freedom of investigation and of private judgment, elevating said church into the position of a dispenser and arbiter of God’s Word in the form (confession) it then may possess. This is abundantly made manifest by the pleas of Popery and of national establishments in the past. And we do not blame these for pressing very logical claims; for, if the premise be once conceded, i.e. that the visible church is such a Kingdom, then the rest legitimately follows. Consistency then demands an outward unity, and, in the efforts to secure such unity, force must be employed, and as a result, violence is done both to religion and man. The edicts of the first Christian Emperors become a model of church authority; the fulminations of certain Councils are cherished as the lawful exhibitions of authorized dominion; the canons and work of fallible man are elevated to tests of allegiance, resulting in crimination, excommunication, and anathema” (*ibid.*, p. 653). “It is not surprising that the meaning of the Kingdom should be almost eradicated, when for ages the Bible was scarcely read, and was only interpreted by persons wedded and subservient to the Hierarchy itself” (*ibid.*, p. 666). “...the Romish Church... It is only a caricature of the promised Messianic Kingdom, a self-appropriation of the work of Jesus” (*ibid.*, p. 681). “...the Church (and its sham imitation of a Theocracy when Church and State were united under Constantine)” (*ibid.*, p. 693) “... ‘the house of His servant David’ is made equivalent to ‘His holy Catholic Church’” (*ibid.*, 2:206). “Reference has been made several times to the guarded manner in which the primitive Christians, including even Jesus and the apostles, spoke of the downfall of Gentile dominion. This was done in order to avoid the hostility and persecution of the Roman Emperors. Yet the view was more or less distinctly proclaimed by the believers, and was one reason why the millenarian doctrine fell into disrepute, especially after a union of State and Church, with those in power” (*ibid.*, p. 776). “If any one desires to see what evils are engendered by the Church ar-

rogating power over the civil authorities or of the civil exercising power over the Church, history is full of it, from the days of Constantine down to the present, as witnessed in the history of Rome, France, England, Germany, Holland (Motley's *Life of Barneveld*), etc." (*ibid.*, p. 778) "Alas! What scenes of crime, bloodshed, and horror have been enacted under a fanatical plea that the extension of God's truth and rule demanded them" (*ibid.*, 3:178). "...the union of state and Church instituted by Constantine (and which all good men must deplore, in view of the results)" (*ibid.*, p. 267) "When the Roman Church set aside the truth of the imminent coming of the Lord, she allowed herself an earthly position and privileges not called for in the Word" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 291). "God has not established an earthly political government for the church" (Dr. Renald Showers, *M*, p. 230). "After they broke away from the Roman Catholic Church, they too became state churches. In Germany and Scandinavia, the Lutheran Church became the state church; in England, it was the Anglican Church or Church of England; in Scotland, the Presbyterian Church; in one part of Switzerland, the Calvinists or Reformed Church; in another part of Switzerland, the Zwinglian Church. The Reformation failed to correct the problem of church and state unity. Therefore, it eventually became a dead church... Because of the existence of state churches, children who were born in a given locality were simply baptized and by this means became members of the church. Personal faith had little or nothing to do with becoming a member of the church. In a matter of time, the greater part of the church was composed of unregenerate members. The churches all had good, solid creeds (except that they were still bound to Replacement Theology)... Even to this day there are state churches in Europe which have good doctrinal creeds, and they are composed of people who are spiritually dead" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 62). "Theologically stated, theonomy confuses present spiritual kingdom (cf. Matt. 13) with future political kingdom (cf. Rev. 20)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:225). *Established churches*, "Contrast the prevailing views—said to be derived under this fostering light of the creeds, etc.—respecting these things, with the faith exhibited by pious Jews and the early Christian Church, and the wide contrast between ancient and modern faith is seen at once. The multiplicity of meanings given to the Kingdom of God alone indicates how much reliance can be placed in a 'universal Church faith' which places itself first and the Bible second; which contends that the Word of God cannot be properly understood without first receiving the word of man... an exaggerated view of the Church, constituting it the covenanted Kingdom of David's Son" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:282) *State education*, "A thousand significant tokens bespeak the fatal mistake that Protestantism (Roman Catholicism was more

wise and prudent, as a matter of mere policy) made when it gave up the education of its children to the State without the Bible... The idea of separating education of the young from religion is more than heathenish (e.g. the Greeks, Romans, etc., never dreamed of such irreligion); it is already antichristian in spirit and tendency... The truth is, that intelligence without Christianity, learning without love to God, education without religious basis, adds strength and enlarged capacity to do evil” (*ibid.*, p. 158).

Replacement theology (see the section, *The Church is Not Israel* in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*), *Reformed theology* “...champions of Reformed theology... denounced premillennialism” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 11). “Reformed amillennialism... Under the amillennial viewpoint, the portions of Scripture dealing with the rapture and the judgment of the church, the resurrection of the righteous dead, the resurrection of the wicked dead, the judgment of the Gentiles, the judgment of Israel, and the judgment of Satan and angels are all combined in a closely knit sequence of events attending the second advent itself” (*ibid.*, p. 82). “Reformed eschatology for the most part intends to honor the Scriptures as the Word of God and accepts the central doctrines of the bodily resurrection of all men, a final judgment before God, and an eternal state of bliss or punishment. Reformed eschatology has been predominantly amillennial. Most if not all of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation were amillennial in their eschatology, following the teachings of Augustine” (*ibid.*, p. 108). “...there needs to be further ‘Reformation’ among many who so fervently proclaim their indebtedness to Reformed eschatology” (Horner, *FI*, p. 77). *Amillennialism* (see the *Covenant: Amillennial* section of our previous chapter *Five Major Views of the Kingdom*), *Postmillennialism*, “The trouble with many writers is simply this: the manner in which this Kingdom is introduced and the Kingdom itself is presented, does not fit in with their development theory, being too much indebted to supernatural power and indicating a too close relationship to a restored Theocracy, hence it is coolly set aside or spiritualized” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:370). (See also the *Covenant: Postmillennial* section of our previous chapter *Five Major Views of the Kingdom*.) *Preterism*, “a Preterite class... such as Grotius... they have but a small following” (*ibid.*, p. 371).

Deceivers, “Christianity suffers severely from professed friends and adherents, who, Judas-like, betray with an alleged kiss of peace. Open infidelity is more honest, more honorable, and less dangerous. The fair and plain statements of the latter, evidence at least candor” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:281). *Heretics*, “Every unbeliever and every heretic throughout the entire church age has been antichiliastic” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:284). *Cults*, “The misap-

plication of the natural law among the various human cultures is no greater than the misinterpretation of supernatural revelation among the various cults. Careful examination of both areas indicates that in spite of the clarity of both revelations, depraved human beings have found a way to deflect, divert, or demean God's commands. Biblical teaching has no edge on natural revelation in the matter of immunity from distortion" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:234). *Orthodox ministers*, "Alas! They are afraid to endure the reproaches, innuendoes, sarcasms, if not worse, of their fellow-ministers or laymen. For it is notorious that just so soon as a man receives the Primitive Church view on these subjects, he becomes the object of contemptuous pity or scorn, and the most uncharitable construction is put upon his belief and piety. The writer has had sad experience in this direction, but it is the experience, more or less, of every true believer" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:734). "Assuming that something is false or invalid because it came from an allegedly bad source is the genetic fallacy. The model for the molecular structure of benzene originated from a vision that the Chemist August Kekule (1829-1896) had of a snake biting its own tail. The origin of the alternating current motor was derived from a vision Nicola Tesla (1856-1943) had while reading Johan Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), a pantheistic poet. No one rejects the validity of these on the basis of their weird sources" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:631). *Antiquity (particularly regarding pretribulationism)*, "Many anti-pretribulationists see the relative lateness of pretribulationism as an argument against it. They claim it began with John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)" (*ibid.*) "The fallacy of chronological snobbery wrongly argues that truth can be determined by time—that is, since the doctrine is late in origin, it's assumed to be untrue. However, time has no necessary connection with truth; something can be new and true just as it can be old and false" (*ibid.*). "What is more, some doctrines in the earliest church were false. Docetism (the denial of Christ's humanity) existed even in New Testament times (1 John 4:1-6). An incipient form of gnosticism that denied Christ's deity was present in the Colossian church (Col. 2). Baptismal regeneration was taught by some early Fathers. *That these were early did not make them true, and neither does the relative lateness of a doctrine make it false*" (*ibid.*, p. 632). "Further, it fits with the overall progress of doctrinal development that eschatology was not a primary focus until modern times. As James Orr (1844-1913) noted in his classic *Progress of Dogma*, certain doctrines occupied different eras, with the doctrine of God coming first in the early centuries and the doctrine of last things coming last in modern times (20-30)" (*ibid.*). "In addition, pretribulationism is not as late as once supposed, for it is now known to have existed in the fourth century. With the discovery of

Ephraem of Syria's teaching (c. 306-373), it has been established that pretribulationism was taught in the early church" (*ibid.*). "As already shown, premillennialism, of which pretribulationism is a derivative, was taught in the early church from shortly after the time of the apostles. The imminence of Christ's return has been emphasized from the start, and pretribulationism is based on a realistic concept of imminence" (*ibid.*). "Lastly, for an evangelical, the primary question is not whether the doctrine was taught by the early church, but whether it was taught by the earliest church—the church of the apostles. As we have thoroughly established, there is ample New Testament evidence to support pretribulationism" (*ibid.*). "It is as if history dominates, that is, Augustinianism reigns and holds exegesis in captivity" (Horner, *FI*, p. 201). *And ultimately, the Antichrist*, "...the visible church [the Tribulation saints—*ed.*] is to be overcome by the Antichrist... give the option of worship or death" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:654). (See our detailed discussion of the Antichrist in the *Characters of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

The History of Opposition

Opposition to the primitive chiliastic eschatology began in earnest in the third century, with the "spiritualizing" Alexandrian school (i.e. Clement of Alexandria and Origen). The "spiritualized" kingdom was subsequently accepted and promoted by Eusebius, Jerome, Augustine and the Roman Catholic Church. The "spiritualized" kingdom view held sway through the dark ages, and even through the Protestant Reformation. In summary, "It was only when the Scriptures and the promises were spiritualized, when, under the influence of release from persecution and incoming churchly prosperity, the church itself was exalted through civil patronage, that the Primitive doctrine was gradually but surely set aside, and the church itself was made (as by Origen) 'the mystic Kingdom of heaven,' or (as by Eusebius) 'the very image of the Kingdom of Christ,' or (as by Augustine) 'the City of God'" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:499). "Dr. Schaff (*His. Ch. Church*, vol. 1, pp. 299-301) presents the same testimony as Neander, Mosheim, Kurtz, etc., respecting the extent of Millenarianism in the Prim. Church, saying, for example: 'The most striking point in the Eschatology of the ancient Church is the widely current and very prominent Chiliasm, or the doctrine of the visible reign of Christ in glory on earth with the risen saints for a thousand years,' etc. After referring to the Fathers who taught it, he then remarks: 'In the age of Constantine, however, a radical change took place in this belief. After Christianity, contrary to all expectation, triumphed in the Roman Empire, and was embraced by the Caesars themselves, the Millennial reign,

instead of being anxiously waited and prayed for, began to be dated either from the first appearance of Christ, or from the conversion of Constantine, and to be regarded as realized in the glory of the dominant imperial State Church.' Certainly it was not in the selfish nature of 'Patriarchs,' 'Metropolitans or Archbishops,' 'Bishops,' and others, who received princely endowments, to desire the Coming and Reign of the Christ—they rather wished their stations, honors, and emoluments to remain in perpetuity" (*ibid.*, p. 506). "God... He has never supernaturally coerced any generation of mankind into virtue, nor rendered schism and heresy impossible in any age of the Church" (*ibid.*, p. 634). "No doctrine of the Bible, however important, but has been perverted and abused by men, and has been allied with error and even extravagance. The doctrine of the Kingdom has not escaped the withering touch of depravity; and as we read, again and again the testimony comes how enthusiasm, mysticism, fanaticism have sought to engraft upon it the most outrageous and blasphemous assumptions" (*ibid.*, p. 645). Walvoord agrees, "It is not surprising that opposition to premillennialism should arise. All forms of true doctrine have opposition and even the majority view in the history of doctrine is not necessarily the right one. The point of great significance is the form in which the opposition arose. It was not the product of orthodox studies in the Scripture, nor of the application of tried and true hermeneutics. It was rather the subversion of the plain meaning of Scripture not only as applied to the millennial question but all other areas of doctrine. The church today with one voice condemns all of the early opponents of premillennialism as heretics. Opposition to premillennialism had its rise in the attackers of true Scriptural doctrine, and it was not until the time of Augustine (354-430) that a reputable adherent of amillennialism can be cited. The opposition to premillennialism in the third century is no asset to amillennialism. While amillennarians may hail the conclusions of the enemies of premillennialism, they accept neither the general method nor the theology of those who participated in the attack. Usually, like Allis, amillennarians abandon the early centuries as a lost cause and begin with Augustine" (*MK*, p. 122). "Belief in the imminent coming of Christ began to be questioned by some church leaders at the end of the second century. When persecution against the Christians stopped and the union of church and state occurred in the 300s A.D., 'the hope of the church underwent a radical transformation' [quoting J. Barton Payne, *The Imminent Appearing of Christ*, p. 19]. As a result belief in the imminent coming of Christ 'had ceased to be of any great influence by the fourth century' [quoting G. Roger Huddleston, 'Monasticism,' *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. X, p. 460]. It continued to have little influence in the major part

of organized Christendom throughout medieval times and the Renaissance until the Reformation” (Showers, *M*, p. 144). “...amillennialism... those especially impacted by this teaching were Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ambrose and Augustine” (Horner, *FI*, p. 215).

Formal opposition to chiliasm had as its primary source the Alexandrian school of theology during the early part of the third century. “The entire character of Biblical testimony was changed by Gnostic and Alexandrian influences, and, along with all vital truth, the church lost her conception of the purifying hope of Christ’s return, and, eventually, under Constantine, exchanged the divine program of a returning Lord for a world-conquering church” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:277). “At the very close of the second century and the beginning of the third we come upon the first bona fide amillenarians, Gaius (or Caius) who wrote early in the third century; Clement of Alexandria, a teacher at the school there from 193 to 220; his pupil, Origen (185-254); and Dionysius (190-265)” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 44). “It is clear that the rising tide of amillennialism comes almost entirely from the Alexandrian school—in particular, from Clement, Origen, and Dionysius, all of this locality” (*ibid.*). “With the close of the second century and continuing through the third a new foe to premillennialism arose in the Alexandrian School of interpretation. Its roots were in Platonic philosophy and in keeping with it the literal and plain meaning of Scripture was sacrificed for allegorical interpretations, often of a most fanciful kind. Premillennialism was attacked then, not as a teaching unwarranted by the Word of God, but rather because it was a literal interpretation of it” (*ibid.*, p. 46). “Nepos early recognized the heretical tendencies of the Alexandrian school of theology, which was the first effective opponent of premillennialism, and he attacked them with vigor... while the church managed to extricate itself from much of the other bad doctrine of the Alexandrian school, premillennialism became in time one of the fatalities” (*ibid.*, p. 123).

Regarding *Clement of Alexandria* (150-215 A.D.) Peters says, “Clement... he was the one who introduced this allegorizing system at Alexandria... ‘If we are asked how Clement understood his bible, we must answer, *pace tanti viri*, very badly indeed’... His fame rests not in exegesis; his admirers (Kingsley, etc.) praise him for his philosophy and earnestness... His (Origen’s) principles of Scriptural interpretation are Philo’s, reduced to a still completer system; and the most remarkable feature in it is his bold avowal of his belief that the simple literal meaning is often not only untrue but impossible” (*TTK*, 1:507). Walvoord is even more bold, “Clement was a heretic whom no intelligent scholar today would follow” (*MK*, p. 122).

Regarding *Origen* (185-254 A.D.), “Origen in the third century was the first who wrote in opposition to the doctrine” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:462). “Origen [wrote]... ‘those of the simpler sort,’... ‘refusing the labor of intelligence, followed the superficial mode of literal interpretation’” (*ibid.*, p. 455). “The *Ency. Brit.* says of Origen (*De Princip.*, 211, s. 2) that he described those who refused his views as such, who ‘refusing the labor of intelligence, followed the superficial mode of literal interpretation’” (*ibid.*, p. 508). “We commend the rebuke given by a writer (in the *North Brit. Review*, May, 1858, p. 273) to D’Aubigne (in *Christianity in the First Three Cents.*) as follows: ‘We are sorry to see Dr. Merle D’Aubigne eulogizing Origen as “the greatest luminary of ecclesiastical antiquity.” Concede to Origen learning, fervor, and a self-sacrificing life; but do not canonize as a luminary one who did more to darken Scripture and to obscure some of its fundamental truths than any Father of the first five centuries’” (*ibid.*). “...Origen, who became a Universalist” (*ibid.*, p. 552) “This change, he [Neander] informs us in various places, was brought out in ‘the consciousness of the church’—whatever this may mean—but we have traced it directly to the Originistic and Alexandrian influence, and is in direct conflict with the Word” (*ibid.*, p. 659). “The pity is that Origen ever conceived the allegorizing method of interpretation, and that his misleading and violent liberty with the text has since found such fertile soil in which to propagate” (Chafer, *KHP*, 7%). “...exegetical schools... the *Allegorical*, of which Origen is the foremost exponent” [quoting F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 177] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 21) “Origen’s spiritualizing method of interpretation brought about the termination of the literal method of interpretation on which premillennialism rested” (*ibid.*, p. 378). “...‘spiritualizing’... The great Church Father Origen is generally regarded as the originator of this method” (McClain, *GK*, p. 142). “The first notable denial of this premillennial viewpoint was made by Origen (185-253). His allegorical method of interpretation resulted in the destruction of not only the millennial doctrine but most other important aspects of Christian belief including the doctrine of resurrection” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 19). “Origen... his hermeneutical method is repudiated at least in part by all modern scholars” (*ibid.*, p. 45). “The first inroad of liberalism in the church historically in Origen, and in modern times as well, has been by subverting the meaning by spiritualizing the words” (*ibid.*, p. 71). “...the allegorical school of Origen” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:295)

Regarding *Eusebius* (263-339 A.D.), “...such men as Jerome, Eusebius, and others—who like Eusebius could flatter the Emperors with the idea that the Millennial glory was already inaugurated under their sway, and that Rome itself was converted into the New Jerusalem” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:484)

“...even the New Jerusalem state (as by Eusebius)—to the then present period. The Alexandrian substitution of the Kingdom, surrounded by talent, wealth, power, influence, and catering to the wishes, hopes, and ambition of humanity, prospered and extended itself. As time progressed, it was fostered and cherished by mystical and scholastic tendencies, and finally strengthened and confirmed by various philosophical systems” (*ibid.*, p. 503). “Eusebius was exceedingly bitter against the Chiliasts” (*ibid.*, p. 506). “...Eusebius, an Arian” (*ibid.*, p. 552)

Regarding *Jerome* (347-420 A.D.), “[Millennialism]...those who were among the first, and most bitter, opposers. Thus e.g. Jerome” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:484) “Dr. Fisher, Art. ‘Mill.’ M’Clintock & Strong’s *Cyclop.*, although a Post-Mill., most candidly says: ‘It (the Mill. doctrine) was still common, however, in the time of Jerome, who himself was one of its opponents’” (*ibid.*, p. 515).

Regarding *Augustine* (354-430 A.D.), “The opposition to our doctrine, when once inaugurated, was greatly aided by the talent and ability of a few great names. Conspicuously among these is that of Augustine. Probably no work has appeared that had such a powerful influence in overwhelming the more ancient doctrine, as Augustine’s leading one, *The City of God*. This was specially designed to teach the existence of the Kingdom of God in the church beside or contemporaneous with the earthly or human Kingdom. The proof for this is remarkably weak; the supposed fact being largely taken for granted, and a superstructure erected upon a hypothetical foundation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:508). “Augustine (*City of God*, B. 20. s. 9) says: ‘The church could not now be called His Kingdom, or the Kingdom of heaven, unless His saints were even now reigning with Him;’ and endeavors to make out such an existing Kingdom by showing that the saints now reign, summing up: ‘in fine, they reign with Him who are so in His Kingdom that they themselves are His Kingdom’” (*ibid.*, p. 601). “Augustine makes the 1000 years to begin with the earthly life of Jesus, when Satan was alleged to be bound, and he was cast out into the abyss, i.e., from Christendom into the hearts of the wicked, non-Christian nations” (*ibid.*, 2:626). “Augustine... the man to whom the moderns are so largely indebted for spiritualizing views” (*ibid.*, 1:313) “In the days of Augustine the method had degenerated into an artistic method of displaying ingenuity and supporting ecclesiasticism” [quoting F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, pp. 236-237] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 23). “The second reason for the importance of Augustinian amillennialism is that his viewpoint became the prevailing doctrine of the Roman Church, and it was adopted with variations by most of the Protestant Reformers along with many other teachings of Augustine. The writings of Augustine,

in fact, occasioned the shelving of premillennialism by most of the organized church” [quoting John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Issue in Modern Theology*, Bibliotheca Sacra, 106:420-21] (*ibid.*, p. 381). “As a matter of fact, Augustine himself shared this belief [chiliasm] at first, but later changed his mind, with momentous consequences to the Christian Church” (McClain, *GK*, p. 9). “Among the orthodox fathers Augustine countered the Alexandrian heresy by suggesting a two-fold principle of interpretation of Scripture, namely, a literal interpretation of Scripture as a whole, but a spiritual or nonliteral interpretation of prophetic Scripture. With this presupposition he was able to deny a future millennium, and he became the principal source of amillennialism as it is taught today. The viewpoint of Augustine that most prophecy cannot be interpreted literally was unfortunately accepted without much debate by the Roman Catholic Church and was largely embraced by the Protestant Reformers. Though there was tenacious retention of such doctrines as eternal punishment for the wicked and eternal heaven for the blessed and reaffirmation of the doctrine of final judgment, the more detailed scheme of prophecy fell by the wayside” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. vi). “Augustine (354-430) also believed in the coming of Christ after the millennium and could for this reason be classified as post-millennial. His view of the millennium, however, was so removed from a literal kingdom on earth that it is virtually a denial of it, and he is better considered as an amillennialist” (*ibid.*, p. 8). “Augustine... He held that the age between the first and second advents is the millennium of which the Scriptures speak and that the second advent would occur at the end of the millennium... his amillennial views became the dominant belief of both the Roman Church and the Reformers” (*ibid.*, p. 19). “Augustine, with his denial of a millennium after the second advent, succeeded in displacing premillenarianism as the prevailing belief of the church” (*ibid.*, p. 20). “Living in the first half of the first millennium of the Church’s history, Augustine naturally took the 1000 years of Rev. xx. literally; and he expected the second advent to take place at the end of that period” (*ibid.*). “There are no acceptable exponents of amillennialism before Augustine. Prior to Augustine, amillennialism was associated with the heresies produced by the allegorizing and spiritualizing school of theology at Alexandria which not only opposed premillennialism but subverted any literal exegesis of Scripture whatever. Few modern theologians even of liberal schools of thought would care to build upon the theology of such men as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, or Dionysius. Augustine is, then, the first theologian of solid influence who adopted amillennialism” (*ibid.*, p. 47). “Augustine conceived of the present age as a conflict between the City of God and the City of Satan, or

the conflict between the church and the world. This was viewed as moving on to the ultimate triumph of the church to be climaxed by a tremendous struggle in which the church would be apparently defeated, only to consummate in a tremendous triumph in the Second Coming of Christ to the earth. Augustine held that the present age of conflict is the millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 49). “Augustine himself expressed it [in *City of God*, XX, 8], ‘This binding of Satan began when the church began to spread from Judea into other regions, and lasts yet, and shall do until this time be expired.’ Augustine considered the progress of the millennium of his day (400 A.D.) well advanced” (*ibid.*). “He has only one reason for avoiding the literal view—some had made the millennium a time of carnal enjoyment, a view which Augustine rightly opposed... ‘...fleshly banquets, where the cheer shall exceed both modesty and measure, this is gross and fit for none but carnal men to believe.’... Somehow, for all his genius, he did not see that he could abandon this false teaching without abandoning the doctrine of a literal millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 50). “Revelation 20 was, then, a recapitulation of the present age which Augustine held was portrayed in the earlier chapters of Revelation. The present age, for Augustine, is the millennium promised in Revelation 20” (*ibid.*). “In arriving at his conclusion regarding the millennium Augustine used the principle of spiritualizing Scripture freely. While he did not use this principle in interpreting Scripture relating to predestination, hamartiology, salvation, or grace, he found it suitable for interpreting prophecy” (*ibid.*). “It is central to Augustine’s theology that he regards the church as ultimately triumphant” (*ibid.*, p. 52). “The outstanding feature of Augustinian amillennialism which captured the church and caused the eclipse of premillennialism proved to be a total failure in the history of the church. There was absolutely nothing to confirm the Augustinian view of the millennium in the centuries which followed him. If the law of fulfillment is essential to establish an interpretation, the Augustinian view is tried and found wanting” (*ibid.*, p. 55). “The Alexandrian school of theology which came into prominence in the third century followed a principle of interpretation which regarded all Scripture as an allegory... It remained for Augustine to give a more moderate application of this principle of interpretation. In general, he held that only prophecy should be spiritualized and that in the historical and doctrinal sections of Scripture the “historical-grammatical” literal method should be used... Because of the weight of Augustine in other major issues of theology where he was in the main correct, Augustine became the model of the Protestant Reformers who accepted his amillennialism along with his other teachings” (*ibid.*, p. 60). “The earliest great Father of the Middle Ages was Augustine, bishop of Hippo, whose ex-

tensive and influential writings dominated the medieval church and continue to this day” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:288). “Premillennialism’s foundation is strong in the early church—it was the standard for the Fathers up to and through the early Augustine; Augustine, who powerfully influenced the thousand years that followed him, later incorrectly discarded the view” (*ibid.*, p. 567). “The early Augustine was premillennial, but he changed his view when he overreacted to a chiliastic cult and adopted an allegorical approach, a crucial error that amillennialists and postmillennialists have perpetuated since his time” (*ibid.*, p. 571). “Augustine... Whereas the Bishop of Hippo rejected the concept of extreme persecution of the Jews (that is, elimination), he favored their being kept in subjection and impoverishment” (Horner, *FI*, p. 157). “O. Heick, *A History of Christian Thought...* He quotes Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*: [p. 458] ‘all his life he [Augustine] remained a Neo-Platonic Christian or, if you will, a Christian Platonist’” (*ibid.*, p. 211). “Not surprisingly, since Augustine was a Neoplatonist prior to his conversion, Warfield concluded, ‘It was as a Neoplatonist thinker that Augustine became a Christian; and he carried his Neoplatonic conceptions over into Christianity with him’” [quoting Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine*, p. 369] (*ibid.*, p. 215).

Regarding *The Roman Catholic Church*, “The writer on ‘Revelation’ in M’Clintock Strong’s *Cyclop.* (and who cannot be charged with Chiliastic sympathies) thus candidly says: ‘Immediately after the triumph of Constantine, the Christians, emancipated from oppression and persecution, and dominant and prosperous in their turn, began to lose their vivid expectation of our Lord’s speedy Advent, and their spiritual conception of His Kingdom, and to look upon the temporal supremacy of Christianity as a fulfillment of the promised reign of Christ on earth. The Roman Empire, become Christian, was regarded no longer as the object of prophetic denunciation, but as the scene of a Millennial development’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:513) “The Papacy has been ever hostile to our doctrine” (*ibid.*) “The early Millenarians, without exception, regarded the Roman Empire and the rising Papacy with distrust because of their belief that the Antichrist would in some way or form be identified with one or the other” (*ibid.*). “This [chiliastic] view, of course, would be offensive to the heads of the Romish Church, and naturally resulted in their decrying Chiliasm and condemning it as derogatory to the honor of the church. Pride, dignity, ambition, power, could not tolerate a view which, necessarily brought with it, expressed, or even implied, reproach” (*ibid.*). “Seiss (*Last Times*, p. 246-7) declares: ‘It is a sad fact, however, that from the fourth century until the sixteenth, this doctrine gradually lost its hold upon the minds and hearts of professed

Christians, and went down into almost absolute neglect. But with it went down the great doctrine of justification by faith, and nearly everything that is distinguishing in gospel religion... So long as men think they see and hear Christ in the Pope and believe that they are worshipping and honoring Christ by serving and obeying hierarchies regarded as *jure divino*, we need never expect them to believe that Christ will ever reign here in person. The two ideas are fundamentally antagonistic. If Christ is Himself to reign here in universal empire, He has not given that Empire into the hands of a vicar; and if He has made the Pope the supreme Lord of the world, it is settled that He will never reign here otherwise than by the Pope. Either proposition confutes the other. The two cannot live together. And this puts into our hands the key to the true explanation how the church has come to lose sight of the primitive and apostolic faith upon this subject” (*ibid.*, p. 514). “It was an easy matter, by adopting the Origenistic interpretation of several senses, to reject the covenanted restored Davidic throne and Kingdom under a personal Messiah, and to substitute in its place an existing Kingdom under the rule of appointed hierarchs, and claim that in and through them Christ was already reigning in His promised Kingdom. This caricature of the Messiah’s Kingdom was varnished over by the most laudatory and fulsome language (even applying to it the predictions alone applicable to the mighty Theocratic King) which self-interest and vainglory could suggest” (*ibid.*). “Shimeall (*Eschatology*, p. 49) correctly observes: ‘Then, too, the Popes, in after ages, discountenanced Millenarianism, inasmuch as it militated against their anti christian usurpation and dogma, that the Millennium commenced with Romish domination in the church.’ Dr. West (*His. Pre-Mill. Doc.*) says: ‘By union of church and state, and perversion of victory, the foundation was laid in the Empire for a carnal and a Satanic caricature of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ on earth before the time—a Millennium sunk in the gross materialism and idolatry of a medieval, political, and military Christianity. By union of Church and State the martyr doctrine itself was martyred, no council resisting, and vanished from view with the departing glory and last remnant of a suffering, but pure apostolic church” (*ibid.*, p. 515). “Starting with the idea—often taken for granted as a settled premise or inferred by far-fetched inferences—that the Romish Church is the predicted Kingdom of the Messiah, everything is made to bend to that theory” (*ibid.*, p. 519). “So Dr. Willis Lord (*The Blessed Hope*, p. 79) remarks: ‘In the Apostolic and Primitive Church it is certain that for more than three centuries the Sec. Coming of Christ was expected to take place *before* the Millennium, and that the bliss and glory of that period would flow from His presence and reign. Especially was this so while Paganism

still held the seat of power, and the church was despised and persecuted. Most keenly did she then feel the sorrows of widowhood, and long for the return of her absent Lord. That return would bring the day of her redemption and joy. When, however, Constantine mounted the throne, and the church with him, her spirit and her faith changed. Favor with men, and increasing flatteries, honors, wealth, and power, made the world seem less barren, and more attractive. Gradually, but surely, the blessed hope gave way to the power of present possession and enjoyment; the once desolate widow became elated, proud, and self-sufficient; and she said in her heart, "I sit as a queen, and shall have no sorrow." For many generations, it would have been the dread of the visible church to have the Lord to come" (*ibid.*). "The fact is, that Millenarians esteem it an honor that their doctrine was first suppressed by prelates possessing the character, etc., that history accords to them. The truth is, that while our doctrine was obnoxious to, and detested by, the Bishops, and many of the leading clergy, through partisanship, yet it was not so early authoritatively condemned, seeing that such a condemnation would involve a disastrous controversy respecting the regular perpetuation of the church. The Bishops and Prelates were too shrewd to do this, seeing, as they did, that this would involve so many of the Fathers that it would be difficult and hazardous, yea, impossible, to trace the true church unless through 'heretics'" (*ibid.*, p. 521). "...the Eastern Church retained much longer the Chiliastic views... while the Western portion fell under the Alexandrian influence, and lost the Chiliastic influence" (*ibid.*, 2:458). "...the Roman Catholic Church. Since the day of Augustine this body has been almost entirely amillennial... Nothing could be more antithetical than the Roman Church and premillennialism, and its influence is definitely amillennial" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 10). "The Roman Church did not make any significant advance in the doctrine after Augustine, and Protestant teachings did not fare much better" (*ibid.*, p. 55). "The Roman Church builds much of its claim for sovereignty on the inheritance from Israel of the combined political and religious authority revealed in the Old Testament. The concept of the church as an institution is enhanced, and ecclesiastical organization and authority given Scriptural sanction. By so much, also, the New Testament revelation of the church as essentially a spiritual organism rather than an organization is often slighted and in effect denied" (*ibid.*, p. 81). "The Roman Church, first of all, regarded itself as the continuation of Israel as a spiritual entity. The political or theocratic character of Israel as well as its religious life was considered as continuing in new form in the Roman Church" (*ibid.*, p. 94). "Only by denying fulfillment of the promises of God to Israel and by spiritualized interpretation transferring

them to the Roman Church could any vital connection between Judaism and Christianity be established” (*ibid.*, p. 95). “They held that there is no church invisible which is not a part of the visible Roman Church, and the important question was whether one was a part of this visible church... As Berkhof [in *Systematic Theology*, p. 562] summarizes the Roman position: ‘...The conception of the Church as an external organization became more important as time went on’” (*ibid.*). “As Berkhof states [in *Systematic Theology*, p. 569]: ‘...The Roman Catholic Church frankly identified the Kingdom of God with their hierarchical institution.’... The stark contrast of what the Roman Church is as compared to the millennial kingdom illustrates the extremes to which spiritualization of Scripture can go” (*ibid.*, p. 99).

Regarding *The Dark Ages*, “...during the dark ages it [the doctrine of the Millennium] remained, like many other precious doctrines, under an eclipse” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:484). “...the Gentile Christians in their animosity to Judaism, which sought to impose its legality and ritualism, finally were carried to such an extreme that... everything that savored in their estimation of Judaism was cast aside, including of course the long-entertained Jewish notion of a Kingdom.” [quoting Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:501] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 379). “Some modern writers seem to realize but little that chiliasm or premillennialism was the all-but-universal belief of the early church, or the extent of that conviction in all centuries when any truth has been received at all. It is hardly worthy of any scholar to assert that this is a modern departure, or, if held in the early centuries, was looked upon as a heresy. It has been conceded that it was ‘lost,’ along with other vital truths, at the end of the third century and remained hidden until the Reformation” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:271). (See also our section *Chiliasm in the Dark Ages* below.)

Regarding *The Protestant Reformation*, “Unfortunately the Reformers went back to Augustine for their eschatology instead of the early chiliastic Fathers; and until premillennialism was again established in the post-Reformation period, the advance of the interpretation of prophecy had to wait” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 156). “The early years of Protestantism saw little if any advance over the Augustinian view. It is clear that the great Protestant leaders such as Calvin, Luther, and Melancthon are properly classed as amillennial. As far as millennial teaching was concerned, they were content to follow the Roman Church in a weakened Augustinian viewpoint” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 55). “Premillennialism at the time of the Reformation unfortunately was expounded chiefly by small groups of somewhat fanatical enthusiasts who were often discredited by extreme doctrines” (*ibid.*, p. 61). (See also our section *The Reformers* below.)

Consequences of Opposition to Chiliasm

Opposition to chiliasm led eventually to rejection by the church of all Jewish elements of the Kingdom. “Gentile Christians in their animosity to Judaism, which sought to impose its legality and ritualism, finally were carried to such an extreme that, without discriminating between what was abrogated and the things of God that remained in force, everything that savored in their estimation of Judaism was cast aside, including of course the long-entertained Jewish notion of the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:504). This led to disinterest by, and eventually, outright persecution of the Jews. “It may be well to say here, that as long as this happy correspondence continued numerous Jews were converted to Christianity (as history attests), but just so soon as this disagreement arose respecting the Kingdom, and the Jewish faith in their Kingdom was derided and scorned, conversions became less and less until they almost ceased” (*ibid.*, p. 281). “One of the darkest pages in the history of Christianity is that which records the tendering of insult, wrong, and death instead of the precious message of hope and peace to this covenanted favored people” (*ibid.*, p. 416). “Under Constantine and the Crusades the Jews were badly treated” (*ibid.*, p. 420). “As the early doctrine became obscured, substituted, and finally driven from the field, the conversions of the Jews became rarer and almost entirely ceased, excepting such as were produced under compulsion. How else account for so great a change, unless it be in the gradual engrafting of other than Jewish ideas to the Messiahship of Jesus, making the Messiah less and less in correspondence with the Messiah of the Old Test. Scriptures” (*ibid.*, p. 467)? “The cessation, in almost a total manner, of the conversion of the Jews, also materially aided in extinguishing the doctrine of the Kingdom... heaping upon Gentiles the promises belonging to the Jews, substituting the church for the Messianic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 509) “After the Gnostic ideas and the Alexandrian school obtained the ascendancy, the preaching of the Kingdom, so widely different from that previously proclaimed by the Fathers, was no longer effective with the Jews, for the simple reason that it was opposed to the Kingdom presented in covenant and prophecy” (*ibid.*). “The student, if observant, must have noticed a remarkable feature in the history of this nation, viz., that immediately and some time after the First Advent many Jews were converted to Christianity, forming even churches composed almost entirely of them. The history of the first and second centuries shows that it was nothing unusual for Jews to embrace Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. But gradually such conversions became rarer, until they either entirely ceased or formed exceptionable cases. If we inquire into the causes of this change, it will be found that it resulted almost entire-

ly in the departure of the large body of the Church from the Millenarian ground occupied by the early Church. The Origenistic, Augustinian, and succeeding theology discarded what was pronounced to be 'the Jewish' element, and engrafted another, the Gentile, into its place. The result was seen in its contracting Jewish conversions and in its confirming Jewish unbelief. On the other hand, a return to the theology of the early Church invites the conversion of the Jews, seeing that it materially aids in removing the principal objections which hold them in unbelief" (*ibid.*, 3:409). "How much injury the self-conceit and pride of Gentileism has inflicted is impossible to calculate" (*ibid.*, p. 408). "Lederer, formerly editor of the *Israelite Indeed* (vol. 8, p. 82), and a missionary among the Jews, after delineating our doctrine as particularly adapted to reach the Jews, declares that 'Indeed, by the preaching of a full Gospel to the Jews, there have been more Jews converted in the last twenty-five years, than during seventeen centuries of the Christian era. All converted Jews, therefore, with but few exceptions, are Pre-Millenarians.' Our most bitter opponents concede that converted Jews are almost exclusively Millenarian" (*ibid.*, p. 409). "Making the Christian Church, which is only preparative, to be the covenanted Messianic Kingdom, forms a fruitful source of difficulty to the Jew" (*ibid.*, p. 422). "...amillennialists are not noted for their interest in Jewish evangelization" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 208) "...that anti-Jewish prejudice which has too often marked the course of Church history" (McClain, *GK*, p. 251). "Luther labeled the Jews as the devil's children impossible to convert" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 189).

On the subject of Christian evangelization of the Jews, Barry Horner offers a thought-provoking extended quotation of J.C. Ryle: "You would probably tell the Jew that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah promised in the Old Testament Scriptures. To those Scriptures you would refer him to [*sic*] for proof. You would show him Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:26, Micah 5:2, Zechariah 9:9 and 11:13. You would tell him that in Jesus of Nazareth those Scriptures were literally fulfilled. You would urge upon him that he ought to believe these Scriptures, and receive Christ as the Messiah. All this is very good. So far you would do well. But suppose the Jew asks you if you take *all* the prophecies of the Old Testament in their simple literal meaning. Suppose he asks you if you believe in a literal personal advent of Messiah to reign over the earth in glory, a literal restoration of Judah and Israel to Palestine, a literal rebuilding and restoration of Zion and Jerusalem. Suppose the unconverted Jew puts these questions to you, what answer are you prepared to make? Will you dare to tell him that Old Testament prophecies of this kind are not to be taken in their plain literal sense?

Will you dare to tell him that the words Zion, Jerusalem, Jacob, Judah, Ephraim, Israel, do not mean what they seem to mean, but mean the *Church of Christ*? Will you dare to tell him that the glorious kingdom and future blessedness of Zion, so often dwelt upon in prophecy, mean nothing more than the gradual Christianizing of the world by missionaries and gospel preaching? Will you dare to tell him that you think it “carnal” to expect a literal rebuilding of Jerusalem, “carnal” to expect a literal coming of Messiah to reign? Oh, reader, if you are a man of this mind, take care what you are doing! I say again, take care. Do you not see that you are putting a weapon in the hand of the unconverted Jew, which he will probably use with irresistible power? Do you not see that you are cutting the ground from under your own feet, and supplying the Jew with a strong argument for not believing your own interpretation of Scripture? Do you not see that the Jew will reply, that it is “carnal” to tell him that the Messiah *has* come literally to *suffer*, if you tell him that it is “carnal” to expect Messiah will come literally to reign? Do you not see that the Jew will tell you, that it is far more “carnal” in you to believe that Messiah could come into a world as a despised, crucified Man of sorrows, than it is in him to believe that He will come into the world as a glorious King? Beyond doubt he will do so, and you will find no answer to give. Reader, I commend these things to your serious attention. I entreat you to throw aside all prejudice, and to view the subject I am dwelling upon with calm and dispassionate thought. I beseech you to take up anew the prophetic Scriptures, and to pray that you may not err in interpreting their meaning. Read them in the light of those two great polestars, the first and second advents of Jesus Christ. Bind up with the *first advent* the rejection of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, the preaching of the gospel as a witness to the world and gathering out of the election of grace. Bind up with the second advent the restoration of the Jews, the pouring out of judgments on unbelieving Christians, the conversion of the world and the establishment of Christ’s kingdom upon earth. Do this and you will see a meaning and fullness in prophecy which perhaps you have never yet discovered” [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, pp. 47-48] (*FI*, p. 342).

Chiliasm in the Dark Ages

In the dark ages chiliasm was suppressed severely, but not extinguished entirely. “Brooks (*El. Proph. Inter.*)... Epiphanius (about A.D. 365) as mentioning ‘the doctrine being held by many in his time, and speaks favorably of it himself’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:491). “...the Nicene council. Although the council was busy settling disputed questions, yet nothing was said

against our view” (*ibid.*) “Baronius and others have asserted that for a long time the doctrine was ‘entirely extirpated.’ This is not strictly correct. It certainly was brought into such disfavor by a ruling Romish Church that during ‘the dark ages,’ down to the Reformation, it was scarcely known. Still we have intimations, plain and decided, that it was held by individuals (as e.g. Jerome mentions in his day, what Lorinus, the Jesuit, says of Tully Crispold, quoted by Brooks, *El. Proph. Interp.*, p. 60; comp. Bernard, etc., quoted by Seiss, p. 26, in *A Question in Eschatology*, etc.), and, at least, in some of its features, by the Vaudois or Waldenses, Albigenses, Lollard, or Wickliffites, and the Bohemian Protestants” (*ibid.*, p. 521). “Against this conversion of the Church into a Kingdom there was a protest, which was ultimately silenced as the Papacy increased in power, until finally it was only held by the Paulicans and Waldenses” (*ibid.*, p. 611). “In spite of the ascendancy of Roman amillenarianism there did continue a small remnant that held to the premillennial position. Ryrie [in Charles C. Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, pp. 27-28] cites the Waldensians and the Paulicans, together with the Cathari, who held the Apostolic belief. Peters [in *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:521] cites, in addition, the Albigenses, Lollard, Wickliffites, and the Bohemian Protestants who espoused the premillennial cause” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 383).

Regarding *Ephraim of Syria* (306-373) (specifically regarding pretribulationism¹⁵), “Ephraem of Syria (c. 306-373)... Grant Jeffrey (b. 1948) discovered an untranslated manuscript by a Syrian Christian poet who was not only premillennial but also pretribulationist. This is a phenomenal find, particularly in light of posttribulationist pronouncements that ‘we can find no trace of pretribulationism in the early church’ (Ladd, *The Blessed Hope*, p. 31). The argument from perceived silence is often dangerous... ‘Why therefore do we not reject every care of earthly actions and prepare ourselves for the meeting of the Lord Christ?... All saints and the Elect of the Lord are gathered together before the Tribulation which is about to come and are taken to the Lord, in order that they may not see at any time the confusion which overwhelms the world because of our sins’ (cited in [Thomas] Ice, *When the Trumpet Sounds*, pp. 110-11)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:570). “Ephraem of Syria (c. 306-373)... ‘We ought to understand thoroughly therefore, my brothers, what is imminent or overhanging. Already there have been hunger and plagues, violent movements of nations and signs, which have been predicted by the Lord, they have already been fulfilled, and there is no other that remains, except the advent of the wicked one in

¹⁵ Pretribulation is the view that the Rapture of the church will occur before the Tribulation period.

the completion of the Roman kingdom... All saints and the Elect of the Lord are gathered together before the tribulation which is about to come and are taken to the Lord, in order that they may not be seen at the time of the confusion which overwhelms the world because of our sins” [quoting Ephraem the Syrian, *On the Last Times, the Antichrist, and the End of the World* as cited in Ice and Demy, eds., *When the Trumpet Sounds*] (*ibid.*, p. 658).

Regarding *Commodianus* (3rd to 5th centuries), “Commodianus [in *Instructions of Commodianus Against the Gods of the Heathens*, 44] (fl. between third and fifth centuries)... ‘We shall arise again to Him, who have been devoted to Him. And they shall be incorruptible, even already living without death. And neither will there be any grief nor any groaning in that city. They shall come also who overcame cruel martyrdom under Antichrist, and they themselves live for the whole time, and receive blessings because they have suffered evil things; and they themselves marrying, beget for a thousand years... the earth renewed without end pours forth abundantly” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:657).

Regarding *Anselm* (1033-1109), “Anselm (Bh. of Havilburg, *Treat. on Rev.*)... says: ‘The whole earth, which carried in its lap the body of the Lord, will be a Paradise” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:431).

The Reformers

The Protestant Reformers, while reclaiming and championing the biblical doctrines of *sola scriptura* (by Scripture alone) and *sola fide* (by faith alone), unfortunately failed to also reclaim the biblical doctrine of the Kingdom. Rather than go back to the first century for their doctrine of the Kingdom, as they had done with their doctrines regarding the primacy of Scripture and faith, they went back only as far as Augustine, and never progressed beyond Augustine’s allegorized, amillennial system of eschatology. “The Reformers, with all their greatness, were fallible, and differed among themselves” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:525). “...both Luther (*Table Talk*) and Melanchthon (*India Doctrince Physica*)... opposed the Copernican system by appeals to Scripture, Joshua, the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, etc., proving that the earth is the centre of the universe. In their conscientiousness Luther calls Copernicus ‘an upstart astrologer’ and ‘fool,’ while Melanchthon pronounces him guilty of ‘a want of honesty and decency to assert such notions publicly.’ This teaches us that good and great men may misjudge and misinterpret, under the impression that they are doing God’s service” (*ibid.*, p. 527). “...the Reformers... they, more or less, adopted the Augustinian notion of a past, present, or existing Mill. age, identifying it with *this* dispensation” (*ibid.*, p. 528). “While the reformers swept away much ritualistic and doc-

trinal rubbish they failed to recover the promise of the Second Advent. They turned to God from idols, but not to ‘wait for His Son from the Heavens’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 131). “Actually, John Calvin and the Reformers were declared literalists, but they forsook the literal interpretation in eschatology to preserve the position of Roman Catholic eschatology in which they saw no harm” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 6). “...the kingdom... the Reformers hardly gave special attention to the subject or developed an adequate idea” (*ibid.*, p. 26). “The major Reformers, like Luther and Calvin, were amillennial. As they were largely preoccupied with soteriological matters, they left latent their Augustinian eschatology to await a future consistent application of the literal hermeneutic (as they themselves had done to salvific matters, which made the Reformation possible)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:572). “...the Reformers were amillennialists” (*ibid.*, p. 658) “The Reformation did not involve an eschatological, biblical recovery according to the first and early second century but rather it embraced a medieval inheritance that has produced shameful consequences” (Horner, *FI*, p. 293). “Reformation... ‘this same age which so consciously scrutinized the medieval traditions simultaneously passed on, with new strength, whatever withstood the test of inspection’” [quoting Heiko Oberman, *The Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Age of Renaissance and Reformation*, p. xi] (*ibid.*, p. 372).

Martin Luther

Martin Luther (1483-1546) held a number of correct (biblical) eschatological ideas. For instance, he denied that the church would transform the world. “...the notion of the conversion of the world under the present dispensation, the idea now regarded as orthodox, but one which Luther constantly condemned” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:534). “Luther wrote: ‘This is not true and is really a trick of the devil, that people are led to believe that the whole world shall become Christian’” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:278). “In another place Luther wrote, ‘I believe that all the signs which are to precede the last days have already appeared. Let us not think that the Coming of Christ is far off; let us look up with heads lifted up; let us expect our Redeemer’s coming with longing and cheerful mind’” (*ibid.*). He also believed correctly that the Abrahamic Covenant was still in effect. “Every Reformer saw and recognized the fundamental character of the Abrahamic covenant, that we lived under its promises, that Christ made provision for their fulfillment, and thus confirmed the covenant. Thus e.g. Luther repeatedly asserts the present existing force of the Abrahamic covenant in his *Com. on Galatians*; Calvin in his *Institutes* (B. 2, ch. 10) rightly makes the promises of this covenant to extend over into the future” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:325). “Thus Luther

makes much of an existing Abrahamic covenant, confirmed to us by the death of Jesus, under which we already enjoy an earnest or prelude to the final inheritance” (*ibid.*). He believed the second Psalm’s fulfillment was yet future. “Why do **the nations rage**, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? **The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us.** He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure: Yet **I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion.** I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art **my son**; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and **I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.** Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling. **Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled.** Blessed are all they that take refuge in him” (Ps. 2:1–12). “...the vengeance of the 2d Psalm was understood by Luther (so Michelet, *Life of Luther*, App. p. 411, Hazlett’s Ed.) to be future” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:734). He looked forward to having a perfected body. “Even Luther (quoted, p. 40, in Lange) could not refer all to the past and present but brings in the future, as e.g. on [Hab 3] v. 19, ‘The Lord is still my God. Of this we will be so glad, that we will run and spring like hinds, so nimble are our feet to become; and we will no longer wade and creep in mire, but for perfect delight we will soar and fly in the high places, and do nothing but sing joyfully, and pursue all kinds of delightful employment’” (*ibid.*, 3:398). However, he still had a limited understanding of the Kingdom. “The reason why Luther expressed himself so slightly respecting the Apoc. arose, as various writers have remarked, from his limited idea of the Kingdom. Thus e.g. Olshausen (*Gen. Introd. Com.*, ch. 10) says: ‘This (Apoc.) was obscure to him from the fact that he could not thoroughly apprehend the doctrine of God’s Kingdom upon earth, which is exhibited in Revelation, and forms the proper centre of everything contained in it.’ Luther, in his views of the Kingdom, was too much under the influence of the Augustinian teaching, and he allowed doctrinal considerations (as in the rejection of James’s ‘strawy’ Epistle) to unduly influence him in criticism—always a dangerous and one-sided procedure” (*ibid.*, p. 366).

John Calvin

John Calvin (1509-1564) also held a number of correct (biblical) eschatological ideas. For instance, he did not expect the Christian church to convert the world. “So, also, Calvin: ‘There is no reason, therefore, why any person should expect the conversion of the world, for at length—when it shall be too late, and will yield them no advantage, they shall look on Him whom they have pierced.’ Calvin also declares in the third book of his Institutes, chapter 25, ‘Scripture uniformly enjoins us to look with expectation for the advent of Christ’” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:278). He counseled his readers to be prepared at every moment for Christ’s coming. “With reference to Christ’s statements about His coming, Calvin said, ‘Besides, as he has promised that he will return to us, we ought to hold ourselves prepared, at every moment, to receive him, that he may not find us sleeping,’ [quoting John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists* (volume third) in *Calvin’s Commentaries*, Vol. XVII, p. 163] and ‘He wished them to be uncertain as to his coming, but yet to be prepared to expect him every day, or rather every moment’ [*ibid.*, p. 156]” (Showers, *M*, p. 145). However, he failed to distinguish between Israel and the church. “Calvin refers to the saints of the Old and New Testament under the one title of the ‘Church’” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 97). “Like Augustine, Calvin taught that the Christian Church had become the new spiritual Israel” (Horner, *FI*, p. 6). He also restricted the thousand-year Kingdom to this dispensation. “Calvin... error, fell into another, viz., restricting the thousand years to the Militant Church in this dispensation, thus following Augustine” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:630). Consequently, he denied a future, earthly, Jewish kingdom. “*Premillennialism superficially considered*. Calvin’s discussion of the millennium is a fair sample of the attitude of the Reformers. They treated the doctrine superficially and arbitrarily, making the view ridiculous by misrepresentation. Calvin, for instance, has this to say [in *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II, 250-51]: ‘...not long after arose the Millenarians, who limited the reign of Christ to a thousand years. Their fiction is too puerile to require or deserve refutation. Nor does the Revelation, which they quote in favour of their error, afford them any support; for the term of a thousand years, there mentioned, refers not to the eternal blessedness of the Church, but to the various agitations which awaited the Church in its militant state upon earth. But the whole Scripture proclaims that there will be no end of the happiness of the elect, or the punishment of the reprobate... Those who assign the children of God a thousand years to enjoy the inheritance of the future life, little think what dishonour they cast on Christ and his kingdom.’ While Augustine discarded premillennialism because he took a carnal interpreta-

tion of the millennium as essential to the view, Calvin commits a greater error in assigning to the premillennial view a limited eternity of one millennium. Neither view would be claimed by any thinking premillenarian of our day” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 56). “Calvin, for instance, refers [in *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I, 488] to ‘the folly of the whole nation of the Jews in the present age, in expecting any earthly kingdom of the Messiah...’ His conclusions were an outgrowth of amillennial theology and its method of interpretation” (*ibid.*, p. 97). “Calvin regarded Israel’s hope of a future kingdom as without warrant—in fact, he held that this hope was a result of their spiritual blindness imposed as a judgment because of their rejection of Christ. Calvin stated [in *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I, 488]: ‘And the folly of the whole nation of the Jews in the present age, in expecting an earthly kingdom of the Messiah, would be equally extraordinary, had not the Scriptures long before predicted that they would thus be punished for their rejection of the gospel.’ Calvin’s interpretation is based partially on the idea that Israel had erroneously interpreted the promises of a future kingdom on earth literally, and partially on the thought that Israel had forfeited these promises by disobedience. He seems to put most of his argument on the former point, however” (*ibid.*, p. 101).

Premillennialism Following the Reformation

Due in large part to the Reformers’ revitalization of the exegetical use of the grammatical-historical hermeneutic, the centuries following the Protestant Reformation witnessed a resurgence of interest in and renewed study of the Bible as it relates to the primitive chiliastic or premillennial eschatology. “...allegorical amillennialism gained preeminence up to modern times. Through exegetical progress and reapplication of the literal hermeneutic, premillennialism has experienced revival” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:571). “After the Reformation, however, the Reformers and others indorsed certain distinctive features belonging, as parts of the system, to Millenarian doctrine, we are chiefly indebted to a few leading minds for bringing forth a return to the old Patristic faith in all its essential forms. Prominently among these are the following: the profound Biblical scholar Joseph Mede (born 1586, died 1638), in his still celebrated *Childs Apocalypica* (translated into English) and *Exposition on Peter*; Th. Brightman (1644), *Expositions of Daniel and Apoc.*; J. A. Bengel (a learned divine, born 1687, died 1752), *Exposition of the Apocalypse and Addresses* on the same; also the writings of Th. Goodwin (1679); Ch. Daubuz (1730); Piscator (1646); M. F. Roos (1770); Alstedius (1643 and earlier); Cressener (1689); Farmer (1660); Fleming (1708); Hartley (1764); J. J. Hess (1774); Homes (1654);

Jurieu (1686); Maton (1642); Peterson (1692); Sherwin (1665); and others (such as Conrade, Gallus, Brahe, Kett, Broughton, Marten, Sir I. Newton, Whiston, etc.), materially aided in directing attention to the Millenarian doctrine and to influence persons to Biblical study on the subject. When these were followed by men eminent for learning and marked ability (some have been mentioned, others will follow); when the leading poets and commentaries gave an additional impulse to Millenarian doctrine by their forcible portrayals and exegetical comments; when persons of the highest and lowest position, in all ranks and professions, of undoubted piety and usefulness, thus united in expressing Chiliastic views, the doctrine of the early church received correspondingly a revival and renewed strength in the hearts and hopes of believers” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:538). “A scholarly lineage of Lutheran premillennialists developed that included Bengel, Zahn, Delitzsch, Godet, Auberlen, and Rothe, along with van Osterzee who was Dutch Reformed... In the United States, three particular Lutherans encouraged Judeo-centric premillennialism: Samuel Simon Schmucker, Joseph Seiss, and George N. H. Peters” (Horner, *FI*, p. 158).

Well-known premillennialists (or men at least kindly-disposed toward premillennialism) from the post-Reformation period include *John Bunyan* (1628-1688), “Several Confessions (confined to small bodies of believers) have Chiliastic Articles... Baptists... signed by John Bunyan” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:531) “John Bunyan (*First Chaps. Genesis*) advocates ‘the glory that the Church shall have in the latter day, even in the seven thousandth year of the world, that Sabbath when Christ shall set up His Kingdom on earth’” (*ibid.*, 2:459). *Increase Mather* (1639-1723), “Increase Mather, in his *Discourse on Faith* (A.D. 1710), and *The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation*, teaches: ‘He (Christ) will then (at Coming) remove His throne from heaven to this visible world. Then will his visible Kingdom appear in the greatest glory; when also there will be a personal reign and residence of Christ in this lower world.’ ‘When they that corrupt the earth are destroyed, a new earth will succeed, in which shall dwell righteousness. Then will the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdoms of Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever,’ etc.” (*ibid.*, 1:541) *Cotton Mather* (1663-1728), “But Cotton Mather is more plain: ‘It is well known, that in the earliest of the primitive times the faithful did, in a literal sense, believe the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the rising and the reigning of the saints with Him, a thousand years before, the rest of the dead live again, a doctrine which, however, some of later years have counted heretical; yet in the days of Irenaeus, were questioned by none but such as were counted heretics. It is evident from Justin Martyr that the doctrine of the Chiliad was in his days embraced among all

orthodox Christians; nor did this Kingdom of our Lord begin to be doubted until the Kingdom of Antichrist began to advance into a considerable figure, and then it fell chiefly under the reproaches of such men as were fain to deny the divine authority of the Book of Revelation, and of the Second Epistle of Peter. He is a stranger to antiquity who does not find and own the ancients generally of the persuasion. Nevertheless, at last men came, not only to lay aside the modesty expressed by one of the first Anti-Millenarians, namely, Jerome, but also with violence to persecute the Millenary truth as an heretical pravity. So the mystery of our Lord's appearing in His Kingdom lay buried in Popish darkness, till the light thereof had a fresh dawn. Since the Antichrist entered into the last half-time of the period allotted for him, and now within the last sevens of years, as things grow nearer to accomplishment, learned and pious men, in great numbers, everywhere come to receive, explain, and maintain, the old faith about it.' In the *Student and Preacher*, Mather is equally decisive: 'The Son of God, about to descend, will inflict vengeance on them who know not God and obey not His Gospel; but He will manifest His Kingdom of the saints in the earth, which is to be possessed by our second and heavenly Adam; and this, we confess, is ascertained to us by promise, but in another state, as being after the resurrection.' 'They indulge themselves in a vain dream, not to say insane, who think, pray, and hope, contrary to the whole sacred Scripture and sound reason, that the promised happiness of the Church on earth will be before the Lord Jesus shall appear in His Kingdom.' 'Without doubt the kingdom of this world will not become the Kingdom of God and His Christ, before the preordained time of the dead, in which the reward shall be given to the servants of God and to those that fear His name.' 'The rest of the saints, and the promised Sabbath, and the Kingdom of God, in which His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, and those great things of which God hath spoken by the mouths of His prophets, all prophesying as with one voice; all shall be confirmed by their fulfillment in the new earth, not in our defiled and accursed earth'" (*ibid.*). *John Gill* (1697-1771), "John Gill (1697-1771)... 'The rest of the dead... meaning not the dead saints, for they will be all raised together, but the wicked dead; and not them as morally or spiritually, but as corporeally dead: these lived not again until the thousand years were finished; so that there will be such an exact term of years between the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of the wicked; nor will there be any [of these] wicked living upon earth, or in bodies, during that time; for the wicked dead will not be raised with the saints at Christ's coming, and the wicked living will be destroyed in the conflagration of the world, and neither of them shall live again until the end of these years'" [quoting

John Gill, *Exposition of the Whole Bible*, on Rev. 20:5] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:573). Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), “Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) is arguably the most significant and influential evangelical Christian in the history of the United States” (Horner, *FI*, p. 333). “Edwards was a decided millennialist, somewhat following a revival of interest in this aspect of biblical eschatology that erupted in England during the middle of the seventeenth century. Stephen J. Stein, editor of the *Yale Edition*, Volume 5, *Apocalyptic Writings*, explained, ‘The millennium remained a matter of consuming private interest for him... During the millennium kings will be like the judges who ruled ancient Israel before the monarchy was established—a form of government that pleased God greatly... In that glorious day, Edwards conjectured, a variety of forms of government may prevail, but none shall be contrary to “true liberty.”’... The geography of the millennium, another issue that divided commentators, attracted his exegetical attention. Edwards found scriptural warrant for placing the land of Canaan at the center of the coming kingdom of Christ... In like manner, he speculated that the return of the Jews to their homeland is inevitable because of the promises of land made to them have been only partially fulfilled. God intends the Jews to be ‘a visible monument’ of his grace and power. The return to their traditional homeland, however, was premised by Edwards upon a conversion of the Jews to Christianity... [Then] Canaan will be the spiritual center of the coming kingdom, and Israel will again be a truly distinct nation” [quoting S. J. Stein, ed., ‘Introduction,’ Jonathan Edwards, Works, *Apocalyptic Writings*, vol. 5 (1977), pp. 17-19] (*ibid.*). “Edwards was a postmillennialist, believing that authentic Christian expansion through evangelism would effectively sweep the world to such an extent that a largely Christianized, millennial world would result” (*ibid.*, p. 334). “[Footnote:] At the urging of many for a Second American Bible and Prophetic Conference (premillennial) in Chicago in 1886, following the immensely successful first conference in New York in 1878, the organizing secretary, George C. Needham, commented, ‘Many of postmillennial faith ratified the call, and were present at every session as interested listeners’ (*Prophetic Studies of the International Prophetic Conference* [Chicago: F. H. Revell, 1886], 1). Classic postmillennialism is in mind here not the more recent revisionist, reconstructionist variety. Of course, nonmillennialists would sense relatively little affinity in such a setting” (*ibid.*). “...they have hitherto continued a distinct nation, that they might continue a visible monument of his displeasure, for their rejecting and crucifying their Messiah” [quoting Edwards, Works, *Apocalyptic Writings*, vol. 5, pp. 133-134] (*ibid.*, p. 337) John Wesley (1703-1791), “John Wesley has often been claimed as Chiliastic (and is so given by Tay-

lor, Shimeall, and others), because of his chiefly adopting Bengal's views in Revelation, and of the views presented in some of his sermons. This has been denied, and utterances seemingly contradictory presented in proof. But this has finally been settled by a Methodist historian, Tyerman, in his *Life of John Wesley*, vol. 2, p. 523, etc. After giving very candidly Hartley's Mill. views from 'Paradise Restored' (affirming the Pre-Mill. Advent, and the Mill. reign of Jesus, etc., which Wesley indorsed, see *Works*, vol. 6, p. 743), Tyerman then gives the fact that John Wesley read and approved of the same, writing (*Meth. Mag.*, 1783, p. 498) to the author: 'Your book on the Millennium was lately put into my hands. I cannot but thank you for your strong and seasonable confirmation of that comfortable doctrine, of which I cannot entertain the least doubt, as long as I believe the Bible'" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:539). "John Wesley, the founder of Methodism who also played a major role in the evangelical spiritual awakening in Great Britain during the 1700s stated, 'Perhaps He will appear as the dayspring from on high, before the morning light. Oh, do not set us a time—expect Him every hour. Now He is nigh, even at the doors'" [quoting Jesse Forrest Silver, *The Lord's Return*, p. 161] (Showers, *M*, p. 146). Charles Wesley (1707-1788), "Tyerman unhesitatingly classes among Millenarians, Charles Wesley (as various hymns evidence)" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:540) George Whitefield (1714-1770), "George Whitefield, the great English preacher who played a major role in the evangelical spiritual awakenings in Great Britain and America during the 1700s, declared, "Where is the promise of His coming?' But perhaps today, perhaps this midnight, the cry may be made... Let that cry, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! be continually sounding in your ears, and begin now to live as though you were assured [sic] that this night you were to go forth to meet Him'" [quoting Jesse Forrest Silver, *The Lord's Return*, p. 168] (Showers, *M*, p. 146). John Darby (1800-1882), "The 'Plymouth Brethren,' or Darbyites, entertain a prominent Chiliastic belief, being one of their chief characteristics" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:536) Dean Alford (1810-1871, "Alford (*N. T.*, vol. 2, p. 350), speaking of the Apocalyptic interpreters since the French Revolution, says: "The majority, both in number, learning, and research, adopt the Pre-Millennial Advent, following the plain and undeniable sense of the sacred text'" (*ibid.*, p. 546). "Dean Alford (*N. T.*, vol. 2, p. 362), who thus writes against spiritualizing the promises and departing from the Primitive Church view: 'But I have again and again raised my earnest protest against evading the plain sense of the words, and spiritualizing in the midst of plain declaration of fact. That the Lord will come in person to this our earth; that His risen elect will reign with Him here and judge; that during that blessed reign the power of evil will be

bound, and the glorious prophecies of peace and truth on earth find their accomplishment; this is my firm persuasion, and not mine alone, but that of multitudes of Christ's waiting people, as it was that of the His. Primitive Apostolic Church before controversy blinded the eyes of the Fathers to the light of prophecy" (*ibid.*, 2:351). John Charles Ryle (1816-1900), "John Charles Ryle (1816-1900), the first Bishop of Liverpool, was, according to C. H. Spurgeon's consideration of that period, 'the best man in the Church of England'" (Horner, *FI*, p. 339). "By way of introduction, Ryle set forth his prophetic creed in eleven sections, three of which are especially pertinent here: '6. I believe that after our Lord Jesus Christ comes again, the earth shall be renewed, and the curse removed; the devil shall be bound, the godly shall be rewarded, the wicked shall be punished; and that before He comes there shall be neither resurrection, judgment, not millennium, and that not till after He comes shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (Acts 3:21; Isa. 25:6-9; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:1; etc.). 7. I believe that the Jews shall ultimately be gathered again as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ, after going through great tribulation (Jer. 30:10-11; 31:10; Rom. 11:25-26; Dan. 12:1; Zech. 13:8-9). 9. I believe that the literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected by the Churches, and is far too much neglected at the present day, and that under the mistaken system of spiritualizing and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often completely missed its meaning (Luke 24:25-26)" [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, p. 9] (*ibid.*). "I am quite aware that many good men do not see the subject of unfulfilled prophecy as I do. I am painfully sensible that I seem presumptuous in differing from them. But I dare not refuse anything which appears to me plainly written in Scripture. I consider the best of men are not infallible. I think we should remember that we must reject Protestant traditions which are not according to the Bible, as much as the traditions of the Church of Rome. I believe it is high time for the Church of Christ to awake out of its sleep about Old Testament prophecy. From the time of the old fathers, Jerome and Origen, down to the present day, men have gone on in a pernicious habit of "spiritualizing" the words of the Prophets, until their true meaning has been well nigh buried. It is high time to lay aside traditional methods of interpretation, and to give up our blind obedience to the opinions of such writers as Poole, Henry, Scott and Clarke, upon unfulfilled prophecy. It is high time to fall back on the good old principle that Scripture generally means what it seems to mean, and to beware of that semi-skeptical argument, "Such and such an interpretation cannot be correct, because it seems to us 'carnal'"! It is high

time for Christians to interpret unfulfilled prophecy by the light of prophecies already fulfilled. The curses of the Jews were brought to pass literally: so also will be the blessings. The scattering was literal: so also will be the gathering. The pulling down of Zion was literal: so also will be the building up. The rejection of Israel was literal: so also will be the restoration” [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, pp. 48-49] (*ibid.*, p. 343). George N. H. Peters (1825-1909), quoted throughout this book. Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), “Numerous writers, who, in their occasional works, give expression to Chiliastic belief, without entering largely in details... Spurgeon” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:546) “Spurgeon (quoted by Dr. Brookes, p. 50, *Proph. Times*, vol. 10) in his sermon on *The First Res.*, says: ‘I do look forward to this with joy, that though I may sleep in Christ before my Master come, and I know not whether that shall be or no, yet I shall rise at the day of His appearing, and shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just, if I have truly and faithfully served Him; and that recompense shall be to be made like Him; and to partake of His glories before the eyes of men, and to reign with Him during the thousand years’” (*ibid.*, 2:292). “Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) [*Sermons on the Second Coming*, 134, 137-138]... ‘Watch for him, and be always ready, that you may not be ashamed at his [second] advent... The Scripture has left the whole matter, as far as I can see, with an intentional indistinctness, that we may be always expecting Christ to come, and that we may be watching for his coming at any hour and every hour... He may not come for a thousand years; he may come tonight’” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:659). “When the Jews are restored, then the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in; and as soon as they return, then Jesus will come upon Mount Zion to reign with his ancients gloriously, and the halcyon days of the Millennium shall then dawn” [quoting C.H. Spurgeon, *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, I, no. 28, 1855, p. 382] (Horner, *FI*, p. 12) Dwight Moody (1837-1899), “Moody, the Evangelist, is a decided advocate of the Pre-Mill. Advent of Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:139) “At a meeting in Glasgow (1876, reported by the *Christian Weekly*) Moody said: ‘Like some others, I was originally much opposed to this doctrine until, from constantly meeting with it in the reading of Scripture, I was constrained to become a believer in it; and now it is to my mind one of the most precious truths in the whole Bible. And I should feel self-condemned were I to leave Glasgow without speaking about it. All Scripture from Genesis to Revelation should be read as an entire whole, and not a few favorite portions dwelt upon to the exclusion of other parts; nor should our views of divine truth be merely grounded upon the opinions of others, as every one is responsible for his own individual belief; and it will be no excuse for per-

sons to say as a reason for not believing any doctrine of the Bible, that they never had it taught to them. The promise and statements regarding Christ's Second Coming are among the things that are freely given to us by God, and are very much spoken about in the Bible. One verse in every thirteen in the New Test. refers more or less directly to the subject.' 'Surely if the Holy Spirit has brought it before our notice in one thirteenth part of the New Test., it must be a truth of great moment to all who love the Saviour. Although the event itself is certain, yet the exact time of its occurrence is spoken of in Scripture as being uncertain, and therefore calling for constant watchfulness. Although there will be signs of its approach discerned by those who watch, yet upon the world at large it is predicted to come suddenly'" (*ibid.*, p. 141). *Sir Robert Anderson* (1841-1918), quoted throughout this book.

Semi-chilastic groups in the history of the United States include *The settlers of New England*, "Rev. Joshua Spaulding (*Lectures*, pp. 221-2, etc.) speaks of 'many Christians, who were looking, not for the modern Millennium, but for the Sec. Coming of Christ,' etc., and adds: 'I have had the testimony of elderly Christian people, in several parts of New England, that within their remembrance this doctrine was first advanced in the places where they lived, and have heard them name the ministers who first preached it in their churches. No doctrine can be more indisputably proved to have been the doctrine of the Primitive Church than those we call Millenarian; and, beyond all dispute, the same were favorite doctrines with the fathers of New England; with the words of one of whom, writing upon this subject, we shall conclude our observations upon their antiquity: "They are not new, but old; they may be new to some men, but I cannot say it is to their honor.'" In another place (p. 191) he says: "The doctrine of the Millennium is truth; and the prevailing expectation, that it is fast approaching, and is now very near, is doubtless rational,' etc. The same is true doctrinally of Thomas Prince (A.D. 1728 to 1758), pastor at Boston (so Spaulding's *Lectures*), of Dr. B. Gale (see Barber's *His. Collections of Connecticut*, p. 531, who also says: "This (Millenarianism) appears to have been the belief of pious persons at the time of the first settlement of New England,' etc.)" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:542). *The Puritans*, "The Westminster Confession, produced in England during the 1640s by the Westminster Assembly, which had an overwhelming majority of Presbyterian Puritan members, declared that men should 'shake off all carnal security and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come (xxxiii, 3)" [quoting J. Barton Payne, *The Imminent Appearing of Christ*, p. 25] (Showers, *M*, p. 145). *Pietists*, "Pietism... was always, more or less, allied with Millenarianism"

(Peters, *TTK*, 1:540). *Mennonites*, “The ‘Mennonites’ (art. in M’Clintock and Strong’s *Cyclop.* says) ‘in the 10th cent., held, in common with the Anabaptists, the belief in Christ’s personal reign during the Millennium.’ Buck’s *Theol. Dic.*, art. ‘Mennonites,’ remarks, that Menno discarded the extravagant views of certain Anabaptists, but retained the doctrine of ‘the Millennium, or 1000 years’ reign of Christ upon earth’” (*ibid.*, p. 537). *Christadelphians*, “The ‘Christadelphians’ have largely incorporated Chiliasm, and make it essential to their system” (*ibid.*). and *Russellites* (precursors of Jehovah’s Witnesses), “Chiliasmic views are dominant in small parties, as in... the adherents of Barbour, of Rochester, N.Y., and in the followers of Russell, of Pittsburg, Pa... theory of Restitution is in the main allied with Chiliasmic views, revived by Barbour, Russell, etc., in *Three Worlds* and their respective newspapers” (*ibid.*).

Premillennialism Today

Today, chiliasts or premillennialists are found in all the major Protestant denominations. “Pre-Millenarianism, being chiefly related to Eschatology, is adopted by persons in all (or nearly all) denominations” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:553). “Episcopalian, Lutheran, Reformed, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, etc., who have been Millenarians” (*ibid.*, 3:235) “Chiliasm... a doctrine which can be received by all denominations without interfering with their distinctive denominational characteristics” (*ibid.*, p. 260). “Pre-Millenarians are to be found in the early Church, and in all Protestant denominations” (*ibid.*, p. 261) “Pre-Millenarians are found in all Protestant denominations, and do not form a party, sect, or denomination separate and distinct from all others” (*ibid.*, p. 263). “In my own denomination (Evang. Lutheran [in 1884—*ed.*]... Rev. Ebaugh in his brief *His. of Mill.* in Rupp’s *Orig. His. of Relig. Denom’s*, says: “The number of Christians who hold substantially the foregoing views of the Millennium [Chiliasmic], cannot be computed with any degree of certainty, but from the writings of distinguished divines, both in the European and American churches, we are warranted in estimating their number at many thousands already” (*ibid.*, 1:547).

Premillennialism is subscribed to today (and has been subscribed to in recent history) by many of the church’s best theologians and ministers. “American evangelism after 1843... the noted evangelists have been uniformly premillennial” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 96). “Peters [in *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:542-46] lists some 360 adherents of this position among the leaders of eleven denominations in this country, and some 470 writers and ministers of Europe who espoused the premillennial cause” (Pentecost,

TTC, p. 390). “Contained in Proposition 78 of his colossal work, *The Theocratic Kingdom*—published in 1884 and unsurpassed either for completeness or for scholarship—George N. H. Peters has listed by name the outstanding clergymen of the world in his day both with reference to country and denomination who were premillenarians. In the United States within eleven denominations he has named 360, a considerable number of whom where bishops, or doctors of divinity. Very many of America’s honored expositors, editors, and preachers are entered in this list. Similarly, at least 470 widely known ministers and writers of Europe are also indicated by name” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:283). Recent and present-day premillennialists include *C.I. Scofield*, “...the *Scofield Reference Bible*... It has probably done more to extend premillennialism in the last half century than any other volume” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 12), *Charles Feinberg*, quoted throughout this book, *Lewis Sperry Chafer*, quoted throughout this book, *Charles Ryrie*, quoted throughout this book, *J. Dwight Pentecost*, quoted throughout this book, *Alva McClain*, quoted throughout this book, *Herman Hoyt*, *Harry Ironside*, *John Walvoord*, quoted throughout this book, *J. Vernon McGee*, *Renald Showers*, quoted throughout this book, *Arnold Fruchtenbaum*, quoted throughout this book, *Norman Geisler*, quoted throughout this book, *Ron Rhodes*, *Barry Horner*, quoted throughout this book, *John MacArthur*, *John Ankerberg*, *Charles Stanley*, *Chuck Smith*, *Dave Hunt*, *T. A. McMahan*, *Chuck Missler*, *Randall Price*, *Hal Lindsey*, *Jack Van Impe*, *Grant Jeffrey*, *Tim LaHaye*, *Thomas Ice*, *David Reagan*, *Nathan Jones*, *Bill Salus*, *Ed Hindson*, *Elwood McQuaid*, *Mal Couch*, *Tony Garland*, *Paul Henebury*, *Andy Woods*, *Eric Barger*, *Terry James*, *Todd Strandberg*, *Jack Kelley*, *Jim Fletcher*, *Jimmy DeYoung*, *Joel Rosenberg*, *Mark Hitchcock*, *Jan Markell* and *Brannon Howse*.

Chapter 3: Presuppositions and Premises

For the sakes of thoroughness and completeness, before getting into our detailed study of the Bible's teaching regarding the Kingdom of God, I'd like to first provide an overview of my foundational presuppositions (assumptions) and premises (contentions). This overview will clue the reader in on exactly where in the philosophical and theological spectrums I'm coming from, and what my primary contentions are, and will thereby lay the groundwork for the remainder of this book.

Our Presuppositions

My presuppositions are basic assumptions, or "givens," regarding reality, truth and the Bible.

Because most Bible-believing Christians will find my presuppositions or "givens" to be old hat, and will likely have no issues with them, I will simply state them here, without offering much if any evidence for their validity. Since this book is intended primarily for reading and study by members of the Christian church, I'm assuming that the (Christian) reader has already investigated these foundational things for himself or herself, and therefore has no need for my proving them here. However, if the reader is not a conservative Christian, he or she will likely take issue with at least some of these "Christian" presuppositions. For further evidence for the validity of these presuppositions, evidence which is outside the scope of this book, I recommend consulting a good work on the prolegomena ("first things") of Christian theology, such as volume one of Dr. Norm Geisler's *Systematic Theology*.

Presuppositions Regarding Reality

First of all, this work presupposes that the reader and I actually exist and that the world and the things in it are also real. I believe, as conservative Christian theology has taught for centuries, that we human beings exist independently as individuals, not just as figments of some higher being's imagination, or as part of some pantheistic collective consciousness, and that the world around us is also real, and is not an illusion. I believe both we and our world originated in causes outside ourselves, and that we did not and do not "create our own reality."

In this work I also presuppose that God exists. I agree with what George Peters wrote in 1884, "We confess ourselves old-fashioned enough, and such a believer in the representations of Scripture, to believe that reason, honestly exercised, can see the work of an intelligent Creator in the sky

above us, on the earth beneath us, and in the world around us... the ten thousand thousand contrivances and relations indicative of intelligent design" (*TTK*, 3:510). And, "Whatever difficulties—as alleged—on the side of pure reason there may be to prove the existence and the revelation of God, far greater difficulties are met in the effort to show that there is no God or no Revelation, for the latter leaves nature, man, world, the Universe an inscrutable enigma" (*ibid.*, 1:87).

I believe that the God of the Bible, Yahweh or Jehovah, is the only true God. Psalm 83:18 says, "**thou alone, whose name is Jehovah, Art the Most High over all the earth.**" This Jehovah is the God of Israel, and is also the God of the historic Christian church. He is not the Allah of Islam, and is not a pantheistic deity as endorsed by Hinduism or Buddhism. He is the one and only Creator-God, and is a God not of nothingness, but of exquisite engineering, artistry and detail. As Dr. Geisler says, quoting Charles Hodge (in Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, 1:436), "Jehovah is the true God, because He is really God, while the gods of the heathen are vanity and nothing, mere imaginary beings, having neither existence nor attributes" (*ST*, 2:362). By the way, it will be noticed that in this book my quotations from the Old Testament are taken from the American Standard Version of the Bible, which uses the name *Jehovah*, rather than the more common *THE LORD* as used in other translations. While the exact pronunciation of the Hebrew tetragrammaton, the four letters YHWH or JHVH that compose the name Jehovah, is unknown, still, I believe the personal name Jehovah is a more correct portrayal of the Name of Israel's covenant God than the generic *THE LORD* used by most translations. In this book I'll be following the example of Dr. Fruchtenbaum, a Hebrew Christian who often quotes from the ASV. New Testament quotations will be taken from the *New American Standard Bible* [NASB], unless otherwise noted.

Presuppositions Regarding Truth

I believe that truth exists, that it is objective and static, is independent of ourselves, and is independent of its manner of presentation. I believe truth is exclusive, that it excludes what is false. I believe that the claim that truth does not exist is self-defeating (as is also the claim that truth cannot be known). I believe that pluralism, which among other things claims that two conflicting truth claims can both be true, is self-defeating because it excludes exclusivism. I believe all truth is divisive and discriminatory, that it always discriminates between truth and error, and that this is a good thing. I believe that all truth is literal truth, that even spiritual truths are literally true. I believe that symbols in Scripture represent literal truths, and that

the purpose of both literal and figurative language is to impart literal truth. I believe that all truth is connected, that it is never contradictory, that it is knowable and communicable. I believe that truth is also fearless; it has nothing to fear from exhaustive investigation.

Presuppositions Regarding the Bible

I believe that the Bible, in its original writings, is a supernatural revelation from God, which makes both Judaism and Christianity supernatural revelations from God.

I believe Scripture's claim for itself, namely, that it is the inspired word of God, and that it therefore merits our personal faith: "he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And thus you invalidated **the word of God** for the sake of your tradition" (Matt. 15:6). See also Mark 7:13. "**All Scripture is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16) "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for **no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God**" (2 Pet. 1:20–21). "But this **I [Paul]** admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, **believing everything** that is in accordance with the Law, and **that is written in the Prophets**" (Acts 24:14)

While a complete treatment of the evidences for the inspiration of Scripture is outside the scope of this book, I would like to here offer at least a few evidences that have been convincing to me:

1. *Its denunciation of sin and its regenerating power.* "Men, naturally loving sin, could never have devised the denunciations of sin and the holiness of life demanded as given in the Bible" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:286). "The chasm between the origin of matter and the results, the natural and the moral, the material and the spiritual, is an impassible gulf unless we receive the explanation vouchsafed by Revelation, thus vindicating its inspiration. Besides this, the heart-felt reception of succeeding Revelation, its influence and practical workings in heart and life, its adaptation to all our necessities, etc., this, as the Word invites us to experience, most conclusively and powerfully contributes to the proving of its Supernatural origin" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:496).

2. *Its neutral and/or negative descriptions of its major players.* "The silence of Scripture in the way of eulogies, explanations, etc., is to the reflecting mind a powerful argument in favor of its divine inspiration, seeing that such a silence is not natural to ignorance, fanaticism, enthusiasm, special pleading—in brief, to man and his impulses" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:483).

3. *Fulfillment of prophecy.* “Fulfilled prophecy is stronger evidence for the ‘Inspiration’ and ‘Authenticity’ of the Scriptures than miracles” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 6). (See our discussion of fulfilled prophecy in our next chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.)

4. *Its negative prophecy concerning its major players.* “It is against the national pride and love—against the noblest instinctive impulses of nature in its social aspects—that men for ages have predicted the down-trodden, despised condition of their own nation and Kingdom... The men who describe the Divine Purpose—against and in denouncement of the present natural wishes of the people then existing—profess to do it by inspiration” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:468).

5. *Jesus’ confirmation.* Jesus said, “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, **until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished**” (Matt. 5:17-18). “At that time Jesus said to the multitudes, ‘Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. But **all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.**’ Then all the disciples left Him and fled” (Matt. 26:55-56). “But **it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail**” (Luke 16:17). (See also Matt. 15:6, 19:4-5; Mark 7:13; John 10:35, 13:18; Luke 16:29-31, 18:31, 24:25-32, 24:44-46; John 5:46-47.) As Dr. Geisler points out, “He [Jesus] and the New Testament writers refer to persons or events from every chapter of Genesis 1-22 and many others in the rest of the Old Testament” (*ST*, 1:438).

In summary, in my opinion, there is just no better explanation for these facts than inspiration. As George Peters says, “It certainly is unwise, even unscientific or unphilosophical to discard a reason which is admitted to meet the exigencies of a case until a better one is substituted” (*TTK*, 3:468).

Therefore, in light of the above, I believe the Bible is:

True. I believe *all of the Bible is true*, including Genesis. Genesis is repeatedly confirmed in the New Testament: Jesus confirms the creation account in Matt. 19:3–6 and Mark 10:6–9, and Paul confirms it in 1 Cor. 15:45 and 1 Tim. 2:13. Jesus confirms the Genesis account of the Flood in Matt. 24:37–39, Sodom and Gomorrah in Luke 17:26–29, and Jonah in Matt. 12:39–41 and Luke 11:32. Peter also confirms the Flood in 1 Pet. 3:20. Genesis, with its accounts of creation, the fall of man, God’s very first promise of redemption (Gen. 3:15), the call of Abraham, and the Edenic, Adamic,

Noahic and Abrahamic Covenants, contains many foundational truths that are integral to the overall Kingdom Plan. “The God who appears in Creation, who manifests His love for man and then His displeasure at sin again appears in love and mercy, manifested by the most extraordinary admirably adapted measures of grace looking forward to a magnificent re-creation, and thus stamps the first record as divine” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:494). Genesis is also confirmed by many of our personal observations and experiences. “Let us take what we see and know, and thus go back to Genesis, and we will find its statements substantiated by a connected chain of evidence, before which all purely inferential statements must vanish. Thus we see man fallen, i.e. naturally given to evil; God personally withdrawn; no Paradise; Creation with all its retained blessings burdened with evil; the creature man oppressed with sorrow and death; and with all this a self-consciousness impressed—arising out of our moral nature—of dependence upon a Higher Being, of relationship to an extra-mundane Will, and even of accountability to a Moral Governor” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:493).

Literally true. “If understood in the sense that all the Bible is literally true but not all is true literally, then literal seems to be the best term available” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:448). I also believe that most of the Bible is true literally, and that non-literal Scripture is readily identifiable as such. We’ll have more to say on this later, in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.

Inerrant. Whether the Bible is speaking on subjects spiritual or scientific, heavenly or earthly, I believe it is speaking inerrantly. In all candor, even after many thousands of hours of personal Bible study, I still have yet to find within Scripture even one incontrovertible contradiction or error.

Unbreakable. I believe that nothing we can say or do can ever either alter what Scripture says or inhibit its fulfillment. “**...the Scripture cannot be broken**” (John 10:35)

Unified. I believe all forty Bible writers, while have differing emphases and writing styles, all present the same doctrine.

Universal. I believe the Bible is true for everyone, in every place, for all time.

Eternal. I believe the Bible, the word of God, will remain forever. “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but **the word of our God shall stand forever**” (Isa. 40:8). “**Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away**” (Mark 13:31). “**But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail**” (Luke 16:17). (See also Matt. 24:35 and Luke 21:33.)

Important. I believe *all of the Bible is important*. As Dr. McClain points out, “No mere man, not even the Apostle Paul, has ever been made

the divine channel of *all* divine truth. Therefore, for any believer to feed on the Pauline Scriptures alone, or the Four Gospels alone, or to lean wholly upon any one human teacher of the Scriptures, or to restrict the total significance of a Biblical doctrine to the measure of a one-sided selection of texts, indicates spiritual immaturity and the limited discernment which always attends it” (*GK*, p. 264). I believe that *Bible doctrine is important*. “...the great fundamental framework of the Scriptures is its doctrines, and comparing them to the bones of the body, imparting consistency and form” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:111). “Theological ideas have longer-lasting consequences than mere political ideas—eternal consequences (Mark 8:36)” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:18). For example, “For **what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul**” (Mark 8:36)?

Authoritative. I believe the Bible is the ultimate authority: that it trumps all creeds, all theological tradition and even man’s logic and reason.

I believe that while the Bible was written by men, these men were superintended by God such that their writings were *without error*. “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but **men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God**” (2 Pet. 1:20–21). Imperfect men were used by God to pen a perfect document. As Dr. Geisler says, “It is possible to draw a straight line with a crooked stick” (*ST*, 1:249).

I believe our present-day Bible *corresponds faithfully to the original writings*. “Christians believe that God in His providence preserved the copies from all substantial error; in fact, the degree of accuracy is greater than that of any other book from the ancient world, exceeding 99 percent” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:257). “We can reconstruct the original text with over 99 percent accuracy” (*ibid.*, p. 503).

Therefore, I’m writing this book from the presupposition of *faith*. With my assumptions that we, the world and God are real, that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant word of God, and that Bible prophecy is in fact supernatural revelation from God, I’m writing from the perspective of *believing* both these presuppositions and also the premises that I’ll be proposing next.

Our Premises

Next, I’ll outline my *premises*. My premises are things on which not all Christians will necessarily agree with me, but if he or she is a believer, he or she will probably agree with me on at least most of them. Other of my premises, though, may be new ideas to him or her or ideas that may be open for debate, ideas that, while not essential for our salvation, are in my mind worthy of defense, as they are the foundational ideas upon which this

doctrine of the Kingdom is constructed. These premises are divided into two major categories: those regarding the Bible and those regarding the Kingdom.

Premises Regarding the Bible

First, I'll state my premises regarding the Bible and regarding our apprehension and understanding of the Bible.

The first four of these premises are *further evidences for the inspiration of Scripture*.

The first of these four evidences is *the specified, or ordered complexity of the Bible's overall Kingdom Plan*. To put it plainly, after examining the evidence in considerable detail, I don't believe that there's any possible way that forty independent writers, writing over a time span of sixteen hundred years, could possibly have designed a Plan like this on their own, one component at a time, without a super-intelligent, superintending Mind overseeing and directing the project. Each writer/prophet contributed his own unique set of components to this overall Plan, apparently without access to the overall blueprint. How was this possible? The blueprint, which we'll be examining in detail in this book, is both highly complex and highly ordered. How do we explain this complex yet ordered design, apart from a superintending Designer? George Peters suggests, "If it were impossible for unskilful, ignorant workmen to build a locomotive with its complicated application of mechanical principles and its confinement and allotment of a powerful force in nature (which in the very nature of the case requires, and is indicative of, intelligent comprehension) how much less is it possible for 'ignorant,' men to construct, develop, and exhibit such a Theocratic Plan as is embraced in the doctrine of this Kingdom; a Plan running through thousands of years, requiring the most extraordinary manifestations and provisions, incorporating an animating, pervading unity extending from the entailment of the curse to its removal, from the loss of a Paradise to its final restoration, from a withdrawal of God to His dwelling again with man, from the introduction of evil to its complete overthrow, from a Redemption needed to a Redemption fully gained" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:487). After many years of careful study of this theocratic Plan, I have no explanation for its astoundingly high level of ordered complexity other than that it was designed by the same One who also designed the cosmos, the laws of physics, the human body and DNA. It is my hope that by the time the reader has finished reading this book, that he or she will have come to this same conclusion.

The second further evidence for the inspiration of the Bible is *the scope and internal consistency of its Plan*. Peters continues, “The important question to be answered is not whether this or that portion may or may not be defective—but whether the Bible contains a Plan of Salvation worthy of God and adapted to secure the happiness of man in all his relations—worthy of the sacrifice alleged to have been made in its behalf, and adapted to the removal of the evils now unhappily burdening the world. While it is reasonable in studying a locomotive to consider its separate portions and desecant on their form, etc., it would be folly to confine ourselves only to these and neglect what is of far greater moment to consider, the locomotive as one whole—its capability of performing the work designed by its builder—and then to look at its various parts—not as misshapen or wrongfully constructed when contemplated by themselves irrespective of their designed use—but only in their adaptedness to subserve the intended end... If a man forms his estimate of the worthiness, the purpose, the capability, etc., of a machine only from viewing its several parts separated from the Plan designed by its designer, he is regarded as taking a low position in judgment, and this too in proportion to the complications, the numerous appendages of the machine, thus requiring for correct apprehension a constant reference to the plan. If this is true of things of a material interest, how much more noticeable is this fact, when we see it applied to the greatest of all interests, those relating to humanity, seeing that the Bible professes to be a book given in behalf of man” (*TTK*, 3:469).

The third evidence is *the fitness of the Plan to achieve its stated purposes*. “A consideration of our needs and that of the world, and then of the remarkable Divine Purpose in Redemption which so accurately meets and provides for these, in connection with an earnest of experimental knowledge; the historical evidences, the past and present fulfillment of prophecy, etc., form such a combination of proof, such a union of necessity and provision, that reason and faith acknowledge it as immensely superior to anything that humanity can produce” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:287). “The Theocratic idea is so grand in its conception and so sublime in its adaptation to man and its results, that it could not have been of human devising” (*ibid.*, 3:592).

The fourth and final premise regarding the inspiration of the Bible concerns Bible prophecy, specifically *the time compression of prophecy*. This will be discussed later, in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.

Our next set of premises concerns six additional characteristics (in addition to its being *inspired*) of the Bible. In our discussion of these charac-

teristics, we'll examine the premises that the Bible is Jewish, concrete rather than abstract, exclusive, progressive, sufficient and perspicuous.

First, the Bible is *Jewish*. Both the Old and New Testaments are thoroughly Jewish, both having been written entirely by Jews from within a Jewish context. And as we will see throughout this study, there are deliberate reasons why this is so. George Peters asks, "Why does God so carefully trace the rise and progress of the Jewish nation to the establishment of the Theocracy, then enter into fullness of detail respecting the Theocracy, its history and downfall; then avoiding any connected history of the nation so long as separated from the form of government He Himself instituted, He only presents a sufficiency to give coherency to predictions and preparations relating to the future? Why does God specially single out this Jewish nation as alone worthy of detailed mention, and pass by those mighty nations (with brief mention) that existed contemporaneously? Why does He devote so many pages to a special form of government, and pass by those forms which largely fill the pages of profane history and which play such a prominent part in the world's drama? Such questions are only satisfactorily answered by a reference to the Theocratic ordering. The Jewish nation being directly under God's own Kingdom, sustaining to Him a near national relationship as the Ruler, He, for the sake of His own Theocratic position, once occupied and to be again re-occupied, evinces this partiality to the nation in the recorded history. When history shall be read and studied after the thousand years are ended, the significancy of all this and the manifest omission respecting other governments and nations of vast proportions will appear self-evident in the then existing grandeur of the Theocracy, the restoration and supremacy of the Jewish nation, and in the Gentile nations having participated in its blessings" (*TTK*, 3:595).

Second, the Bible's message is *concrete rather than abstract*. "The great ideas of the Bible are concrete rather than abstract; and such terms as the Kingdom of God are intended to convey meanings which are pertinent to actual situations in the world of reality with which common men are somewhat familiar" (McClain, *GK*, p. 17).

Third, the Bible's correct interpretation is *exclusive*. While Scripture may have more than one *application*, it has only one correct *interpretation*. "...that golden rule of all sound interpretation which Luther first introduced, namely, that all the sacred books contain but one single meaning" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:49) "According to the literal method, there is only one textual meaning: the one expressed in it by its author" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:417). However, while it has only one correct *interpretation*, it has countless possible *implications* and *applications*. "There is a difference between the in-

terpretation of a text (which is one), and the *application* of a text (which are many)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:418). “Interpretation is one; application is manifold” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 145). “Also, while there is only *one interpretation* of a text—the one literally meant by the author—there are *many implications*. This is why New Testament use of the Old Testament sometimes seems removed from a proper interpretation; the New Testament is often not giving an interpretation, but an implication or application of that text. *A text’s correct interpretation is the historical-grammatical interpretation*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:418). Also, the true meaning of Scripture is *what the author meant*; not *what it means to me*. “If it is requisite, in order to understand any author, to enter into his spirit and to comprehend the reasoning which leads him to definite conclusions, this is equally true of the primitive writers. Without a knowledge of the Covenant promises, the prophecies based upon them, etc., it is simply impossible to do justice to certain expressions and even doctrinal positions assumed by the Fathers” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:406). “The true meaning of a biblical passage is not what it means to me, but what was meant by the one who wrote it” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:416). “Martin Luther [in *Basic Theological Writings*, p. 129]... ‘The words [of Scripture] are to be considered according to the intention of the speaker’” (*ibid.*, 4:454). “The Old Testament is to be interpreted in light of *itself*; whatever it meant in that context by those authors who wrote to those people is what it still means” (*ibid.*, p. 587). “The reader’s task is to *discover* the meaning already in a text, not *determine* what he thinks it ought to mean” (*ibid.*, p. 416).

Fourth, the Bible’s message is *progressive*. The entire Kingdom program is complex, and has been revealed piece by piece over an extended period of time. “Not all doctrine is revealed immediately and completely by God; most teachings are revealed progressively” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:298).

Fifth, the Bible is *sufficient*. “The Kingdom being thus postponed, and the process of the gathering out of the elect now going on, is sufficient reason why no additional Revelation is necessary. The Apocalypse of John, to encourage our faith and hope, includes all that is additionally required to be known, appropriately closing the direct Divine communications, and confirming the voices of the Prophets” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:626). “We possess a sufficient guide” (*ibid.*, p. 627). It has been sufficient throughout history. “Irenaeus fought against the troops of heretics with arguments (munitions) drawn from the Scriptures alone. This was only an imitating of Christ, the apostles, and prophets, who constantly appealed to, and cited from, the Record, thus comparing the things of the Spirit” (*ibid.*, 1:112). No new present-day revelation is needed.

And sixth, the Bible is also *perspicuous*: its main messages are intelligible and understandable. Dr. Geisler explains, “The oft-misunderstood principle of biblical perspicuity does not claim that everything in Scripture is clear; it affirms that Scripture’s central teachings are clear. As stated popularly: In the Bible, the main things are the plain things, and the plain things are the main things. Indeed, the gospel itself is stated in one-syllable words, none of which is over four letters: ‘He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life’ (1 John 5:12). Also, Jesus said plainly, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’ (John 14:6). Doubters and distorters only need be asked, ‘Which of these words do you not understand?’” (*ST*, 4:92)

Our final set of premises regarding the Bible itself concern Bible prophecy. Specifically, we maintain that Bible prophecy is a major component of Scripture, that it is important for us to understand, that it is connected with history, and that it will all be fulfilled, whether we believe it or not.

First, prophecy *is a major component of Scripture*. As Chafer points out, “In the actual text of all the Scriptures, at least one-fifth was prediction at the time it was written” (*ST*, 4:257).

Second, prophecy is *important for us to understand*. Jesus castigated the Jewish leaders of His day for not discerning the times, as they should have done via their study of Daniel 9:24-27. “And the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Him asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. But He answered and said to them, ‘When it is evening, you say, “It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.” And in the morning, “There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.” Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot **discern the signs of the times**? An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah.’ And He left them, and went away” (Matt. 16:1-4). Also, all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for us, including prophecy: “**All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; **that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.** (2 Ti. 3:16-17). (See also 1 Pet. 1:12 and 2 Pet. 3:2.) And specifically regarding the prophetic book of Revelation, “**Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near**” (Rev. 1:3). “And he said to me, ‘**Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near**’” (Rev. 22:10-11) Bible prophecy should become *more* relevant with the passage of time, rather than *less*: “Christian eschatology,

the more the course of time advances, must become less and less an unimportant appendix, and more and more a locus primarius of Christian doctrine” [quoting Lange’s *Com. Luke*, p. 326, Doc. 1] (Peters, *TTK*, 1:33). An understanding of prophecy is necessary for a complete and well-rounded understanding of biblical theology. As Peters points out, “Therefore it is, that he who studies and compares Prophecy (teaching respecting the future), keeping in view that it is far more than mere prediction (in the sense of foretelling to convince men of the truth, etc.), that it is designed to teach *a system of truth* (one part adjusting itself to another in the thus revealed Plan), will obtain *a deeper and more satisfactory* insight into Redemption, as carried on and finally realized” (*ibid.*, p. 170). “...our hopes all lay in the future... The covenants themselves, in their most precious aspects, relate to the future... Prophecy... it is a communication or message from God, a pre historic record of the Divine Purpose, and if properly linked together forms a continuous chain of evidence, evincing the unity of the Divine Plan in establishing the Kingdom. To perceive this unity, so confirmatory to faith, a knowledge of the future is indispensably necessary; hence it is graciously given, that we may, beholding the future as present, see the unfolding of covenanted grace, realize the evidences of a prevailing Sovereignty of the Most High, and have excited within us faith, childlike trust, hope, and love” (*ibid.*, p. 340). Walvoord says, “The hope of future events is inseparable from Christian faith and any vagueness weakens and limits the whole perspective” (*MK*, p. 10). A good understanding of Bible prophecy will also help insure that we’re expending our efforts in Christian service in eternally meaningful ways. Dr. Chafer admonishes, “It is for every child of God to know the exact plan He has disclosed and to be wholly subject to it, else his ignorant service may but play into the hands of the enemy of God and add to the final bonfire of wood, hay and stubble” (*KHP*, 94%).

Third, prophecy is *connected with history*. McClain observes, “Viewed from one standpoint, prophecy arises out of a definite historical situation existing immediately before the eyes of the prophet. There is probably no exception to this rule. No matter how far into the future he was transported in vision, the prophet never lost his contact with history. He never forgot where he was, nor the people to whom he was sent to speak on behalf of God. Even in purely predictive prophecy, or what some have called apocalyptic vision, although the prophet may say little or nothing about the immediate historical situation, it is nevertheless not forgotten but furnishes the background of all that he has to say with reference to the future. In his vision of the coming Kingdom, the seer never cut loose from the kingdom of history” (*GK*, p. 135). Peters adds, “Prophecy is designed to reveal the Di-

vine Purpose, to indicate and vindicate its unity of design, and therefore, instead of being ‘independent,’ one of another, all the predictions of God’s Word relating to the Redemptive process, and the history of His people, are mutually dependent upon each other” (*TTK*, 1:247).

Fourth, and finally, *prophecy will all be fulfilled, whether believed by us or not*. Jesus said, “For truly I say to you, **until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished**” (Matt. 5:18), and “**But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail**” (Luke 16:17). “From the decided and specific fulfillment of prophecy in the past, it is proper to hold that the remainder will also thus be verified” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 246). That being the case, might we not do well to believe as did Paul? “But this I [Paul, vs. 10] admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect **I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything** that is in accordance with the Law, and **that is written in the Prophets**” (Acts 24:14)

Premises Regarding Our Apprehension and Understanding of the Bible

Before digging into our study of the Bible itself, which is the major task of this book, it will be helpful for us to first review some characteristics of the Bible that can make studying the Bible challenging, and we’ll also take a look at some of the helps and hinderances to our understanding the Bible.

First, we recognize that the Bible is complex, detailed and even obscure on some points.

Because the Bible is *complex*, “The issues of premillennialism are neither trivial nor simple” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 127). But while the Bible and the issues related to premillennialism are complex, the subject of the Kingdom is still worthy of diligent study, with the goal being good comprehension. “Certainly if one is to reject a doctrine because it is complicated, no theologian could for a moment accept the doctrine of the Trinity or debate the fine points of the relation of the two natures in Jesus Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 111).

The Bible is *detailed*, and minute detail permeates the doctrine of the Kingdom. “When these things are realized, men will be amazed to find how largely and minutely, all this has been described in the Word, and yet how little it has been noticed and appreciated, just as the things relating to the First Advent were overlooked” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:24).

The Bible is also *obscure* on some points. We suggest that this obscurity is *intentional*. “Admitting the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and that, as many writers have noticed, some indistinctness, a degree of obscurity, relating to time, explanations, etc., is manifested in the things of the King-

dom, these facts are indicative of design in the same” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:148). “There is, consequently, a deep wisdom, such as man could not evince, in those isolated, broken predictions” (*ibid.*, p. 233). For instance, at times Jesus spoke in parables for the express purpose of *hiding* their meaning from some people. (See Matt. 13:10-13.) This obscurity on some points is *intentional* for at least three reasons: 1. *To preserve moral freedom*. Peters continues, “Again, another reason for [this obscurity] may be found in human freedom. Omnipotence inspired by mercy has given continued moral freedom, and it will do nothing, even by way of revelation, to exert an undue force upon the will. Preiswerk (quoted by Auberlen, *Danl. and Rev.*, p. 84) says: ‘The Lord has always represented the events He announced by the prophets in such a manner, that they were sufficiently clear for him who approached with reverence and careful thought, and yet sufficiently dark and veiled not to limit the freedom of human action. For if the unchangeable decrees of the Eternal were presented to our eyes in unveiled features, what would become of the responsibility of man, of the free movements of human life, what of courage, and hope, and joy?’ Hence it is, e.g. that prophecies which particularly describe the time of the reestablishment of the Kingdom are given somewhat obscurely, as in Daniel and the Apocalypse. This, and other reasons, will become more apparent, when considering certain things pertaining to the Kingdom, especially the postponement, the ordering of the future Kingdom, the restoration of the Jews, the Antichrist, etc.” (*ibid.*) 2. *For the safety of believers*. “In answer to the question, frequently asked, why the revelations respecting the Messiah’s Kingdom were at first so obscure, were so gradually unfolded, and that some things, to be fully understood, require additional light, it has been said, that God makes long and secret preparations for important events; that He adapts His revelations to the necessities and circumstances of particular times, etc. Reflection will teach us an additional reason, viz.: that the depravity of man, exhibited in the pursuit of selfishness, would, hitherto, have rejected a plainer revelation, or else would have made it the basis of a continuous cruel persecution. If everything relating to the Kingdom would have been clearly revealed, in a systematic order, we are confident that such would have been the hatred of earthly kingdoms toward it, that no believer in it would have been safe, and, in consequence, the work of gathering out the elect would have been seriously impeded. The existence of Gentile domination, especially the hostile and jealous Roman power, prevented (as we shall show in the proper place) a plainer statement of various particulars, lest it should unnecessarily excite unremitting persecution. This Kingdom will be better understood as the Primitive view is revived; its nature and the

things pertaining to it will be better comprehended as the Scriptures are compared; and the result will be, as prophecy teaches us (e.g. Rev. 19, etc.), that the kings and mighty of the earth will be arrayed against its re-establishment. God, foreseeing this antagonism as directed by ‘the god of this world,’ does not unnecessarily excite it by a premature disclosure of all things, but gives us the truth in detached portions, some of it veiled under prophecy, others under symbolical language, etc., so that His preparations, patiently conducted, may go on to a successful completion, and the Kingdom be suddenly—unexpectedly to many—manifested. The history of the world in its rejection of the truth, is evidence to justify such a conclusion” (*ibid.*). “...knowledge itself may give new weapons into the hands of evil” (*ibid.*, 2:156) “So prevailing was the primitive view in its relation to the Empire that, as Gibbon (*Decl. and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 80) intimates, it was one cause of the hostile spirit and persecution of the emperors, although mentioned with caution and reserve it became known, and (Mosheim, vol. 1, p. 413) the Montanists were censured because they disclosed it so freely and prominently” (*ibid.*, p. 640). “To indicate to the student how delicately this was anciently handled, we refer e.g. to Josephus (*Ant.* 10, 10, 4), who relates Daniel’s dream (Dan. 2), and vaguely refers to the interpretation of it. After intimating that the fourth kingdom is the Roman, he, in view of the action of the Stone, to avoid giving offence, says ‘Daniel did also declare the meaning of the Stone to the king; but I do not think proper to relate it, since I have only undertaken to describe things past or things present, but not things that are future’” (*ibid.*, p. 640). 3. *To set up the nations for destruction.* “And now **many nations are assembled against thee**, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon **Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah**, neither understand they his counsel; **for he hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor**” (Mic. 4:11-12). “The restoration of the Jews being intimately connected with the Kingdom, an essential accessory to its re-establishment, a degree of obscurity is thrown around the subject (as e.g. to the exact manner of occurrence, the time, etc.), in order that it may prove ‘a snare’ and ‘a net’ for the nations, who, at the consummation, shall be arrayed against it and the saints and God, saying, ‘Come and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance’ (Ps. 83:4)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:148).

These factors notwithstanding, understanding the Bible still is *possible*. Jesus told His disciples, “and **you shall know the truth**, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). “But when He, **the Spirit of truth**, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; for He will not speak on

His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; **and He will disclose to you what is to come**” (John 16:13). Daniel was told, “But as for you, Daniel, **conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time**; many will go back and forth, and **knowledge will increase**” (Dan 12:4). “Many will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and **none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand**” (Dan 12:10). Serious Bible students agree that “a sufficiency is given to every one who will ‘search the Scriptures’” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 51). “There are no limits to be placed on the possibility of the illumination of the mind by the Spirit” (Chafer, *G*, 88%). “The claim that the prophetic Scriptures cannot be understood is never made by those who give due attention to them” (Chafer, *ST*, 7:138). “Premillennialism not only takes the Bible as authoritative in opposition to liberalism but believes that an ordinary believer can understand the main import of the Scriptures including the prophetic Word” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 15).

We suggest that it is also possible to understand the Bible with *certainly*. Peters is straight-forward regarding the premillennial view of the Kingdom: “Our position is an impregnable one” (*TTK*, 3:258).

Understanding will increase as history progresses. In the last days, knowledge will increase and become abundant. “But as for you, Daniel, **conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase**” (Dan 12:4). Even before the age of computers and the Internet Peters wrote, “The cheap publication and extended circulation in almost every language of the globe, the numerous aids to its comprehension, the varied versions and translations, the revisions and their discussions, the works in defense of, or against them, etc., has had a tendency to bring the Word of God before the people with such startling conspicuousness, that God justifies Himself in first warning before bringing upon the nations the terrible threatened judgments. The nearer we are to the end, the more prominent should be this interest in the Scriptures” (*TTK*, 3:130). In the last days, we should expect that study of prophecy will accelerate. Peters continues, “Oosterzee (*Ch. Dog.*, vol. 2, P. 777) says: ‘In the nineteenth (century) the importance of the Eschatological—almost overlooked by the Reformers—becomes constantly more universally recognized;’ or as Kling (quoted by Oosterzee): ‘It is not to be denied that our age enters with an earnestness and intensity, such as no earlier one has done, into the Eschatological examination, and presses forward in the complete development of this doctrine, one sign among many that we are hastening toward the great decision.’... the study of Eschatology so earnestly and successfully prosecuted in recent times, is a

sign that we are approaching the great crisis” (*ibid.*, p. 135). And prophecy will surely be most clearly understood as the prophesied events actually unfold. “But thou, O Daniel, **shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased**” (Dan 12:4). Peters suggests, “Dan. 12:4 pertains exclusively to the one vision that was sealed, which will not (as to its conclusion) be fully understood until ‘the time of the end’ (which we place in the interval between the two stages [of Christ’s return, i.e., the Tribulation period—*ed.*]), when it will be thoroughly comprehended in view of the events transpiring, and the precise chronological status being recognized” (*TTK*, 3:150). “And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for **the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end**. Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but **they that are wise shall understand**” (Dan 12:9–10). According to the book of Revelation, at some point when the Tribulation period is in full swing, even hardened, unrepentant sinners will recognize that God is at work in the events then transpiring: “And **the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man**, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they **said** to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of **Him who sits on the throne, and** from the wrath of **the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come; and** who is able to stand” (Rev. 6:15–17)? “Whatever the wise may understand in reference to the general outlines of the prophecy ([Dan.] ch. 12:10), yet there is sufficient said in ch. 12:9 to indicate that some things shall not be clearly apprehended until the time of the end, the closing period has arrived and is actually inaugurated” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:657). “The Book of Dan. (*Jewish Apoc.*) remains at least sealed, 12:9, for the nation to the time of the end, while Rev. (Christian Apoc.) is unsealed, Rev. 22:10 [“And he said to me, **‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near’**”], inviting study and knowledge” (*ibid.*, p. 658). “The Bible will be read and searched with increasing interest—intensified by actual trial and suffering—and everything illustrative of the times then existing will be most carefully examined. Then it is that such a work like this—perhaps now derided and sneered at by some professed believers—will be thankfully perused and its deductions from the Scriptures gratefully contrasted with the then existing manifestations and the Divine original. It is both an honor and a privilege to write for such a period, thus becoming, by God’s grace, instrumental in upholding the faith and consoling the hearts of martyrs, of

sustaining men and women under Antichrist's cruel rule by the assurance that this very trial shall redound, if faithful, to their everlasting honor and glory (Rev. 20:4, 6)" (*ibid.*, p. 733).

Our understanding of the Bible *will never be entirely complete in this life*. There are difficulties that may be insurmountable for us, at least for the time being. Therefore, when we encounter difficulties, rather than pretend that they don't exist, we should be forthright and readily admit such. "Nearly all writers upon chronology and prophetic dates have manifested commendable modesty, and while giving in their judgment an approximation to the truth, do not conceal from themselves or readers the difficulties connected with the subject" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:102). We recognize that we will never fully understand everything in this life. "For **as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts**" (Isa. 55:9). And, "**Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways**" (Rom. 11:33)! Since God's wisdom is infinitely greater than ours, we should therefore expect at least some difficulty grasping His thoughts. "a believer... the promise is ours, but the manner of fulfilling it belongs to God" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:553). "The finite mind is soon overwhelmed in the contemplation of the eternal facts and purposes of God" (Chafer, *G*, 13%) "In the Scriptures we have a revelation coming down from an Infinite Mind, expressed in the vehicle of human language; and therefore, as Alford has well said, 'Its simplest saying has in it a depth which the human mind cannot fathom...' [quoting Henry Alford, *New Testament for English Readers*, Intro., p. 4]... There is no end to God" (McClain, *GK*, p. 265). However, again, we *can know*, and know *with certainty*, those things that God has revealed to us. "**The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us** and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29).

Next we'll consider *some things that are necessary in order for us to understand the Bible*. Some of these necessary things are from God, and some are from us.

The necessities *from God* include spiritual regeneration and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

First, because "**a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them**, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Cor. 2:14), *spiritual regeneration*, or being "born again" is essential to understanding the Bible. Natural, or unregenerate man always misinterprets the work of God.

This can readily be seen by observing his claims concerning God, nature, the accuracy and sufficiency of the Bible, the gospel, someone becoming a believer, or any of a thousand other biblical subjects. A natural, or unregenerate man evaluates these things incorrectly because he simply does not have the spiritual tools necessary to interpret them correctly. Jesus spoke of **“the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you”** (John 14:17). Paul said “For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so **the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God**” (1 Cor. 2:11), “but **whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away**” (2 Cor. 3:16) and, “in whose case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving**, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4). “For among them are those who enter into households and captivate **weak women weighed down with sins**, led on by various impulses, **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth**” (2 Tim. 3:6-7). Dr. McClain explains, “Spiritual blindness... This is the condition of the whole unsaved world, so that we cannot expect anything but confusion in the ideas of unregenerated men regarding the essential truths of Scripture, no matter how great their scholarship” (GK, p. 264). “‘the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not’ (2 Cor. 4:4). In this verse it is worthy of notice that the particular object of Satan’s venomous hatred is ‘the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God’ (ASV)” (*ibid.*). “In summarizing this introductory discussion, two things should be emphasized: first, the crucial problems of understanding the written revelation of God are found in man, not in the revelation; and second, excepting man’s finitude, these problems are all basically moral and spiritual in nature. If men cannot see, it is not that they have lost their minds, but they have lost their holiness. If men do not believe, it is not that they are incapable of the intellectual act of assent, but that they will not believe. To say that the simple act of belief, considered psychologically, is beyond the power of man, is nonsense. Every day, men show clearly by their actions that they can believe in each other, in themselves, even in the lies of the propaganda mills. But men of themselves will not believe God. If there is an impossibility somewhere—and there is—it is not to be found in any alleged esoteric meaning of Scripture; nor can it be located in some defect of the human intellect. The impossibility is moral and spiritual. Man can not believe and understand what God says because he will not. That is why fallen men are ‘ever learning,’ yet never, without the

saving operation of the Holy Spirit, 'able to come to the knowledge of the truth' as revealed in Jesus Christ and recorded in Scripture (2 Tim. 3:7). And that is why, in the last analysis, it is God who must open the 'understanding' of men that they might 'understand the scriptures' (Luke 24:45)" (*ibid.*, p. 265).

Second, *the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit* is needed. Jesus said, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But **when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth**; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and **He will disclose to you what is to come**. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you" (John 16:12-15) and, "Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**' Then **He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures**" (Luke 24:44-46) Conservative scholars are in agreement with Jesus on this. "None will comprehend prophecy who are not taught by the Holy Spirit" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:257). "The remedy for such ignorance, of course, is to receive and read the whole Word of God with an open mind under the guidance of the Spirit of God" (McClain, *GK*, p. 263). "No amount of evidence apart from the work of the Holy Spirit will convince anyone of the significance of the fact that the Bible is God's Word" (Geisler, *ST*, 1:559). "God not only bears witness to the believer that Christ is the Son of God, but also that the Bible is the Word of God" (*ibid.*, p. 559).

Now, while spiritual regeneration and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, which both come from God, are essential, there are at least three other things that must come *from us* if we are to understand the Bible. These are faith, effort, and deep reflection.

First, *faith*. Scripture will only be truly understood as far as it is believed. Chafer says, "As to their theories concerning the origin of things, men are thus divided into two general classes. It is not a division between learned and unlearned men, or between good and bad men; but it is a division between men to whom God is sufficiently real and those to whom He is not sufficiently real to be accepted as the Creator of all things. There is an unalterable law which accounts for the capacity or incapacity of man to grasp the things of God (1 Cor. 2:12, 14; John 3:3). 'By faith we understand' (Heb. 11:3); but the man without faith does not understand, nor can he ever understand until he is saved in Christ. And since the unre-

generate cannot understand, God has commissioned the Gospel to be preached to them rather than a ministry of useless controversy” (*MBT*, 42%).

Second, *effort*. “Prophecy... no man can make himself conversant with the same without considerable labor and time” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:170). “While all men can derive benefit from its study, yet few men are really qualified to perform the amount of labor required to bring together prophecy connectedly and systematically. And among the few, nearly all, possessing the requisite talent and ability, are so occupied with other labors that they cannot bestow the time that the subject demands” (*ibid.*, p. 170). “The testimony in behalf of our position is cumulative” (*ibid.*, p. 442). Dr. Fruchtenbaum observes, “...the mysteries of the Kingdom were not given to be understood by unbelievers, but only by believers; even then, it can only be understood by those believers who are willing to *hear and understand*. This requires discipline of study” (*FM*, p. 659).

And finally, *deep reflection*. “It is only the deeply reflective, who receive the Word as spoken, and recognize the predicted fact that there will be but little faith in Christ’s Coming as ‘the Son of Man’ to sit on the throne of His glory, that ponder and accept these things. The author anticipates unmeasured abuse from some quarters for stating his views so plainly, and insisting so strongly upon the future reign of Jesus as ‘the Son of Man,’ just as covenanted. But he anticipates it only from those whose reverence for the Word is outweighed by human authority, prejudice, and bigotry; men of candor, judgment and high honor, however unable to accept of these views, yet seeing how they at least have a basis in the grammatical sense of covenant, prophecy, etc., will treat them with respect, lest unhappily they should be eventually found to have derided God’s own ordering” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:566).

There are some things that will be *helps* to us in our endeavor to understand the Bible, one of which is the works of others. It’s been well said that “we stand on the shoulders of giants.” “as Sir I. Newton justly remarked, there is scarcely a prophetic writer but he adds something through his investigations to our stock of knowledge” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:97) However, we must be cognizant that others’ works will be fallible. “Infallibility does not belong to man, and hence the best of men—as if to encourage us in our own efforts—give us evidences of weakness and imperfection in some things” (*ibid.*, p. 234).

There are also *hinderances* to our understanding the Bible. These include the piety and charisma of religious leaders, personal “revelations” and cultic arrogance. Regarding *religious leaders* to whom we may look up, and

rightly so, because of their Godly manner of life, “Their piety, usefulness, ability, etc., enlarge the power to mislead in this direction, and materially aids in forming that ‘snare’ and ‘net’ in which both Church and world will be entangled at the Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:164). Regarding *personal “revelations,”* “The world is full of... prophetic interpretation... many who deem their special theory or system the child of prayer and an answer from God, when it is the outgrowth of their own speculations and imaginations. Every student of God’s Word will, of course, ask His guidance and the Spirit’s influence, but he knows that such are only available and practical in so far as he accommodates himself to the guidance already given in the Holy Scriptures and to the utterances of the Spirit already recorded therein” (*ibid.*, p. 719). And *cultic arrogance*, “They take their own mental deductions and imaginings for such as are divinely derived and authorized. Such, too, more or less influenced by their supposed elevation to a plane higher than that enjoyed by others are exceedingly exacting and bigoted, as the history of the past and present attests in various professed churches, parties, and individuals—salvation out of their own standpoint being impossible, or, at least, a matter of the utmost difficulty” (*ibid.*, 3:76).

But the blessings of understanding the Scriptures are well worth the time and effort expended. The diligent Bible student will be blessed with *enhanced faith*, “...there is in Holy Scripture a ‘hidden harmony’ unknown to those who ignore the scheme of type and prophecy which permeates the whole. This study is a sure antidote to skepticism. No student of prophecy is a sceptic” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 211). *motivation for ministry*, “And I went to the angel, telling him to give me **the little book**. And he said to me, ‘Take it, and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.’ And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and it was **in my mouth sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter**” (Rev. 10:9–10). “The content of the Little Book is prophecy, especially the prophecy of the middle and the second half of the Tribulation. This gives the clue to the meaning of verses 8-10. To almost all people, prophecy is sweet. Prophetic conferences draw larger audiences than virtually any other kind of conference. The voluminous sale of the more sensational prophecy books is another evidence of how ‘sweet’ Bible prophecy has become to so many people. But if ‘sweetness’ is all there is, then it is worth little. Every student of prophecy should have the second experience that John had: bitterness in the stomach. A knowledge of things to come should give every believer a burden for people. For the way of escape from these things is the Rapture, and the requirement to qualify for the Rapture is the acceptance of Messiah now. A true student of prophecy

will not simply stop with the knowledge of things to come. Rather, this knowledge will create the strong burden to preach the gospel to others and thereby give them a way of escape” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 239). and *enhanced ability to honor God and Christ* “We only rightly honor Jesus when we accept of the promises relating to Him as found recorded in the Scriptures” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:516).

Premises Regarding the Kingdom

The biblical Kingdom of God is the major subject of this book. Throughout the book we will be endeavoring to, among other things, state, examine and hopefully prove our premises regarding the Kingdom. These premises are in relation to the Kingdom’s purpose, people, structure and nature, as well as the Kingdom’s relationships to the Bible, theology, God, man and history.

We suggest that the primary *purpose* of the Kingdom is to glorify God (hence one reason for the title of this book). Secondary purposes include the executing of justice, the defeat of evil, the righting of all wrongs, the defeat of Satan and his works, the reconciliation of men to God, the salvation of men from sin and death, the judgment of mankind, the restoration of man’s dominion over the earth, the government of the world, the blessing of mankind and the restoration of all creation. We’ll have much to say on each of these purposes in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*.

We suggest that the *people* of the Kingdom consist of three major groups: Jews, Gentiles and the church of God. The apostle Paul divided humanity into exactly these three groups even after the Christian church had been formed. He counseled the Christians at Corinth, “Give no offense either to **Jews** or to **Greeks** or to **the church of God**” (1 Cor. 10:32). Walvoord points out, “In 1 Corinthians 10:32 it is specifically mentioned: ‘Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the church of God.’ Here is a clear threefold division of humanity into (1) Jews, (2) Gentiles, (3) church of God” (*MK*, p. 164) and, “The continuance of Israel and Gentiles as such is a strong argument against either one being dispossessed of their own place. Israel is not reduced to the bankruptcy of the Gentiles—to become ‘strangers from the covenants of promises’ (Eph. 2:12), and the distinction between the two groups is maintained on the same sharp lines as before the church was instituted” (*ibid.*, p. 165). Chafer agrees: “The real unity of the Bible is preserved only by those who observe with care the divine program for Gentiles, for Jews, and for Christians in their individual and unchanging continuity” (*D*, 28%). And Feinberg adds, “There are three divisions of the human race according to the clear testi-

mony of Scripture; namely, the Jew, the Gentile, and the church. There is an eschatological judgment connected with each one of those three groups” (*M*, p. 360).

The Bible deals at length with *two elect peoples*, namely, *Israel* and *the church*, and *one non-elect people*, namely, *the Gentiles*.

The two elect peoples, Israel and the church, have two things in common. They both depend on the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, for salvation and for the fulfillment of their eschatological hopes, and both of their ultimate purposes are to glorify God. “The vital point of contact between them is that they are both dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ for their complete and final fulfillment” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 232). “No one, not even the Jew, can make any claim on God, but God will save men only by grace through faith, among both the Jews and among the Gentiles” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 782). “For both national Israel and the spiritual body of Christ, the ultimate purpose is to give glory to God. Indeed, this is the purpose for which everything was created” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:529) While Covenant theologians see only one people of God in Scripture, there is no logical reason why God can’t have two elect peoples, and in fact, this is what the Bible teaches. “Dispensationalists... do not agree with Ladd’s premise that there can be ‘but one people of God,’ which was Israel then and is now the Church. Dispensationalists agree that the Church is a people of God, but Israel still is as well” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 282). “If the dispensational emphasis on the distinctiveness of the Church seems to result in a ‘dichotomy,’ let it stand as long as it is a result of literal interpretation. There is nothing wrong with God’s having a purpose for Israel and a purpose for the Church and letting these two purposes stand together within His overall plan.” [quoting Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 148-150] (*ibid.*, p. 457).

First, let’s consider *Israel*. For a definition of Israel, we turn to Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, who is himself both a Jew and a Christian. “This is the biblical definition of Jewishness: descendancy from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (*I*, p. 336). “Biblically speaking, the Jewish people are a nation; a scattered nation but, nevertheless, a nation. They are a nation because they are descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. A simple definition then is: a Jew is any descendent of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (*ibid.*, p. 749).

Israel is the subject of most of the Bible. “Most of the Bible in general and the Old Testament in particular deals with Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 248). “Most ‘of the Bible from the early chapters of Genesis to the concluding chapters of Revelation either directly or indirectly relate to the nation Israel’” [quoting Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, preface] (*ibid.*, p. 496).

“The theme of the Old Testament is Israel past, present and future” (*ibid.*, p. 254). “How important the Jews are in God’s sight is demonstrated in that ‘five-sixths of the Bible bears directly or indirectly upon them’” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 1:38] (*ibid.*, p. 332). “With respect to primary application, Israel occupies nearly four-fifths of the text of the Bible, while the Church, with respect to primary application, occupies slightly more than one-fifth” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:47] (*ibid.*, p. 422). “Premillennialists merely recognize that if God speaks about a certain people through two-thirds to three-fourths of His revelation and promises them certain blessings, which were noted in the survey of the premillennial view of the kingdom in the Old Testament, that He means for them to have just that much prominence. Millennialists do not find it their duty to instruct the Word as to the eminence it should or should not give to any nation” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 229).

It is evident from Scripture that *Israel is an elect nation*. For instance, “But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that **Jehovah doth make a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel**” (Ex. 11:7). “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be **mine own possession from among all peoples**: for all the earth is mine: and **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of **Israel**” (Ex. 19:5-6). “Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For **what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day**” (Deut. 4:6-8)? “For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? **Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes**” (Deut. 4:32-34)? “For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to

be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth” (Deut. 14:2). “and Jehovah hath avouched thee this day to be a people for his own possession, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments; and to make thee high above all nations that he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor; and that thou mayest be a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, as he hath spoken” (Deut. 26:18-19). “He showeth his word unto Jacob, His statutes and his ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; And as for his ordinances, they have not known them. Praise ye Jehovah” (Ps. 147:19-20). “Hear this word that Jehovah hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities” (Amos 3:1-2). “Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you” (Rom. 11:20-21). (See also Deuteronomy 10:15; 2 Samuel 7:23-25; Jeremiah 2:2-3 and John 4:22.) “No nation on earth, saving the Jewish, has God chosen, over whom He condescends to act in the capacity of an earthly Ruler” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:49) “Israel... ‘she is the only nation in Scripture that has ever been nationally elected’” [quoting Feinberg, *Israel: At the Center of History & Revelation*, pp. 117-126] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 504). It should be noted that *the nation of Israel as a whole* was elected, not just the elect or believing remnant of Israel. “(it is impossible that when Pharaoh was asked to let *my people* go, God meant for Pharaoh to let only the elect of Israel go and not the whole nation)... (when Saul was appointed by God to be king over *my people*, God did not mean only over the elect, but over all Israel, both elect and non-elect)... It is very obvious that expressions such as *my people*, *his people*, or *thy people*, when used of God, speaks of Israel as a nation. The above passages show that even when Israel is in a state of unbelief they are still the people of God. This is obviously not always true in a salvific sense. It is simply the result of their national election” (*ibid.*, p. 851). And, *Israel is still an elect nation*. “I say then, **God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!** For I too am an **Israelite**, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. **God has not rejected His people** whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel” (Rom. 11:1-2)? “The fact that Paul refers to Israel as *his people* in the present age shows that they are still the chosen people” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 740). “Even in unbe-

lief, they are still His people” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 780). “The unbelief and sinfulness of the nation may, indeed, for a while remove the mercy and favor of God, but it does not remove the election” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:209) “While God’s people share equally in His salvation *personally and spiritually*, nonetheless, there will be a special future place for Israel *collectively and nationally*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:436) *Israel’s national election is secure and eternal.* “**And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, and to make him a name, and to do great things for you, and terrible things for thy land, before thy people, whom thou redeemest to thee out of Egypt, from the nations and their gods? And thou didst establish to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever; and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God. And now, O Jehovah God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, confirm thou it for ever, and do as thou hast spoken**” (2 Sam. 7:23-25). We will have more to say on this in our chapter *The Covenants of the Kingdom*. We should be clear, however, that while Israel is an elect nation, *not every individual Jew is elected.* “Dispensationalists see the Bible as speaking of two elections. One is a national election which is the election of Israel. While a national election sets the Jewish nation apart from all others, this type of election does not guarantee the salvation of the individual Jew; it only guarantees the survival of the nation as a nation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 333). “It has always been true that in Jewish history the majority of the nation was in unbelief, and only the remnant believed” (*ibid.*, p. 513).

God revealed Himself in a special way to Israel for a specific purpose. “The reason why God did not reveal Himself directly to other nations as He did to the Jews—a problem, the subject of much thought to various writers—is found in this Theocratic idea. They were utterly unfitted for it, even as the Jews, although having a previous preparation of wonderful manner, evidenced themselves to be unworthy of its permanent retention in the form first presented. It was, therefore, as a preparatory measure, brought out in the Jewish line in order to provide for the Theocratic King, David’s Son, etc.... The Theocratic idea gives as the full explanation of such a position, and this, so objectionable to unbelief, enforces our argument and answers all objections” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:595). *To Israel were given several major privileges.* “**He showeth his word unto Jacob, His statutes and his ordinances unto Israel**” (Ps. 147:19). “**What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision? Much every way: first of all, that they were intrusted with the oracles of God**” (Rom.

3:1-2). “[Rom. 3:1-2] The key advantage... *first of all that they were entrusted with the oracles of God*. The *oracles* refer to God’s divine revelation; this was entrusted to the Jew both for recording and preserving it. For that reason, every author of every book of Scripture was a Jew” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 842). “who are **Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises**” (Rom. 9:4) “[Rom. 9:4] This passage lists four facets of Scripture and all belong to Israel. The *covenants* are the four unconditional covenants. The *giving of the law* is the one conditional covenant, the Mosaic. The *service of God* is the whole Levitical system. The *promises* are the prophetic and messianic promises. These are all facets of Scripture and Scripture is a product of Israel” (*ibid.*). “They alone produced the Scriptures (except perhaps Luke and Acts). They alone had prophets confirmed by God through miracles. They alone had Moses, the mediating lawgiver with whom God spoke face-to-face. They alone had the covenants. They alone had God, in His glory, dwell personally in their tabernacle and temple. They alone were a theocratic nation under the only God” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:525). *All the prophets, inspired teachers, Jesus and the apostles were Jews*. “But when the fulness of the time came, **God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law**” (Gal. 4:4) “I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For **I [Paul] too am an Israelite**, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin” (Rom. 11:11). Israel brought the Savior to the world (Gal. 4:4). “All the prophets, all the inspired teachers, Jesus and the apostles, are Jews” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:210) “The Messiah Himself, in His humanity, ‘came from Israel’” [quoting McClain, *The Jewish Problem and Its Divine Solution*, pp. 9-10] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 505) “God has chosen to reveal Himself through the Jewish people only. That is why every writer (including Luke) had to be a Jew” (*ibid.*, p. 709). Indeed, *salvation is of the Jews*. Jesus said to the woman at the well, “You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for **salvation is from the Jews**” (John 4:22). “Salvation is of the Jews, and not of the Gentiles” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:212) “Brethren, fellow-Gentiles, it is as true to-day as it ever was, that ‘salvation is of the Jews;’ and if, owing to their fall, we have been brought in by faith, let us exercise such faith in humble acknowledgment of our dependence on a covenanted people, lest we be ‘high-minded’ (as Paul warns us Rom. 11:20), and also be cut off on account of our unbelief and being ‘wise in our own conceits’” (*ibid.*, p. 334). “In John 4:22, Jesus told the Samaritan woman that *salvation is from the Jews*. This was declared to a woman who was a member of a nation that despised the Jews” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 849).

*Israel is not a type*¹⁶, either of the church or of Jehovah's Witnesses, or of any other group. "The nation is no type, for it composes the real Kingdom of God when the Theocracy is manifested within it; and, hence in view of this relationship, the necessity of incorporation with it. If it were merely typical of another people (viz.: Christian believers in the church), why must such a people also become Abraham's seed" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:212)?

Israel is the nucleus of the earthly Kingdom. "The Jewish nation is the center of all things related to the earth" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:313). We'll have more to say on this in our chapters *The Theocratic Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom*.

Next, let's consider *the church*. Because the church has a heavenly citizenship, rather than an earthly one, she is immediately differentiated from Israel. "For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20) "The Church is foreign to the earth and related to it only as a witnessing people. They are strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors whose citizenship is in heaven" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:313). Even so, the church is of Jewish origin. "Even unbelief (as e.g. Potter in *The Genius of Christianity and Free Religion*) declares 'Christianity to be developed Judaism,' basing it upon the fact that the link between Jesus and the Hebrew people is found in 'the Messianic idea,' as given in 'the Jewish prophets and literature'" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:427). Especially is this true of chiliasm, or premillennialism. "Our doctrine has a Jewish origin, founded upon Jewish covenants, Jewish predictions, Jewish faith, and a Jewish Messiah" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:457) "We leave an opponent to sum it up, and give the details as follows: *The Princeton Review* (Ap., 1850, p. 329), in a hostile notice of Rev. Imbrie's sermon, 'The Kingdom of God,' pronounces our view 'the Jewish doctrine; and by Jewish we mean that actually held by the Jews. They taught, 1. That the Messiah was to appear and reign in person gloriously in Jerusalem. 2. That all the Jews were to be gathered in the Holy Land. 3. That the pious dead were to be raised to share the blessings of the Messiah's reign. 4. That the Messiah and His people were to reign over all nations for a thousand years. 5. That at the end of that period Satan was to be loosed, and a great conflict ensue, after which were to come the general resurrection and final judgment. This theory was by many Christians, during the second and third centuries [observe, he omits the first, as if none existed then, over against the positive testimony in our favor], adopted bodily. The only difference was, that what the Jews expected to occur at the first

¹⁶ A type is a model that serves as a preview or pattern of a reality that is yet to come. An antitype is the fulfillment, or the reality of which the type was a preview.

coming, these Christians anticipated at the Second Advent of the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 458). We’ll have more to say regarding the church’s identity, purpose and destiny in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.

While the Bible deals with two elect peoples, Israel and the church, it also deals with one non-elect people, the Gentiles. Gentiles are all non-Israelites. “A Gentile is simply anyone who is not a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In short, a Gentile is anyone who is not a Jew” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 750). In the Bible, Gentiles, even Gentile converts to Judaism, are never called Jews or Israel. “Acceptance of Judaism by a Gentile does not make him a Jew, but a proselyte” (*ibid.*, p. 751). “Gentile converts to Judaism are never given the title of Jew. The *Jews* are those born that way. The *proselytes* are Gentile converts to Judaism” (*ibid.*). But interestingly, Gentiles are only mentioned in (again, thoroughly Jewish) Scripture as they relate to Israel. “The Bible concerns itself with the Gentiles only as they come in contact with Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 333). We’ll have more to say about the Gentiles in the *Times of the Gentiles* section of our chapter *Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*, and also in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.

Confusing any of these three groups, Israel, the Gentiles and the church, confuses the nature and characteristics of the Kingdom. “Scripture is unintelligible until one can distinguish clearly between God’s program for his earthly people Israel and that for the church” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 529). We’ll have more to say on this in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.

Now, concerning *the structure of the kingdom*, we suggest that the structure of the Kingdom is complex, that it has both temporal and spiritual aspects, that it has five major facets, and that it is at its nucleus a Jewish theocracy.

First, the Kingdom is *complex*. Like the cosmos, nature, and DNA, the Kingdom is complex yet ordered, having an analogically high level of specified complexity.

Second, the Kingdom *has both temporal and spiritual dimensions*. The *temporal* dimensions of the Kingdom pertain to its earthly aspects, particularly as they relate to Israel. “The Kingdom of covenant is a visible, outward Theocratic Kingdom, manifested here on earth, identified with a certain people, promised in a definite manner, and ruled over by ‘the man ordained’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:556). “The points of emphasis Israelology would make in Eschatology would include the following: Israel was to become a state sometime before the Tribulation; the Great Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven-year covenant between Israel and the Antichrist;

the Tribulation primarily relates to Israel, secondarily to the Gentiles, and not at all to the Church; the 144,000 are literally Jews; the Woman of Revelation 12 is Israel; the pre-condition to the second coming is Israel's national salvation; there will be a national salvation of Israel; there will be a national restoration of Israel; a major purpose of the Messianic Kingdom is to fulfill literally the unfulfilled elements of the unconditional Jewish covenants; and, Israel's distinct identity will continue for all eternity" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 856). We'll have more to say on the temporal dimensions of the Kingdom in the *The Theocratic or Mediatorial Kingdom* and *The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom* sections of our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*. The *spiritual* dimensions of the Kingdom encompass both its earthly and its heavenly aspects. "Dispensationalists... also believe in the Spiritual Kingdom and that all 'believers in every age are part of this spiritual kingdom'" [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 170-173] (*ibid.*, p. 389). We'll have more to say on the spiritual dimensions of the Kingdom in the *The Spiritual Kingdom* section of our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*. The complete Kingdom encompasses *both temporal and spiritual* dimensions. "The Theocratic ordering necessarily embraces both the highest temporal and spiritual blessings to which Redemption, in its fullest, widest reach, extends" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:384). "The Mediatorial Kingdom of the prophets is *one* Kingdom, not two kingdoms. This one Kingdom has various aspects, as we shall see, but these aspects must not be pluralized into different kingdoms, the one *spiritual* and the other *earthly*.... in their predictions of a future *Mediatorial* Kingdom of God, which is the main burden of their message, they contemplate but one indivisible Kingdom" (McClain, *GK*, p. 146).

Third, the Kingdom *has five primary facets*. "Kingdom's theological meaning includes several dimensions, including God's overall reign in the universe, His present spiritual reign in His people, and His future messianic reign on earth" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:460). These facets include The Universal or Eternal Kingdom, The Spiritual Kingdom, The Theocratic Kingdom, The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom and The Mystery Kingdom. We'll explore these five facets in detail in our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*.

Fourth, at its core, the Kingdom is *a Jewish theocracy*. "This Kingdom is then essentially a Jewish Kingdom. This follows from the Abrahamic, Sinaitic, and Davidic Covenants; this is uniformly taught by the Prophets in associating and identifying the Kingdom with the nationality of the Jews; this again is confirmed by the election of the Jewish nation, the oneness of the Kingdom, the preaching of John, Jesus, and the disciples, the renewed covenant, the offer of the Kingdom, the engrafting of Gentiles, the rejection

of the nation only until the times of the Gentiles are ended, the postponement of the Kingdom, etc. The whole tenor and analogy of Scripture sustain this position; and it is but a weak, unsatisfactory, inconsistent procedure to deny what is so plainly the burden of Holy Writ” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:424). “Let the reader consider the precise promises of the Jewish covenants and the Jewish predictions, all uniting in a glorious Messianic Kingdom under the reign of a personal Son of David on a restored Theocratic throne with a Jewish supremacy, overthrow of enemies, irresistible power, vast dominion, etc., and it is utterly impossible, without a total perversion of the covenants and prophecies, to separate the Jewish cast from Christianity which is designed to prepare ‘heirs’ to inherit these promises and this Kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is folly to ignore, or to deny, this Jewish relationship, and in place of it attempt to make out a fulfillment of these things in the past history of a fighting, struggling Church” (*ibid.*, p. 426). It is the Kingdom of a literal hermeneutic (see our next chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*); it is the Kingdom needed (see our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*); it is the Kingdom covenanted (see our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*); it is the Kingdom prophesied (see our chapter *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*); it was the Kingdom expected by the first-century Jews (see our chapter *Expectation of the Kingdom*); it was the Kingdom announced by John the Baptist, Jesus, the 12, and the 70 (see our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*); it was the Kingdom reaffirmed by Jesus and the apostles (see our chapter *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*); it was the Kingdom of the earliest church history (see our previous chapter *The Kingdom in Church History*); it is the Kingdom to be inaugurated at Christ’s Second Coming (see our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*); it is the Kingdom of perfect earthly government (see our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*); and it is the Kingdom that will never pass away (see our chapter *The Eternal Order*).

Concerning the *nature* of the Kingdom, we suggest that the Kingdom is, among many other things (see, for instance, our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*), both magnificent and glorious.

The very idea of the Kingdom is *magnificent*. “Take the highest thoughts of the sages of Asia, Greece and Rome; the loftiest conceptions of the philosophers of the world, and they pale before the brightness and splendor of the Theocratic conception. There is nothing so magnificent to be found outside of the Bible” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:477).

And fundamentally, the Kingdom is *glorious*. “And **blessed be his glorious name for ever; And let the whole earth be filled with his glory**. Amen, and Amen” (Ps. 72:19). “All thy works shall give thanks unto

thee, O **Jehovah**; And thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of **the glory of thy kingdom**, And talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, And **the glory of the majesty of his kingdom**” (Ps. 145:10-12). “For **the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea**” (Hab. 2:14). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in **the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne**, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28). “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:30). “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31). “so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own **kingdom and glory**” (1 Thes. 2:12). From passages such as these we can be assured that fulfillment of God’s prophetic word will be neither invisible, difficult to discern nor boring. It will be *spectacular!* For more on the glory of the Kingdom, see our chapters *The Second Coming of the King*, *The Millennial Kingdom* and *The Eternal Order*.

Now that we’ve taken a brief look at the Kingdom’s purpose, people, structure and nature, we’ll take a brief look at the Kingdom’s relationships to the Bible, theology, God, man and history.

First, we’ll consider *the Kingdom’s relationships to the Bible*.

The Kingdom of God is the major theme of the Bible. The Kingdom is the overarching theme of Scripture. We submit that without a correct understanding of the Kingdom, the Bible itself cannot be correctly understood. “The Kingdom of God is, in a certain and important sense, the grand central theme of all Holy Scripture” (McClain, *GK*, p. 4). “As Dr. Bright [John Bright, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 7, 197] has correctly observed, ‘The concept of the Kingdom of God involves, in a real sense, the total message of the Bible;’ and, ‘Old Testament and New Testament thus stand together as the two acts of a single drama. Act I points to its conclusion in Act II, and without it the play is an incomplete, unsatisfying thing. But Act II must be read in the light of Act I, else its meaning will be missed. For the play is organically one. The Bible is one book. Had we to give that book a title, we might with justice call it “The Book of the Coming Kingdom of God.” That is, indeed, its central theme everywhere” (*ibid.*, p. 5). “It is not too much to say that millennialism is a determining factor in Biblical interpretation of comparable importance to the doctrines of verbal inspiration, the deity of

Christ, substitutionary atonement, and bodily resurrection... It is of course true that to an individual a denial of the deity of Christ is more momentous and far-reaching than denial of premillennialism, but, as far as a system of interpretation is concerned, both are vital” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 16). “...the Kingdom the main, leading idea which includes all the rest” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:505).

The Kingdom is the major theme of Old Testament prophecy. “In a very real sense, all Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament is Kingdom prophecy. Even those predictions which deal with Messiah’s humiliation and sufferings cannot be separated from the context of regal glory. As Archibald M’Caig has rightfully observed concerning the great prophetic period in Old Testament history, “The prophecies all more or less have a regal tint, and the coming one is pre-eminently the coming king” [quoting Archibald M’Caig, ‘Christ as King,’ *I.S.B.E.*, Vol. III, p. 1802] (McClain, *GK*, p. 145).

The Kingdom is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments. “The Old and New Testaments describe the same Kingdom—the same Theocratic arrangement under David’s Son. All the writers, separated by centuries, independent of each other, residing in various countries but still under the influence of the same Spirit, locate this Kingdom in the future, link it with the Sec. Advent, and agree in portraying its distinguishing peculiarities and blessings. In a comparison of their writings, entering even into details, there is no contradiction between them... The disagreement is found in the interpreters and not in the writers of the Bible; for the latter all start from the same point, holding up the same covenant as an everlasting one under which we receive the promises, and all declare the same provisionary and preparatory process, and all insist upon the same literal fulfillment. Harmony of design, unity of purpose is seen throughout their writings, but only so long—as the infidel even has forcibly stated and proven—as the plain grammatical sense is retained. Forsake this sense, and then, notwithstanding all the protests to the contrary, this harmony is violated, this unity is destroyed to the confirmation of unbelief” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:222).

The Kingdom unifies all of Scripture. “the Kingdom... binds the whole from Genesis to Revelation into one connected chain” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:467). “The reader is requested to notice the wonderful harmony of our doctrine. Although many things are requisite to give it completeness, every link in the chain of connection is forthcoming and expressed in a plain, easily understood, grammatical sense—the strongest proof that can be given to substantiate a doctrine. Aside from the details (in which we may, more or less, mingle error—being human) the grand outlines of the system evidence this

harmony of teaching. It is a great gratification, a high comfort, to find such unity between the curse and redemption, the covenants and their realistic fulfillment” (*ibid.*, p. 588). “For the first time it seems to be commonly recognized that premillennial theology has become a *system* of theology, not an alternate view of eschatology which is unrelated to theology as a whole” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 15).

The Kingdom illuminates all of Scripture. “In brief, it is the testimony of every one who has given this subject any careful study, that it is such ‘a solvent of difficulties’ that its application has given great joy of heart and delighted surprise in discovering the import of passages which otherwise proved either to be unsatisfactory or dark” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:405). “Indeed, there is scarcely a point of importance and interest to which the doctrine of the Kingdom does not add force” (*ibid.*, p. 506).

The Kingdom is not missing any of its parts in the Scriptures. “It is remarkable that for the complete success of our argument not one link, essential to its perfection, is missing in the Scriptures” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:181).

However, *the entire Kingdom program is not systematized in any one biblical passage.* All of the Bible is needed for a complete picture. “There is no systematic statement of the doctrine of the Kingdom in the Bible. It is given in brief covenants, in separate prophecies, in detached portions, in fragments, in hints, in promises, in concise outlines, and to bring all these together in their regular order much labor is requisite. Without diligent comparison, no progress can be made” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:152).

Next, we’ll look at *the Kingdom’s relationships to theology.*

First, we must state clearly that we believe that having a correct view of the Kingdom is *not a salvation issue.* We believe, as do most conservative Christians, in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus alone, plus nothing. Indeed, one can be saved without holding to our doctrine of the Kingdom. In fact, we doubt that many, if any persons have ever had entirely correct, let alone complete views of the Kingdom at the moment of their regeneration (salvation). Neither do we believe that acquiring our view of the Kingdom is necessary for maintaining one’s salvation. It is *Jesus* who keeps us “until that day” (Jude 24, 2 Tim. 1:12). “The redeeming feature in some, however, is, that they make their Hope (delusive as it may be in the manner and place of realization) centre in Christ, and thus honoring Christ with us, they are still accounted worthy to experience the hope of the promise made to the Fathers” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:311). We believe this is so even though those not holding to our view of the Kingdom may reject our view, and even ridicule us for holding it. “Alas! So embedded is this modified Hope in the affections of many, that if we point to ‘the One Hope,’ sustained by Scrip-

ture and Tradition, and held by men whose praises are in the churches, it is pronounced ‘foolishness,’ or ‘heresy,’ or ‘a return to carnal Jewish notions,’ etc.” (*ibid.*). Rather than being a doctrine necessary of acceptance for salvation, this Kingdom will be, instead, when fully executed, whether believed or not, salvation actually completed. We believe anyone truly saved will find their salvation ultimately completed in this Kingdom. While many, and likely most believers are saved without (yet) correctly envisioning the structure of the Kingdom, we nonetheless rejoice with them in their salvation, and encourage them now to consider with us how their salvation will be accomplished in time, as part of the outworking of God’s overall Plan. “The consideration of personal salvation, however precious, should not hinder a due view and appreciation of the Divine Purpose in Redemption as exhibited in this Theocratic ordering. This would be religious selfishness, leaving out the most glorious results” (*ibid.*, p. 597).

But while we’re not saved by or through our understanding of the Kingdom, it is true that our view of the Kingdom does *color all our doctrine*. “Any failure to understand the Kingdom as set forth in Biblical revelation, with its rich variety and magnificence of design, may actually blur the vision of good men to other matters of high theological importance to Christian faith. We may wonder sometimes at Luther’s open and determined attitude toward the Book of Revelation, as he bluntly said, ‘Even if it were a blessed thing to believe what is contained in it, no man knows what that is.’ But Olshausen [H. Olshausen, *Biblical Commentary on the New Testament*, p. cxv] puts his finger unerringly on the great Reformer’s blind spot when he remarks that the final book of the Bible was obscure to Luther simply because ‘he could not thoroughly apprehend the doctrine of God’s Kingdom on earth, which is exhibited in the Revelation, and forms the proper center of everything contained in it.’ ...Luther in his hasty exclusion of the Apocalypse from the canon of fully inspired Scripture” (McClain, *GK*, p. 6)

We maintain that this doctrine of the Kingdom *needs restoration in our theology*. “It is high time for reverent, intelligent piety to see this abuse of the Word, and aid in restoring its proper and faith-inspiring use” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:351). “...recalling the Church, if she heed the call, to the Primitive belief, before the catastrophe comes” (*ibid.*, 3:132).

And, we are heartened that, at least to some extent, the correct concept of the Kingdom *is being revived in our day*. This can be seen by the recent popularity of television programs having to do with “last days” issues, on-line prophecy web sites, prophecy conferences, etc. “As the prophetic periods are drawing to their close and the time is rapidly approaching for the

astounding events preceding and accompanying the Advent of the mighty King, it is reasonable that God should revive in His believing people the ancient faith to serve both as a source of warning and encouragement” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:199).

Next we'll consider *the Kingdom's relationships to God*.

First, we should recognize that the Kingdom of God *belongs to God*. God speaks of the future revived Davidic kingdom as “**my kingdom**” (1 Chron. 17:11-14). Jesus taught His disciples to pray to the Father, “**Your Kingdom come**” (Matt. 6:10).

That being the case, the Kingdom must be *defined by God*, not by man. We should not be “...placing ourselves in the place of judges respecting the expediency of the divine purposes, and the manner in which they should be carried out, which is always a dangerous procedure. We dare not confine God's purposes to one dispensation unless it is specifically stated; we must follow the purpose as it is unfolded and declared, observing how and when it is to be realized” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:211). “Multitudes, who are no professed unbelievers, reject the plain, contained grammatical sense, and insist upon giving a sense which shall harmonize with their own ideas of the fitness of things, thus paving the way for unbelieving license, forging the weapons for unbelief, and preventing the use of a consistent, manly Apologetics” (*ibid.*, p. 219).

The Kingdom is *God's idea*, not man's. “A Theocracy, as the Bible describes, is the grand conception of inspiration. It belongs wholly and essentially to the divine, being a revelation of the Divine Purpose, and strikingly exhibiting the divine in all the preparatory stages and measures until the culmination, when the divine, connected with humanity, appears in overwhelming grandeur and glory. We may well, therefore, dismiss the vain efforts to trace the biblical idea to Oriental religions, to India, Egypt, etc., seeing that nothing approaching such a consecutively developed Theocratic Plan is to be found anywhere outside of the Bible. It is God's idea, not man's; it is God's work and not man's; to Him we gratefully and joyfully attribute all honor and praise” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:592).

If we are to apprehend the Kingdom, then, it must be *communicated to us by God*. “The Creator, and not the creature, must inform us what are the ends contemplated by an Infinite Mind” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:87).

The Kingdom is *the responsibility of God*, not man. “Reason asserts that the responsibility for the issues of His creation must, in the end, rest upon the Creator” (Chafer *ST*, 1:237).

Its program is to be *executed by God*, not man. “Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I, Jehovah, have builded the ru-

ined places, and planted that which was desolate: **I, Jehovah, have spoken it, and I will do it**” (Ezek. 36:36). “The Providence of God, both general and particular, is sufficiently evidenced in the call of Abraham; the raising up of the Jewish nation; the distinction made between Esau and Jacob; the history of Joseph; the removal from Egypt; the establishment of a Theocratic Kingdom; the varied transactions of that Kingdom; the care of good and punishment of wicked kings; the raising up of prophets; the removal of the Theocracy; the provisions made for its re-establishment; the rejection of the nation; the call of the Gentiles; the destruction of Jerusalem, and in hundreds of particulars; so much so that the student of the Theocratic Plan is constantly impressed with it, and feels it to be a living reality in which he can evermore trustingly confide. Every step in the progress of events, every unfolding of time, every reference to the Theocratic ordering, every provision made for the future Messianic Kingdom teaches him that underlying all, and having control over all, is a Divine Providence which has occupied itself with the high and the low, the lofty and the minute, the nation and the individual, the rich and the poor, the happy and the suffering, the pious and the wicked—all tending toward the one great goal in the future” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:341).

It is also to be *justified by God*, not man. It is not our place to be “...men thus presuming to set themselves up as the judges respecting what it is right and proper for Jesus to do” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:552).

Prophecy concerning the Kingdom will be fulfilled, not naturally, but *supernaturally*. “Those additions are so great in their nature, so striking in their characteristics, so manifesting the interference of the Supernatural, that no one can possibly mistake when this Kingdom is restored” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:248). “...hopes which must forever remain unrealized, unless a Saviour who can control nature and nature’s laws is accepted” (*ibid.*, 3:289).

We can rest assured that Jehovah and His Kingdom *will be vindicated* in due time. “**And I will sanctify my great name**, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and **the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, saith the Lord Jehovah, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes**” (Ezek. 36:23). “When regarding the history of this doctrine, how it has been treated; how it has been perverted; how it has been held in bigotry; how believers in it are held apart by incorporated erroneous doctrines; how bitterness, malice, and persecution have arisen concerning it; how on the one hand it is hated and abused, and on the other loved and cherished, we are sad at heart, and feel to say, ‘How long, O Lord.’ Its history impresses the view that we need our infallible Head, Jesus, to come, so that He Himself may

vindicate His own truth, verify His own promises, and bring His brethren into the promised unity. How, then, men will rejoice; how, then, men will be ashamed” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:274). “Some (Froude’s *Short Studies*, p. 98) lament with Father Newman that “God’s control over the world is so indirect and His action so obscure;” others have their faith sorely tried by past and existing providences, but all this will be rectified when the Theocracy appears” (*ibid.*, p. 590).

We are thankful that the outworking of this Plan has been graciously *foretold to us by God*. “...it being ever God’s method to give a foreview of all His great purposes and undertakings” (Chafer, *KHP*, 68%).

Next, we’ll look at *the Kingdom’s relationships to Man*.

In relation to *people in general*, the Kingdom is *universal*. We will all find ourselves in relation to the Kingdom one way or another.

In regard to its *apprehension*, the Kingdom *cannot be seen* by many. Most people are entirely blind to the future of this world, and it is disheartening to this writer that even so few Christians have caught a vivid vision of the Kingdom. In the main they are either just not interested or are “...blinded to the truth by the generally adopted spiritualizing system of interpretation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:205). It is *ignored* by many. Peters points out “...the absurdity of totally ignoring the subject, as if it were a species of exaggerated human prediction” (*TTK*, 2:150). Even many pastors, “Men, whose special business it is to proclaim the Word of God, are found in large numbers, who have never made the prophecies a careful and serious study” (*ibid.*, 3:200). This is largely due to the fact that “Most theological seminaries view the millennium as an unfruitful area for study and tend to suspend judgment on any detailed exegesis of related Scriptural passages” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 14). It is also unfortunately true that “...in the minds of many scholars the matter is settled before it is fairly examined” (*ibid.*, p. 111). The Kingdom is also *confusing* to many, and it is therefore not discussed as much as it otherwise would be. “We can hardly expect those who admittedly are bewildered and confused to be able to debate the issues” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 111) Therefore, the Kingdom is *misunderstood* by many. “Though the kingdom occupies so large a place in the Sacred Text, the theme of the kingdom has been more misunderstood and its terminology more misapplied than any other one subject in the Bible” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:315). “Unbelief has a just right to object to the vast number of interpretations foisted upon the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:296)

In regard to its *reception*, however, this doctrine of the Kingdom *can be embraced* by those with open minds. “Bh. Hopkins (Winthrop’s *Letters*, p. 6) declares that his opinions have undergone ‘a thorough revolution,’ and

adds, ‘And I cannot but think that any man whose mind is ready to submit, with the humility of a child-like faith, to the only infallible teacher—the Word of God—must yield, even at the sacrifice of his previous prejudices, to the vast amount of testimony which the Scriptures furnish to that important doctrine, the personal Advent, and reign upon the regenerated earth, of the glorious Redeemer,’ etc. The honored friend to whom this work is dedicated, informed me years ago how he also changed his views, being impelled to it by Scripture testimony... hope of the ultimate salvation of the world was in the direct interposition of God... the Sec. Advent... since he had adopted such ideas, time and study had only strengthened them” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:179).

However, this doctrine of the Kingdom is often met with *rejection*. It is *a tender subject* to many. “The early belief is a tender subject to many, seeing that they cannot reconcile its existence and prevalence with their modern notions” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:489). It is *undervalued* by many. “It is strange that but few Confessions make the kingdom a distinctive article of faith” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:128) “It is sad to see the frailty and perversity of human wisdom in the things of God. The Jews believed in this restored Davidic throne and Kingdom, but overlooked the foretold sufferings, death, etc. of the Messiah; the Gentiles acknowledge the sufferings and death, but ignore the Davidic throne and Kingdom, the promises literally understood. The Theocratic-Davidic inheritance of Jesus is but rarely mentioned; it is scarcely ever heard in preaching or praying; it is deemed of so little importance that Christian teaching hardly refers to it; and when reference to it is made, it sounds a note of discord in prevailing systems of theology. Let us ponder: ought promises so solemnly given, so constantly presented, so literally reiterated, so precious confirmed, to be passed by in neglect, and even in silence? Ought they to become the objects of ridicule and reproach? No! To ignore them, or to mock them, is indicative of serious doctrinal defect” (*ibid.*, p. 350). It is *willfully ignored* and/or *rejected* by many. “God has not left Himself without witness; and it is only by persistently closing our eyes to existing facts, prophesied thousands of years ago, that we can escape God’s manifested interest in sustaining our faith. To deny all this requires about as much assurance and love of singularity as it did in the philosophers who, against their senses and laws of being, denied the existence of an external world” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:150). “...can ignorance be pleaded, when they fully admit that the grammatical sense indeed teaches it, but claim that another (spiritual) sense is intended” (*ibid.*, p. 350). “Spiritualism, mysticism, materialism, etc., close their eyes to both the Plan and the historical attestation, and such a mode of procedure, coming from cultivat-

ed minds, indicates a certain ‘willingness’ to engage in this one-sided consideration” (*ibid.*, 3:436). It is *unpalatable* to many, especially to those who would appropriate to themselves the promises given to Israel. “...this doctrine. It certainly is unpalatable to all who strive to appropriate to themselves what lawfully belongs to others” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:98). It is simply *not wanted* by many. “But these enemies of mine, **who did not want me to reign over them**, bring them here and slay them in my presence” (Luke 19:27). “The sphere of man’s thought is limited to the circle in which his own will seems to him to be supreme” (Chafer, *MBT*, 35%). “The world will deify any leader who will give to the people enough ‘bread and circuses,’ while making no high moral and spiritual demands upon them. But they will reject the true God if He asks them to receive what they do not want” (McClain, *GK*, p. 383). It is *denied* by many. “The Jews misapprehended how and when the Kingdom was to be brought in, but it is left to Gentiles—also professing faith in the Scriptures not only in their ‘high-mindedness’ to misconceive the how and when, but to deny the Kingdom itself” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:230). And, it is *rejected* by many. “We are classed with heretics, fanatics, etc. But this is precisely the state of things that we ought to expect to find as the end draws nigh. If the entire Church would receive our view, if it were the great popular doctrine, all recognizing it as scriptural, etc., then indeed we might doubt its truthfulness. For one of the evidences that the world will not be converted before the Advent, is the predicted sign that the Church, under the influence of delusive hope (just such an one as the Whittier theory presents) will be in a state of fancied security and prosperity not looking for the Advent of Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:199). “Relying upon the far-seeing and sure knowledge of the future as contained in this Book, it is certain that this return to the primitive faith will be accepted by the few; and that the protestations of these, however logically and forcibly presented, will utterly fail—for reasons previously given—to stem the torrent of unbelief which now receives its already swollen tributaries from all sides... every great providential movement in the progressive advancement of the Divine Purpose was met by a corresponding condition of unbelief” (*ibid.*, p. 297).

Sometimes this rejection is pronounced. This doctrine of the Kingdom is often *ridiculed*. “Know this first of all, that **in the last days mockers will come** with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and **saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’** For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation” (2 Pet. 3:3-4). These mockers sometimes even come from within the church itself. “Individuals truly have peace with God in believing, but if faithful do not

find it with their fellow-man, the world, or even in a great extent in the church itself” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:618). “As the period arrives for the Advent, unbelief in it shall characterize the Church and world. Hence, he expects its Pre-Mill. nature to be opposed and rejected; the passages which teach it to be glossed over with other meanings; the objects intended by it to be denied; the early Church doctrine to be derided as suited for children, and a soporific, worldly-wise interpretation to become generally prevalent. Indeed, to place the Church and world in the posture assigned to it just previous to the Advent, requires a display of learning, theology, philosophy, spiritual improvement, etc., in order to beat down the warnings of the Word and of a long line of faithful witnesses to the truth” (*ibid.*, 2:163). “Let the student reflect: if the Lord Jehovah did not consider it derogatory to His honor and glory to act (as a multitude of able writers admit) in the capacity of an earthly Ruler under the initiatory form of the Theocracy, how then can it be derogatory to the honor and glory of the Son of Man, David’s Son, to come and act in a like capacity? This in itself should cause those persons, who slightly and dishonorably (to Christ) speak of this future reign of Jesus on earth (as advocated by us), to be careful lest they be found treating with disrespect and contempt the most astonishing, desirable, and glorious of God’s provisions for man’s welfare and the happiness of the world, and which immeasurably redounds to God’s praise and glory” (*ibid.*, 3:452). This doctrine is also sometimes *scorned*. “Even to-day, when men arise and point us to the prophetic Word with warnings of danger, persecution, judgment, and bloodshed still in the future, and per adventure not very distant, multitudes arise in antagonism, and brand them as Jeremiah was branded, and would, if they dared, proceed to severer measures” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:214). “Multitudes who cannot be reached by an argument appealing to reason, will permit themselves to be influenced by invectives” (*ibid.*, p. 231). And, at times, it is even *persecuted*. “When it cannot reach its victim personally, it will at least unchurch him, and consign him to perdition. It will do this under the cloak of superior sanctity, under the plea of greater knowledge and holiness. If it can do no more, it will—instead of meeting the arguments of an opponent—blacken character by an array of epithets that a bigot’s heart and mind can only concoct” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:276) (I experienced this variety of persecution when I left the Jehovah’s Witnesses.)

One reason for people’s rejection of this doctrine of the Kingdom is that it *dashes human pride*. Peters comments, “No matter what the covenants say, what the prophets describe, what the disciples preached, what the early Church believed, these live in a new era of enlightenment, and have nothing to do with ‘the old paths.’... The reflection follows: when we behold all those

theories and systems of faith—all hostile to our doctrine—with numerous, learned, powerful, adherents, and these actuated by party attachments and associated inclinations and regard, it seems impracticable to hope for any large additions to our number... in all probability, the secret reason for rejecting faith in our doctrine lies with some in dislike to the humbling features of the doctrine, viz., that it utterly discards all human schemes and plans for ‘the regeneration’ of society and the world. This Kingdom that we teach, being God’s own Theocratic arrangement for the government of the world, repudiates all human organizations; it will completely set them aside and put in place of them the Theocracy under Jesus Christ and His associated Ruler. This takes such a low estimate of things that men prize so highly; this abases what so many now pride themselves in; this so degrades the boasted advancement and development of the race; this so debases the pet theories, hierarchical tendencies, claims of superiority, etc., advanced by multitudes—that it is too humiliating to their own dignity and the loftiness of humanity to accept of it. A doctrine which threatens the perpetuity of institutions, organizations, etc.—which teaches that they are all imperfect, and must give place to a divine revelation of the Theocracy, is far from being acceptable to powerful bodies, to partisan adherents, to wealthy corporations, to laborers for the conversion of the world, to ecclesiastical rulers, etc. The Kingdom requires a radical change, resurrection and glorification in its inheritors, a complete conversion and revolution of faith and practice in the Jewish nation, and an entire submission and consecration of the Gentiles to its dominion... Men, instead of studying and appreciating God’s plan for ‘regeneration’ and ‘restitution,’ hug their own delusive plans and existing forms for the salvation of the race and world” (*TTK*, 3:237).

To *seekers of truth*, the Kingdom should at least be *interesting*. Walvoord points out, “Prophetic Bible conferences are inevitably premillennial in their doctrine. Neither amillennialism nor postmillennialism ever aroused much interest in prophecy” (*MK*, p. 125). To these the Kingdom should also be *desirable*. “It is singular, and certainly worthy of reflection, that God’s Plan of Government falls within the line of man’s wishes, if we will only receive the covenants, prophets and apostles in their true grammatical sense” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:550). “Who, when viewing the sad history of the nations of the earth (a long, dreary catalogue of jealousies, wars, bloodshed, revolutions, etc.), and regarding the fearful condition and troubles still future (as delineated by the Spirit of God), does not earnestly desire the speedy Coming of this Theocracy” (*ibid.*, p. 589). We point out to these seekers that this Kingdom is also *reasonable*. “In relation to the Kingdom itself and the Advent which is to introduce it, reason, if it desires to know something of the

expediency and reasonableness of the establishment of such a Kingdom under David's Son, will fall back upon the preliminarily given Theocracy, study its nature, design, connections, and then regard the utterances of the Prophets in the light of the Divine Purpose previously indicated and determined. Prophecy thus finds itself confirmed by a solid foundation of noteworthy facts, which calls for unbounded faith in the things still future. Past and present fulfillment, in behalf of a divinely ordained Plan insures future fulfillment in the interest of the same purpose, and hence the extraordinary consistency (now by many called 'weakness') of the early Church in its belief based upon a union of reason and faith, of knowledge and trust" (*ibid.*, p. 221). "Such a view indeed leaves much for faith, seeing that it places much in the future; but our position ought to be that of faith, not blind, unreasoning faith, but of faith suggested and sustained by the accumulated evidences of the Messiahship of Jesus" (*ibid.*, p. 358). "...in considering the intelligent plan of the Creator—an intelligence existing outside of us, yet which, when established by facts, appeals to reason and can be comprehended as reasonable by the intelligence within us" (*ibid.*, p. 497). Indeed, just such a Kingdom has been *envisioned by the world's deepest thinkers*. "Plato's (Seiss's *Last Times*, p. 64) declaration will come to pass: 'In the end, lest the world should be plunged into an eternal abyss of confusion, God, the author of the primitive order, will appear again, and resume the reins of empire; then He will change, embellish, and restore the whole frame of nature, and put an end to decay of age, sickness, and death'" (*ibid.*, p. 590).

To *believers*, this doctrine of the Kingdom *defines what we should be eagerly anticipating*. "In comparison with the Second Advent and its glorious consequences, its grand results, death sinks into insignificance. Nothing, so far as the destiny of man or of the world is concerned, can be compared to it. The First Advent brings the saving grace, but the Second perfects it; the First brought the earnest of Redemption in humiliation, the Second completes it in glory. Hence the intentional scope and profound interest given to it in the New Test., lest (as foreseen) men and believers should give it its modern secondary position" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:312). To *believers*, it should also be *appreciated*. "The Scriptures assume to teach that it is a hope so well grounded and so clearly expressed, that we can fully appreciate it" (*ibid.*). And, it should be *eagerly anticipated*. "Whatever others may do, we dare not accept of this transmutation introduced by uninspired men (who gave evidence to much weakness) and which was firmly established in the Church by the rise and progress of the Papacy. Besides this, the sanctifying (Heb. 3:6; 1 John 3:2, 3; 1 Pet. 1:13, etc.) influence of this

Hope, when appreciated, as exemplified in Jewish history and in the Christian confessors of the truth, is still connected with it, seeing that instead of a vagueness and indefiniteness thrown around the promises, it brings them forth with clearness and vividness, distinctly perceiving and embracing the great object of Hope—the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 311). “The exceeding prominence given to ‘the blessed hope’ in the New Test., should in view of its contents most certainly influence us to give it a like prominence in our faith. In reference to the Sec. Advent, Brookes (*Bible Readings*) says: ‘It is mentioned 318 times in the 260 chapters that make up the New Test., or if the whole book is divided into verses, it occupies one of twenty-five verses from the first of Matthew to the last of Revelation’” (*ibid.*, p. 313). “Dr. Bonar’s language: ‘Weary of man’s rule, we long for God’s.’ In the Church itself, in view of the differences, dissensions, divisions, etc., who has not longed for an infallible head, teacher, and guide, seeing that the most pious and devoted are thus separated both in doctrine, practice, and government. Our hope is in the Second Coming of One in whom is lodged all power and wisdom” (*ibid.*, p. 551). We’ll discuss in some detail the Christian’s proper attitude toward the Rapture of the church in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.

In relation to *theologians*, historically speaking, this doctrine of the Kingdom *has captured the minds of some of the church’s greatest thinkers*. “Our Lord’s inseparable and central relation to the Kingdom may serve to explain, at least in part, the compelling interest and fascination which the subject of the Kingdom of God has exercised upon the greatest minds in the Church, from Augustine with the twenty-two books of his *De Civitate Dei* (426) down to the massive treatise by George N. H. Peters under the title of *The Theocratic Kingdom* (1884)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 5). We discussed this briefly in our previous chapter *The Kingdom in Church History*. Sadly, however, the Kingdom is being *ignored* by many. “Systematic Theology, as set forth generally in textbook, is without recognition of the divine program of the ages” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:xiii). It is often *considered to be too simple*. “The very simplicity of the plan causes men to discard it for something, in their estimation, higher and better” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:82). It is sometimes *unfairly linked with heresy*. “Allis tries to link premillennialism with Russellism because both believe the Abrahamic covenant is unconditional” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 13). “Dr. Patterson (*Princeton Review*, 1878) in an art. against us, concedes that it is not ‘heresy,’ endorsing the following: ‘This doctrine (says the latest Church His. which has come into our hands) though ultimately rejected by the Roman Catholic Church, was too frequently held by the early Fathers to be ranked as a heresy’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:231). However, “The

perversion of any one point, or the rashness of men in dealing with a doctrine—seeing that every important truth of the Bible has been, by some, either perverted or rashly dealt with—has no weight with the real student” (*ibid.*, p. 257). Nonetheless, despite its common rejection, we counsel our fellow believers that this Kingdom *should be berated with caution*. “We ask our opposers to be very guarded, if reverent believers of the Word, in their denunciations of our doctrine, lest, peradventure, they be found to disown and disparage God’s own appointments” (*ibid.*, p. 462).

To *ministers of the gospel*, we suggest strongly that the Kingdom should be *preached and taught boldly*. “One reason for this lack of faith in the Church results from eminent divines, who hold to the cardinal outlines of our doctrine being afraid to express them with a becoming freedom, or giving but a faint and indistinct utterance, or when declaring their faith neutralizing the whole by endeavoring to incorporate the leaven or development theory. From those who ought to give no ‘uncertain sound,’ we have but vagueness or silence. We could give several striking illustrations, but, for the sake of others, forbear. To their own Master they must give account for the influence exerted; but the fear may be stated, that while the dread of controversy, antagonism, loss of patronage, etc., causes the adoption of such a procedure, the pleasantness of the present life is no compensation for ‘the loss’ that will be sustained because of a concealment, or neutralizing presentation, of truth. The number that occupy this position is not a small one, and the plea of ‘prudence’ is presented in order to shield themselves from the charge of not proclaiming these doctrines, and thus warning the Church and world. What weight such a plea will have with the Judge Himself, we leave them to estimate after contrasting it with His expressed commands” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:225).

By *cults and other false religions*, the Kingdom is being *counterfeited*. Jesus said, “**Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness**” (Matt. 7:22–23). And Paul cautioned, “**But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ**” (2 Cor. 11:3). And, “**And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light**” (2 Cor. 11:14). Scripture makes it clear that one of Satan’s activities is to deceive the nations, an activity that will increase even more during the Tribulation period. “And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great

chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not **deceive the nations** any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time” (Rev. 20:1–3). Chafer points out, “Kingdom and prophetic truths are being falsely represented... The country is being swept by ‘Russellism’ (so-called ‘Millennial Dawn,’ ‘International Bible Students’ League,’ etc.), and the appalling progress of this system which so misrepresents the whole revelation of God can only be accounted for in the unsatisfied hunger of the people for the prophetic portions of Scripture. Such a false system, mixing truth with untruth, and designed to interpret all of the divine revelation, is evidently more engaging to the popular mind than only the Scriptural presentation of the fundamental doctrines concerning God, Man and Redemption. Satan’s lies are always garnished with truth and how much more attractive they seem to be when that garnishing is a neglected truth! And insurance against the encroachment of such false teaching lies only in correctly presenting the whole body of truth rather than in treating any portion of it as impractical or dangerous. No minister need greatly fear any false system when he is intelligently and constantly feeding the people on the Word in all its symmetry and due proportions. This is not only true concerning the teachings of ‘Millennial Dawn,’ but is equally true of the teachings of ‘Christian Science,’ ‘New Thought,’ ‘Spiritism,’ ‘Seventh Day Adventism’ and all unscriptural doctrines of Sanctification” (*KHP*, 5%).

In regard to the *nations* of the world, the Kingdom will be *resisted*. “Why do **the nations rage**, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, **Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us**” (Ps. 2:1–3). Peters comments, “It is not dependent upon the choice of any nation or nations, for, as prophecy predicts, it will be so unwelcome to the nations of the earth that, to establish it, the kingdoms of the world will be broken to pieces by it... Just as the establishment of the Theocracy in Palestine brought on a conflict with its rulers, so the reestablishment of a Theocracy in Palestine (as its centre), destined to extend its sway over all the nations of the earth, must, in the very nature of the case, lead to a serious contest... Alas! so blinded is man that but few appreciate its design and adaptation to bless, and it is only when introduced under the auspices of the Theocratic King and His associated rulers, amid opposition and the fall of its enemies, that the eyes of multitudes will be opened to the grandeur, majesty,

blessedness, and glory pertaining to it, and they will also gladly submit themselves to its ordering” (*TTK*, 3:591).

Finally, we’ll look at *the Kingdom’s relationships to history*.

First, the Kingdom *explains why the Bible is full of history*. “The doctrine of the Kingdom as presented, shows why the form and structure of the Bible is so largely historical and prophetic, and why so much stress is laid on the history and future of the Jewish nation. The Theocratic idea and purpose require it. The facts in reference to the Kingdom make this feature—considered objectionable and a blemish by some—a necessity. It is so historical, because the covenant, the Kingdom, and the downfall demand it; prophetic, because the assured fulfillment of covenant in the restitution of the Theocracy requires it; Jewish, because the Theocratic relationship of that nation forbids a departure from it. Hence narrative, prophecy, events connected with the elect nation rather than events related to the vast Gentile monarchies, etc., receive new light in that of the Theocratic ordering” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:477).

The Kingdom also *explains world history*. This can be seen in several different facets.

The Kingdom explains that *history does have meaning, purposes and goals*. Peters observes, “A divine ordering toward a specified end, is manifest in all history” (*TTK*, 3:427). “We do not then need to occupy the position of Hume, who (as quoted by an anon. writer, *Proph. Times*, vol. 6, p. 6) remarks respecting the suffering and evils of the world: ‘The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery. Doubt, uncertainty, suspense of judgment, appear the only result of our most accurate scrutiny concerning this subject.’ Fully admitting that we now must, in the nature of the case, see through a glass, darkly, and that God now hides Himself in Providence as in nature, yet certain great landmarks are given, within whose limits we find rest to our souls, peace to our minds, and hope to our hearts. The amplitude of evidence respecting the Divine Purpose, supported by a personal experience derived from faith in Jesus, gives us the assurance and confidence that evil is temporary, and will, in God’s own good time be blotted out of this world” (*ibid.*, 3:436).

The Kingdom explains *the design and divine purposes of history*. “To give an accurate description of a machine it must embrace not merely its several parts but the design or end for which it is intended; precisely so with an attempt to portray the world’s history, for every effort which does not embrace the great end, the gracious design (and exhibited in this Kingdom) that God has in view, will utterly fail to do justice to the problems of history” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:427).

The Kingdom explains *how the divine purposes are to be realized*. “Prophecy simply teaches us what history will be in the future; it does not itself make history, for that which gives prophecy—a power more potent than prophecy—makes history, either directly or permissively... much of prophecy is given not merely to foretell future events, but to inform us how and when certain things pertaining to the Divine Purpose are to be realized, and, therefore, is a portrayal of what God will do to carry out His Plan. It is thus the revelation of God’s will and design” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:437).

The Kingdom explains that *God is the Maker of history* via both providence and intervention. “The Theocratic order unmistakably teaches us that there is a Divine Providence overruling all things, even down to that dark end when Antichrist is allowed, for a brief space, to triumph, making victory and punishment the more signal and glorious” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:430).

The Kingdom explains *the origin and progression of evil in the world*. “Again, take the fall of man and the personal withdrawal of God. However the historical account may be explained, fact demonstrates the truthfulness of both, viz., that restraining influences are requisite to incline man to virtue and holiness, to moral law and order; and that God is not personally present with man. So long as these facts exist, it is folly to deny them; and unless a better explanation than that given in the Word to account for the introduction of such facts is presented (which has never yet been done), it is both unwise and unsafe to reject the Biblical statement on the subject... a Divine Plan for the removal of such a fall and the restoration of the personal Divine Presence... While the Bible appeals to the fall of man as a fact that self-consciousness attests to, and that the history of the race abundantly confirms, it at the same time predicts (which is now so abundantly fulfilled) that men will arise and ignore this fall, decry the natural depravity of the race, reject with scorn the provisions made for its removal as unnecessary, laud and magnify the natural ability of humanity to save and exalt itself, until the Perfectibility of Human Nature shall be endorsed and advocated by the multitude... While the Bible insists upon the depravity of man, yet at the same time it also states that such is his condition, mental, moral, and physical, that God still deemed him worthy of redemption, and in the determination of such redemption and the provision made for it through Jesus Christ elevated man to a position of dignity which he is now at liberty either to retain, confirm, and enlarge (viz., by the reception of Christ), or to degrade and forever forfeit (viz., through the rejection of proffered salvation). The establishment of this Kingdom (in the kingship and priesthood of the saints, in the restored happy condition of the elect Jewish nation, and in the rich blessings bestowed upon Gentile nations) vindicates the dignity

(bestowed by grace) of man, exhibiting his capacity for (advanced by love) and enjoyment of its privileges, honors, and happiness” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:433).

The Kingdom explains *the need for a cure and the cure for evil in the world*. “There is only one solution, and that contained in the Bible, to the evils of the world, to the removal of the curse, to the enigmas of regeneration puzzling the minds of statesmen and others; this is found in the Second Advent of ‘the Christ,’ and its related truths, especially the one pertaining to the Kingdom. The six thousand weary and sad years of humanity, bound in a curse and adding to its horrors by the effects of willful wickedness, are designed to teach man that he needs Theocratic help in the Person and Power of the Theocratic King, Jesus the Christ—the earnest now, the perfect realization hereafter. Faith holds fast to this hope” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:434).

The Kingdom explains *why Scripture gives only a brief mention of antediluvian history, and disproportionately great attention to Israel’s history*. “The antediluvian world, as its fate testifies, was not favorable for a Theocratic ordering, and hence it was not attempted; Gentile nations, as their history indicates, could not be brought into the spirit and obedience requisite for such an ordering, and therefore it was not proposed to them; even the Jewish nation, so highly favored, God foreknew was lacking in qualifications (which was foretold), but God had a plan to overrule even this in mercy, and consequently the initiatory form was introduced... History in its more particular or minute form begins with Abraham. His call is a remarkable epoch; so marked that the Bible gives more place to Abraham’s history than to the antediluvian period... Let the reader mark it well, it was owing to this Theocratic idea and rule that the history of the Jewish nation alone assumes such prominence and importance in the eyes of the Almighty God, while mighty nations and empires receive but the slightest notice... The particular and the prophetic history, just as they are given, are needed, together with the Gospel history, to give us a complete and perfect view of God’s Purpose in the re-establishment of the downfallen Theocracy. Everything relating to this idea, and essential to its comprehension, is carefully portrayed; all else outside of it, is passed by or referred to as it may be effected by it. Hence the history of the Jewish nation even, outside of this Theocratic idea, has only the briefest prophetic delineation, such as is given to Gentile nations. God shows respect to His own Theocratic ordering, and when this Theocracy is restored again under David’s Son, persons will wonder that this feature was so much overlooked or undervalued” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:432).

The Kingdom explains *the contexts and purposes of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection*. "...the voluntary offering of Jesus, so that through it God's forbearance and love could be manifested in continuing (against the sinfulness of the nation and world) His gracious purpose to fulfill the covenants... By this death and resurrection Jesus Christ as David's Son becomes the covenanted immortal, glorified Son of David. He gives the highest possible expression of obedience to the Divine Will; and He that has thus obeyed is worthy also to reign. By these He gains power over death, so that He is able to deliver His own from the prison house at the time appointed. These constitute Him a King worthy of all love, for the Theocratic King, the King of glory died and was raised to deliver His coheirs and subjects... His death and resurrection are the two most noted events that history thus far records, and they form the real basis of past, present, and coming history, inasmuch as they show that through the provision made by them all history thus far has been possible, and that future history, as represented in the Word by anticipation, will exist" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:438).

The Kingdom explains *the purposes of the age in which we currently live*. "The history of the world down to the Second Advent allows that God's estimate of human nature is the only correct one... this long series of repeated depravity, finally culminating in the Antichrist, was only permitted in order that during this period this distinctive and peculiar people of God, designed for coheirship with Jesus the Christ, might be formed for the Theocratic Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:436). We'll have more to say about this in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.

The Kingdom explains *the goal of history*. "The question, then arises, what great leading (biblical) fact does the Word present for which all others are more or less preparatory. The answer is plain, it is found in this Theocratic Kingdom of the Messiah... If the Jews were not a scattered people; if Jerusalem were not in the possession of Gentile nations; if the Church had not tares, divisions, trials etc.; if wickedness did not abound; if the Roman Empire was not divided, etc., then palpable contradictions would exist, and unbelief could triumph. But present history contains no such adverse statements invalidating the truthfulness of Holy Writ. Therefore, for this and other reasons, we hold implicit confidence in the history of the future as also given in the same unfailing Word... dispensations... Jesus Christ the Son of God and the Son of David, the promised Theocratic King as the central figure of history" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:428) "The world's history is a mystery and incomplete without this restored Theocracy; for God to undertake a Theocratic form of government and not to complete it, and for Him to promise its restoration and make the most suitable provision for it, and

then not to manifest it, would leave a void fatal to the happiness of the individual, of the race, and of the world” (*ibid.*, p. 588).

And finally, the Kingdom explains *the vindication and glorification of God in history*. God “...by the end accomplished vindicates His perfections, His rights, and His glory. Before man attempts to criticize God it is best for him to await the ultimate result of these preparatory dispensations... The author of *The Ancient History of the East* in the pref. remarks: ‘...all ancient history is the preparation for—modern history the consequence of—the divine sacrifice of Calvary.’ To this we add that both ancient and modern history are only preparative for the wider and grander results at the Sec. Advent of the once crucified One, to which all prophetic history points us. It is this Advent with its grand results that illuminates history, showing what the Divine Purpose intends to accomplish, bringing in an eventually worldwide Theocracy, a completed Salvation, a manifestation of God’s glory, and the reflection of that glory in His creatures” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:428).

Chapter 4: Biblical Hermeneutics

In this chapter we'll discuss some basic principles that will help us correctly interpret the Bible.

Foundational Hermeneutical Principles

Definition of Hermeneutics

“Hermeneutics is the study of the general principles of biblical interpretation” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:160).

A Discussion of Hermeneutics is Necessary

A discussion of hermeneutics is necessary, especially when attempting to accurately define and describe the Kingdom of God. For instance, consider these two key texts: “And in the days of those kings shall **the God of heaven set up a kingdom** which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but **it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Daniel 2:44–45). and, “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus**. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever**; and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:31–33). How are we to interpret these passages? Are they meant to be taken literally, or figuratively? Is the *plain* sense the *correct* sense when interpreting passages like these? If so, how do we know that?

It is our contention that the plain sense is indeed the correct sense when interpreting these passages and hundreds of other similar passages, and that an unbiased reader would naturally interpret these passages this way, if the “spiritualizing” of Bible texts were not so prevalent. Ideally, this discussion of hermeneutics would hardly be necessary if men were content with taking the vast majority of what they read in the Bible literally, or plainly, but alas, many “experts” say that in many, many cases, and especially in cases such as these, while the Bible clearly *says* one thing, it really *means* something else. “Break in pieces,” they explain, means “gently transform,” “the house of David,” they say, means the church. As Dr. Chafer says, “Human authors seem hopelessly unable to let simple facts speak for them-

selves, nor are they willing to credit the reader with the requisite sagacity to draw his own conclusions” (*ST*, 1:33). Therefore, to peel away these ubiquitous, yet entirely unwarranted layers of “spiritualizing” that have been imposed on texts such as these over the years, by men considered to be experts on the Bible, a discussion of hermeneutics becomes necessary. “The issue, then, between amillennialism and premillennialism is their respective methods of interpretation, and little progress can be made in the study of the millennial issue until this aspect is analyzed and understood” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 59). “Dwight Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, p. 1]... “No question facing the student of eschatology is more important than the question of the method to be employed in the interpretation of prophetic Scriptures” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:456).

Characteristics of Scripture that Influence our Interpretation

Before accurately and confidently determining what the Bible really means in its eschatological passages, we should first familiarize ourselves with several characteristics of Scripture that influence our interpretations of these passages. These characteristics include whether these passages of Scripture are to be taken literally or non-literally, the symbiotic relationship between the Old and New Testaments, the eclectic composition of the synoptic gospels, the relationships between the Old and New Testaments, the four different ways the New Testament quotes the Old Testament, and some basic but important characteristics of prophetic Scripture.

Literal vs. Non-Literal

First let’s consider some *characteristics relating to literal versus non-literal passages*.

As we’ve already mentioned, it is our position that the vast majority of Scripture, including the vast majority of historical and prophetic passages, is meant to be understood literally. For many people, when reading the Bible for the first time with unbiased and unfiltered eyes, it’s a major revelation how little of it is actually anything but literal. As George Peters points out, “While there are a few prophetic types (e.g. Isa. 22:2; Jer. 13:1-7; Jer. 16:2, etc.), these are but rare, exceptional cases; the immense mass of prophecy, in no shape or sense, is typical but real descriptions or representations in language of things to come” (*TTK*, 1:193).

However, even the staunchest of literalists recognizes that the Bible does, on occasion, use figurative, allegorical or symbolic language. That being the case, a few things regarding these non-literal genres of Scripture should be kept in mind.

Regarding *figurative* Scripture, it should be recognized that *the purpose of both literal and figurative language is always to impart literal truth*. “It should be observed at the very outset that the purpose of figurative language is to impart some literal truth” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 42). “The literal method of interpretation does not take Jesus’ statement “I am the true vine” (John 15:1) as physically actual. That He is a vine is literally true, but it is not true literally (i.e., physically). Literally and physically Jesus was a human being, and His hearers understood this; since a vine is not a person, it follows that Jesus is not literally a vine. Nevertheless, there is a literal truth behind this metaphor, viz., that as we are branches on the vine (v. 5), our source of spiritual life literally (actually) comes from Christ” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:418). And, “Paul said plainly, ‘Christ, our Passover [Lamb] was sacrificed for us’ (1 Cor. 5:7 NKJV)... This fulfillment is in no sense a spiritualization or allegorization of any literal thing or event; it is a literal fulfillment of the literal type by a literal antitype” (*ibid.*, p. 419).

Regarding *allegorical* Scripture, we should be aware that *whenever allegory is used in Scripture, it is always plainly presented as such*. “The writers of the New Testament themselves make a clear distinction between the allegorical and literal interpretation of the Old Testament. When they use the allegorical method, they either say expressly, here is allegory, Gal. 4:24, or they show it by the context, or by prefixing some particle of comparison, e.g., [two Greek words], Heb. 7, John 3:14, Matt. 12:40” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:50). “Even when allegory is admissible it is confined to the subject in hand and does not vitiate or alter (as seen in Paul) the proper, legitimate covenanted Messiahship and Messianic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, 3:525).

Regarding *symbolic* Scripture, it should be pointed out that *every symbol in Scripture represents something literal*. “We encounter symbols in road signs all the time, but we never doubt that they signify literal realities” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:420). And, each symbol’s meaning remains highly consistent throughout the Bible. “A specific symbol will mean the same thing throughout the Old and New Testaments in about 95 percent of the cases. For example, whenever the word ‘stone’ is used symbolically, it is always the symbol of the second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, or Jesus the Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 545). Also, Revelation’s symbols are all explained elsewhere in Scripture. “While it is true that the Book of Revelation uses many symbols, the meaning of all those symbols is explained either in Revelation itself or elsewhere in the Scriptures” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 791). For instance, Revelation alone contains over five hundred references to the Old Testament. It may take some time and effort to make all the connections, but they’re there. (For an exhaustive list of the five hun-

dred Old Testament references in Revelation, see Arnold Fruchtenbaum's *Footsteps of the Messiah*, Appendix XI.)

Again, while the Bible does at times use figurative, allegorical or symbolic language, it must be kept in mind that these non-literal passages are almost always readily identifiable as such. "One can be sure that, when the Holy Spirit wants a concept taken in other than the literal sense, He will use the qualifying word or words that make the idea intelligible" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 356). Therefore, when reading and studying Scripture, our default disposition should be a willingness to receive and understand what is written literally or plainly, just as we would with any other text, unless we encounter clear indicators within the texts themselves that the authors intended that we do otherwise.

The Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments

Next, let's take a brief look at *the symbiotic relationship between the Old and New Testaments*. Dispensational premillennialists emphasize that:

Both the Old and New Testaments are needed. "No rule or interpretation should be endured which arbitrarily distinguishes between, virtually severs, the same Word of God, but we must regard the Scriptures as one whole, all significant, important, and weighty, giving only when in combination, in firm union, the steady, brilliant light that we need" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:158). And, "It is not uncharitable to suspect, that one reason why so many meanings and contradictory definitions are given to the Kingdom, arises from the neglect—conscious or unconscious, designed or undesigned—of the Old Test. Scriptures, or, from an artful, misleading, but well-intended exaltation of the New over the Old, as if some great and vital difference existed between them instead of their being inseparably one" (*ibid.*, p. 161).

Both the Old and New Testaments present the same Kingdom. For example, compare Luke 1:26-33 with Isaiah 9:6-7:

Luke 1:26-33: Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was **Joseph, of the descendants of David**; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, **Mary**; for you have found favor with God. And behold, **you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will**

reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.”

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

Is it not obvious that both Luke and Isaiah are describing the same Kingdom? “Did Mary for one moment hold the amillenarian view? Would she spiritualize this passage—the throne of David is God’s throne in heaven; the kingdom is a spiritual kingdom; Israel is synonymous with the church? Certainly not! It was totally foreign to her thinking. If the amillenarians are right, Mary was sadly deceived. The prophecy of the angel could hardly have been better worded to confirm the ordinary Jewish hope as well as the exact essentials of the premillennial position—the literal and earthly fulfillment of the Davidic covenant” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 117). “...Gabriel’s message to Mary: that her Son would sit upon the throne of His father David and will have ‘rulership over Israel forever.’ This is in keeping with a literal understanding of the Davidic Covenant and Gabriel made no effort to correct a supposed Jewish misunderstanding of the nature of the kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 348). This is the same Kingdom that Jesus’ disciples were expecting, even following His resurrection, after Jesus had just finished “**appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God**” (Acts 1:3) “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel**” (vs. 6)? “Our position... Such a view binds the contents of both Old and New Tests. into a unity, which no other can present, and evidences the pre-eminent logical position occupied by the first churches of believers in ‘the gospel of the Kingdom’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:358).

The New Testament assumes familiarity with the Old Testament. “The New, taking a familiar acquaintance of the Old for granted, and proceeding on this supposition, does not supersede the Old” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:158).

The New Testament is built on an Old Testament foundation. “The New [Testament], as evidenced by our remarks, is built on the Old as on a foundation, and if separated from the latter, its strength and stability is di-

minated, if not destroyed” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:158). Without a good understanding of the Old Testament, understanding the New Testament, particularly in relation to the Kingdom, is impossible.

The New Testament confirms the Old Testament. Jesus said to His disciples, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled**” (Luke 24:44). Peter wrote to His fellow Jewish believers, “And so **we have the prophetic word made more sure**, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts” (2 Pet. 1:19). “The promises of the New Test. relating to the future are based on unfulfilled predictions of the Old, are repetitions of the same, and thus renewed predictions” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:163). And even, “Numerous writers reject the New Test. books because a continuation and confirmation of the Jewish ideas of the Old” (*ibid.*, 3:490).

The New Testament does not contradict the Old Testament. “There is an unerring test: if any teaching is directly opposed to that which is recorded in Holy Writ, it is to be rejected at once, because the Spirit will not be in conflict with truth previously given. Truth is harmonious and not discordant; the Spirit is not antagonistic to itself” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:203).

The New Testament does not supersede the Old Testament. “...the idea that the Old Test. is superseded by the New, and that the interpretation of the Old, as once held by the Jews, is antagonistic to the New, and that, consequently, the literal, grammatical sense must give place to another, additional one grafted upon the Old. This whole theory is a violation of the laws of language, of the Revelation of God’s Purposes as given to ancient believers and trusted in by them, and it places the Israelites, before the Advent, in the posture of an ignorant, self-deceived people who trusted in a grammatical sense which is a lie—in plainly expressed covenants and promises which, as understood by them, they never comprehended. In brief, it makes God teaching what they could not understand, prophesying what they could not apprehend, and developing a faith and hope that can never be realized... Briefly, no student can afford to occupy such an exclusive position; the true scholarly method, commended by common sense and due respect for God’s whole Word, is to interpret both by the same laws of language, and to observe, on any given subject, which part, the Old or the New, advances the most revelation or information, receiving the same as of equal authority” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:160). “The Old Test. is not superseded by the New, and we are urged to observe the intimate and enduring connection existing between them” (*ibid.*, 2:64).

The New Testament does not reinterpret the Old Testament. As we'll see below, the New Testament quotes the Old Testament in four different ways, one of which is "literal plus application." An *application* of an Old Testament passage to a New Testament situation does not "reinterpret" the Old Testament passage; the originally intended *interpretation* of the Old Testament passage remains intact.

The New Testament should not be read back into the Old Testament. "The Old Testament should not be interpreted in light of the New, because later writings, inspired or not, do not change the meaning of earlier writings. Meaning is objective and absolute; a text means what the author meant by it, nothing more and nothing less. Later authors can add more information on the same topic, but they cannot change the meaning" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:587). "Dispensationalism refuses to read the New Testament back into the Old, a major principle in Covenant Theology" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, 322).

On some subjects, the Old Testament is more clear and/or more complete than the New Testament. "The Old Testament... in its covenants and prophecies... it contains stronger proof and clearer light in reference to some things that are yet to be fulfilled than the New Testament" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:159). "The Old Testament, as comparison abundantly shows, has more to say of the final realization than the New" (*ibid.*). "...without the Old Testament the kingdom cannot be understood" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 279).

The New Testament quotes the Old Testament in four different ways. Because writers of the New Testament sometimes quote the Old Testament in unusual and/or unexpected ways, Covenant theologians will point to this as evidence that we cannot simply accept what the Old Testament says at face value, but rather that we must reinterpret the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament. However, as Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, "Another key factor under Bibliology concerns the way the New Testament quotes the Old. It has been shown several times that this is a major evidence Covenant Theologians use to prove that the Old Testament prophecies cannot be understood literally. They claim that the New Testament 'changed' the meaning of the Old Testament or 'reinterpreted' it. Even Covenant Premillennialism has a hard time using the Old Testament as evidence for their Premillennialism. What this boils down to is that the original intended meaning of the Old Testament was changed by the New and this requires an ignoring of the original context. The Old Testament cannot be understood on its own merit and saints had to wait until the writings of the New to understand the Old. According to Covenant Theology, in light of the New Testament's use of the Old Testament prophecy, these prophecies

cannot be understood literally. What they fail to see is that the New Testament also treats historical passages in the Old Testament the same way, but does not intend to mean that the historical event never literally happened. In Galatians 4:21-31, Paul gives an allegorical application to the story of Sarah and Hagar, and Isaac and Ishmael, but he does not deny that these were literal people and that the Genesis account of their history literally did happen. The solution to the problem is simply to recognize that the New Testament quotes the Old in four different ways. This was a typical Jewish way of quoting the Old Testament in that period and the writers were Jews. They often gave a spiritual meaning or a new application to an Old Testament text without denying that what the original said literally did or will happen. There is one example of each of the four ways in Matthew two and so this will be the basis for explaining them.” [reference is made in this section to David L. Cooper, *Messiah: His Historical Appearance*, pp. 174-177] (I, p. 843).

The first of these four different ways is *literal plus literal*. Consider these two passages: “But thou, **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, **out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel**; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2) and “And they said to him, ‘**In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet, “And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler, Who will shepherd My people Israel”**’” (Matt. 2:5-6). “The first is called *literal prophecy plus literal fulfillment*. This example is found in Matthew 2:5-6, which quotes Micah 5:2. In the original context of Micah 5:2, the prophet is speaking prophetically and prophesying that whenever the Messiah is born, He will be born in Bethlehem of Judah. That is the *literal* meaning of Micah 5:2. When a literal prophecy is fulfilled in the New Testament, it is quoted as a *literal fulfillment*. Many prophecies fall into this category such as Isaiah 7:14; 52:13-53:12; Zechariah 9:9, etc.” (Fruchtenbaum, I, p. 843)

The second way is *literal plus typical*. Consider these two passages: “When **Israel** was a child, then **I** loved him, and **called my son out of Egypt**” (Hosea 11:1) and “and was there until the death of Herod, that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, “**Out of Egypt did I call My Son**” (Matt. 2:15). “The second is called *literal plus typical*. This example is found in Matthew 2:15, which is a quotation of Hosea 11:1. However, the original context is not a prophecy, it is an historical event. It is a reference to the Exodus when Israel, the national son of God, was brought out of Egypt. It is obvious that Hosea is thinking of lit-

eral Israel for in the following verses he points out how Israel quickly slipped into idolatry. The *literal* meaning in context of Hosea 11:1 is a reference to the Exodus. There is nothing in the New Testament that can change or reinterpret the meaning of Hosea 11:1, nor does the New Testament deny that the literal Exodus actually happened. However, Israel as the national son of God coming out of Egypt becomes a type of the individual Son of God, the Messiah coming out of Egypt. The passage is quoted, not as a fulfillment of prophecy, since Hosea 11:1 was not a prophecy to begin with but as a type. Matthew does not deny, change, or reinterpret the original meaning. He understands it literally, but the literal Old Testament event becomes a type of a New Testament event. This is literal plus typical. Many of the citations in the Book of Hebrews of Exodus and Leviticus fall into this category” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, 843).

The third way is *literal plus application*. Consider these three examples: Rachel weeping for her children, the pouring out of the Spirit prophesied by Joel, and “calling them who were not my people ‘my people.’” First, Rachel weeping for her children: Consider “Thus saith Jehovah: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, **Rachel weeping for her children**; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not” (Jer. 31:15). and “Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, Weeping and great mourning, **Rachel weeping for her children**; And she refused to be comforted, Because they were no more” (Matt. 2:17-18). “The third is called *literal plus application*. This example is found in Matthew 2:17-18 which is a quotation of Jeremiah 31:15. In the original context, Jeremiah is speaking of an event soon to come as the Babylonian Captivity begins. As the Jewish young men were being taken into captivity, they went by the town of Ramah. Not too far from Ramah is where Rachel was buried and she was the symbol of Jewish motherhood. As the young men were marched toward Babylon, the Jewish mothers of Ramah came out weeping for sons they will never see again. Jeremiah pictured the scene as Rachel weeping for her children. This is the *literal* meaning of Jeremiah 31:15. The New Testament cannot change or reinterpret what this verse means in that context, nor does it try to do so. In this category, there is a New Testament event that has one point of similarity with the Old Testament event. The verse is quoted as an *application*. The one point of similarity between Ramah and Bethlehem is that once again Jewish mothers are weeping for sons they will never see again and so the Old Testament passage is applied to the New Testament event. Otherwise, everything else is different. In Jeremiah, the event takes place in Ramah, north of Jerusalem, but in

Matthew, it takes place in Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem. In Matthew, they die, but in Jeremiah they are still alive and are going into captivity. This is literal plus application. The original text may be history or prophecy. The Jeremiah quote is an example of history” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 844). Second, the pouring out of the Spirit prophesied by Joel: Consider “And it shall come to pass afterward, that **I will pour out my Spirit** upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:28-32). and “**but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel:** And it shall be in the last days, saith God, **I will pour forth of My Spirit** upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams: Yea and on My servants and on My handmaidens in those days Will I pour forth of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above, And signs on the earth beneath; Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the day of the Lord come, That great and notable day. And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:16-21). “An example of prophecy is in Acts 2:16-21 which quotes Joel 2:28-32. Nothing that happened in Acts two was predicted by Joel two. What actually did happen in Acts two (the speaking in tongues) was not mentioned by Joel. What Joel did mention (dreams, visions, the sun darkened, the moon turned into blood) did not happen in Acts two. Joel was speaking of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the whole nation of Israel in the last days, while Acts two speaks of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Twelve Apostles or, at most, on the 120 in the Upper Room. This is a far cry from Joel’s *all flesh*. However, there was one point of similarity, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, resulting in unusual manifestations. Acts two does not change or reinterpret Joel two, nor does it deny that Joel two will have a literal fulfillment when the Holy Spirit will be poured out on the whole nation of Israel. It is simply applying it to a New Testament event because of one point of similarity” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 844). Third, “calling them who were not my people ‘my people:’

Consider “Yet the number of the children of **Israel** shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, **in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God**” (Hosea 1:10), “And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and **I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people**; and they shall say, Thou art my God” (Hosea 2:23) and “As He says also in Hosea, **‘I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, “MY PEOPLE,” AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, “BELOVED.” AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, “YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,” THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD**” (Rom. 9:25–26). “Can the New Testament so unilaterally change or reinterpret the meaning of the Old? If so, this calls into real question the inspiration and validity of one or the other or both. However, the validity of both can be maintained by recognizing the quotation for what it is: an application. Hosea’s prophecy will be fulfilled to Israel. Because of one point of similarity, the passage is applied to a New Testament event. The one point of similarity is that the Gentiles at one time were not my people but now have become my people. Paul neither changes nor reinterprets the meaning of the Old Testament. He merely makes an application” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 293). In summary, “Covenant Theology fails to distinguish when the New Testament is actually interpreting the Old and when it is merely applying an Old Testament passage to a New Testament event because of a similar situation. This failure leads many Covenant Theologians to ignore the original Old Testament text in its context, and to ignore its original meaning. It makes the New Testament guilty of actually changing the original Old Testament meaning” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 256). “The New Testament often cites the Old Testament purely as an application and not as an interpretation. Ladd basically says that the Old Testament context must be set aside and ignored. As he admits, ‘this involves reinterpretation’ of the Old Testament. This cannot help but lead to the questioning of the validity of the original prophecy. Ladd goes so far as to say: ‘Sometimes the fulfillment is different from what we would expect from the Old Testament.’ This would render the Old Testament useless since the original cannot be understood in its own context. This is no different than the Mormon claim that the New Testament must be understood by the Book of Mormon; but for Ladd, the Book of Mormon’s contradiction (reinterpretation?) of the New Testament would render the Book of Mormon invalid. Ladd fails to see that if the New Testament actually changes the meaning of the Old Testa-

ment, then either one or the other is invalid. The Old Testament cannot stand on its own for ‘the final word in doctrine... must be found in the New Testament.’ It is this approach to the Old Testament by which Ladd develops his Israelology” (*ibid.*). “Application is not reinterpretation... The original Old Testament prophecy is neither changed nor cancelled” (*ibid.*, p. 294).

The fourth way is *summation*. Consider this verse: “and came and resided in a city called Nazareth, **that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, ‘He shall be called a Nazarene’**” (Matthew 2:23). “The fourth is called *summation*. The example is found in Matthew 2:23:... *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene*. However, no such statement is found anywhere in the Old Testament. Since Matthew used the plural *prophets*, one should be able to find at least two, yet there is not even one. The fourth category does not have an actual quotation as in the first three categories, but only a summary of what the prophets actually said. The plural use of *prophets* is a clue to this category. In the first century, *Nazarenes* were a people despised and rejected and the term was used to reproach and to shame (John 1:46). The prophets did teach that the Messiah would be a despised and rejected individual (e.g. Isa. 53:3) and this is summarized by the term, *Nazarene*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 845). Consider also: “And He took the twelve aside and said to them, ‘Behold, **we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again**’” (Luke 18:31–33). “Another example of this category is Luke 18:31-33. Using the plural for prophet again, Jesus states that the time for fulfillment has come and He states what is to be fulfilled: the Messiah will go to Jerusalem, be turned over to the Gentiles; the Gentiles will mock Him, treat Him shamefully, spit on Him, scourge Him, and kill Him, but He will rise again the third day. Not one prophet ever said all this, but the prophets together did say all this. Hence, this is a summation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 845).

While the New Testament *does* quote the Old Testament in these four ways, it is important to point out again that the New Testament *does not* ever quote the Old Testament *allegorically*, unless it also states explicitly that it is doing so (as Paul does in the story of Sarah and Hagar in Galatians chapter 4). “...about 400 citations from the Old Testament found in the New Testament... It is one of the characteristic and instructive features of

the New Testament writers that they absolutely refrain from the allegorical method of interpretation current in those times, particularly in the writings of Philo” [quoting G. H. Schodde, ‘Interpretation,’ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. III, p. 1490] (McClain, *GK*, p. 259).

In conclusion, “Every New Testament quotation of the Old will fit into one of these four categories. The procedure is not simply ‘to interpret the Old by the New’ as Covenant Theology insists. The procedure is first to see what the original quotation means in its own context. Once that is determined, then it can also be determined in just which of the four categories the quotation belongs. There is no need to conclude that the New Testament changes or reinterprets the Old Testament. Even preachers today make applications of biblical historic or prophetic texts to the modern situation without implying that that was the intent of the original author” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 845). “While the New Testament sometimes gives an application (rather than an interpretation) of an Old Testament passage, it never spiritualizes away the literal truth of an Old Testament text” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:444). “...the Hebrew authors of the NT... quote from the OT in a more applicatory, illustrative sense without invalidating the original literal meaning” (Horner, *FI*, p. 182)

The Eclectic Composition of the Gospels

Next, we’ll take a look at *the eclectic composition of the synoptic gospels*.

Has the reader ever wondered, if we’re saved by grace alone through faith in Christ alone, how Jesus could say “if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions” (Matt. 6. 15)? How could this be true, if, as John said in 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”? Or, has the reader ever thought about how impractical, or even impossible it would be, in this day and age, to consistently follow the golden rule, “However you want people to treat you, so treat them” (Matt. 7:12)? How could we always “give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you” without literally losing our shirts (Matt. 5:40), and everything else, to those who would be only too happy to take advantage of our generosity? How practical would it be for us to always “turn the other cheek” (Matt. 5:39) when we’re met at every turn by those who would be only too happy to harm us if they knew they could get away with it? How can Jesus’ command to Peter, “Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword” (Matt. 26:52) be reconciled with His later admonition, “let him who has no sword sell his robe and buy one” (Luke 22:36)? Is it possible to rec-

oncile the Sermon on the Mount, which when read carefully, seems to be more legalistic than even the Mosaic Law, with the grace teachings of the later sections of the New Testament?

We suggest that the best solution to these apparent contradictions in Scripture is the recognition that within the synoptic gospels is an intersection of three separate and distinct dispensations: Law, Grace and Kingdom. First, Jesus was a Jew, born under the Law (Gal. 4:4), and He preached and taught a Jewish audience that was also under the Mosaic Law covenant. Second, He announced an eschatological Kingdom that was to come in the (potentially near) future (Matt. 6:20). Third, after His official rejection by the Jewish leaders in Matthew chapter 12, He foretold, for the first time in the history of the world, a new entity and a new age, the age of the church (Matt. 16:18). So, within the synoptic Gospels, and even within just the one book of Matthew, we have the confluence of three different dispensations. So in order to avoid actual contradictions in Jesus' apparently contradictory statements, we must be careful to first ascertain to which dispensation, and to which people group, each of these statements or commands belongs. "The Gospels are complex almost beyond any other portion of Scripture, since they are a composite of the teachings of Moses, of grace, and of the kingdom" (Chafer, *G*, 38%). "The Gospel of Matthew, while in general addressing itself to the subject of why Jesus Christ did not bring in His millennial kingdom at His first coming, actually involves three dispensations in its teaching, sometimes referring to the law of Moses in the Old Testament, sometimes to the present church age as in the announcement of the coming church in Matthew 16:18, and sometimes to the end of the age and the Millennium that will follow. All of these phases of truth were addressed to His disciples" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 185).

The reconciliation comes in the recognition that while all Scripture is written *for* us, not all Scripture is written *to* us. "There is a dangerous and entirely baseless sentiment abroad which assumes that every teaching of Christ must be binding during this age simply because Christ said it. The fact is forgotten that Christ, while living under, keeping, and applying the law of Moses, also taught the principles of His yet future kingdom, and, at the end of His ministry and in relation to His cross, He also anticipated the teachings of grace. If this three-fold division of the teachings of Christ is not recognized, there can be nothing but confusion of mind and consequent contradiction of truth" (Chafer, *G*, 52%). The Sermon on the Mount, for example, was spoken by Jesus, not to the church, which was not yet in existence, but rather to first-century Jews who were on the threshold of the restored Davidic Kingdom, should the required condition of national repen-

tance be met. “P. B. Fitzwater [in *Christian Theology*, p. 535] has summarized the situation well: ‘This so-called Sermon on the Mount is the royal proclamation, or the setting forth of the laws which shall prevail when Christ shall reign as King. The Sermon on the Mount is strictly kingdom and not Church truth. However, the principles of righteousness set forth are of perpetual and universal application’” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 223). “Finally, as for truth for the church, the teachings of the Lord Jesus [in the Sermon on the Mount] on the way of salvation, the Holy Spirit, the church itself, prayer in Christ’s name, and the rapture are not found once” (ibid., p. 222). “The Golden Rule, apart from a society of regenerated men whose desires are morally right, is never wholly workable and may actually prove to be a perilous mode of action... short of heaven and the eternal state, only in a Kingdom of God on earth... can the Golden Rule become *fully* a practical principle for all human action” (McClain, *GK*, p. 289).

Characteristics of Prophetic Scripture

Finally, let’s consider *some basic but important characteristics of prophetic Scripture*.

First, again, it should be recognized that *prophecy is always connected with history*. (See our discussion of the Bible’s relation to history in the section *Premises Regarding the Bible* in our previous chapter *Presuppositions and Premises*.)

Next it should be understood that *prophecy often does not contain a precise chronology*. “In prophecy there is only a general, indefinite appeal to chronology (excepting Daniel and the Apoc.)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:246). This can be seen in the fact that Old Testament prophecy is generally compressed time-wise, and that even Jesus’ prophecies did not contain a precise chronology.

Time is generally compressed in Old Testament prophecy. “Two events, widely separated as to the time of their fulfillment, may be brought together into the scope of one prophecy” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 46). “The prophets often saw together on the screen of revelation certain events which in their fulfillment would be greatly separated by centuries of time. This characteristic, so strange to Western minds, was in perfect harmony with the Oriental mind which was not greatly concerned with continuous chronology. And the Bible, humanly speaking, is an Oriental book” (McClain, *GK*, p. 137). This time compression can be seen by examining three Old Testament prophecies: First, Isaiah 9:6 says, “For **a child will be born** to us, a son will be given to us; And **the government will rest on His shoulders**; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.” While the first part of this

prophecy, the prediction that “a child will be born to us,” was fulfilled at Jesus’ Incarnation, the second part of the prophecy, stating that “the government will rest on His shoulders” awaits fulfillment at His Second Coming. Second, Isaiah 61:1-2 says, “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because **Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek**; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor, and **the day of vengeance** of our God; to comfort all that mourn” The first part of this prophecy was fulfilled at Jesus’ First Advent. Luke writes, “And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of **the Lord** is upon Me, Because **He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor**. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden, To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” And **He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down**; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, “**Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing**” (Luke 4:16-21). The first part of Isaiah’s prophecy, that “Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek,” was fulfilled at Jesus’ First Advent, as Jesus explained to those in attendance at the synagogue in Nazareth. However, the latter part of the prophecy, concerning “the day of vengeance,” is yet future. Therefore, while contained within the same prophecy, the fulfillments of these two prophetic events are actually separated by many centuries. Third, Zechariah said “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of **Jerusalem**: behold, **thy king cometh unto thee**; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and **riding upon an ass**, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and **his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.**” The first part of this prophecy was fulfilled on Palm Sunday, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (Matt. 21:5), presenting Himself as peaceful King to the Jewish nation. However, now, almost two thousand years later, the latter part of this prophecy still awaits fulfillment when Jesus returns to earth, at which time He will present Himself to Israel and to the world, not as the peace-offering King riding on a donkey, but rather as the conquering King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16), atop a white war horse (vs.

11). Indeed, “It is not uncommon for future events to be initially lumped together, and then for further revelation to show that they are separable” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:474).

There are several purposes for this time compression. Peters suggests, “This intermingling and blending of Advents, or rather, this non-discrimination of Advents, is purposely done, (1) to allow full latitude to the freedom of the nation; (2) to evince the foreknowledge, truthfulness, and faithfulness of God; (3) to test the faith of His people; (4) to throw the responsibility of Christ’s rejection upon the nation; (5) to prepare the way for the engrafting of the Gentiles; (6) to avoid the despondency, etc., that must arise, if the long intervening period of time were presented” (*TTK*, 1:242). He adds, “This characteristic of not distinguishing between the two Advents, excepting as the events connected with one or the other now (in view of fulfillment) enables us to discriminate between them, has been often ridiculed by unbelief as an evidence of weakness. We, on the other hand, find in it a profound meaning and an indication of the highest wisdom and the greatest strength. Indeed, when properly comprehended in its true relationship to the Jewish nation and the Theocracy, it forms a strong proof of inspiration, being a phase beyond human conception and continuance. Foreknowing the facts, it carefully avoids contradiction in the least particular; aware of the result, it gives due latitude to moral freedom; and conscious of a postponement resulting from the conduct of the Jewish nation, it still proclaims that God’s Plan shall be ultimately accomplished. Divine Wisdom alone could devise such a wonderful way of predicting the future” (*ibid.*, p. 244). “Now it is no longer a matter of difficulty to discriminate; the fulfillments at the First Advent teach us what to apply to it and what to refer to the Second. Both Advents are plainly delineated—one of humiliation, suffering and death, and exaltation; the other, one of triumph, vengeance, dominion, and glory. The Primitive Church view gives us the key to this peculiar prophetic style, and this very delineation, now so perplexing to Jewish Rabbis and to unbelievers, is evidence, if we will receive it, of Divine inspiration” (*ibid.*, 1:385).

One purpose of this time compression is *to give us assurance of the distant aspects of these near-and-distant prophecies*. “It was the purpose of God to give the near and far view so that the fulfillment of the one should be the assurance of the fulfillment of the other” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 47). “The student may find a prophecy having all the external marks of literary unity, yet referring to some event in the near future connected with the historical phase of the Kingdom and also to some far-off event connected with the Messiah and His Millennial Kingdom. When the first event arrives, it

becomes the earnest and divine forecast of the more distant and final event” (McClain, *GK*, p. 137).

A second purpose of this time compression is *to insure the literalness of the fulfillment of the distant aspects of near-and-distant prophecies*. “The manner in which the prophecies were fulfilled at the First Advent teaches us how we may expect the prophecies pertaining to the Second to be realized, viz.: in the strict grammatical sense contained in them” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:243). “Take, for example, the anti-millennial approach to such a passage as Isaiah 9:6-7 which in part reads: ‘For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder... Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David.’ Now the normal and natural sense here should be perfectly obvious: A Child will be born, and He will reign universally upon the throne of David. And so we begin our interpretation with a literal child and a literal birth. But now consider what happens if an unbroken mould of continuous time is clamped on the prophecy. Because the regal Child did not *immediately* take the literal throne of David to rule the world, it is argued that such a thing will never come to pass. And then, to preserve the assumption of unbroken time-sequence which cannot allow room for any literal fulfillment of the second part of the prophecy at some future time, the throne of David on earth is changed into the throne of God in heaven, and Messiah’s reign is reduced to the ‘influence of the Gospel’ or the rule of God in the ‘hearts of men’” (McClain, *GK*, p. 137).

A third purpose of time compression in the prophecies is *to preserve moral freedom*. “It will be observed that, owing to the terrible period of punishment for the rejection of ‘the Christ,’ etc., no distinction of First and Second Advent is made, and a little reflection will show the great wisdom and mercy of God in not making it. Had it been made, its revelation would have had crushing force, and would have interfered with moral freedom. We regard this very feature, so delicately handled, as a decisive proof of divine inspiration” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:243).

A fourth and final purpose of time compression is *to allow for the rejection and postponement of the Kingdom*. “The leading motive for such a non-discrimination of First and Second Advent will be found in the offer of this same Kingdom to the Jewish nation at the First Advent, and, upon its rejection by the nation, in its postponement to the Sec. Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:242).

It will be noticed that *even Jesus’ prophecies did not contain a precise chronology*. McClain says, “We must be careful, however, not to read into the words of Christ any hard and fast chronological scheme. For, in con-

formity with the general method of predictive prophecy, our Lord pictured together future events which would be outrolled separately in their historical fulfillment. This method is not something wholly arbitrary but has a gracious purpose. Within certain limits, it leaves room in history for the interplay of both divine sovereignty and human freedom. The future event is always certain, but the time element (with certain important exceptions) has elasticity... For, viewed from the standpoint of Jewish opportunity and responsibility, the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 might have led directly to the end of the age... This divinely ordained elasticity of time is the rock upon which, fortunately, all rigid chronological charts of *the present age* have been wrecked” (GK, p. 365).

It should also be noticed that *future events are sometimes spoken of in past or present tense*, for emphasis. “The present tense is often put for the future, to show that the thing spoken of shall as certainly happen as if it were already present” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:415). For example, “But **you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to myriads of angels... And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.’ And this expression, ‘Yet once more,’ denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since **we receive a kingdom** which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:22-28). Also, “and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and **whom He justified, these He also glorified**” (Rom. 8:30). And, “and **He has made us to be a kingdom**, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:6). Also, “I, **John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom** and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (vs. 9) “This feature heightens the Divine in the Word, making it to speak in the largeness and fulness of the Spirit, as e.g. in that Divine Purpose portrayed in the declaration that Jesus is ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world’ (Rev. 13:8)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:415). “Thus the Kingdom of God, the great object of faith and hope, being sure, founded on the Word and oath of the Almighty, is in view of its certainty spoken of as present, being received, etc. in Heb. 12:22-28; Rom. 8:30; Rev. 1:6, 9, etc. To take such passages, given through the intensity of faith and hope, and make them contradictory

and inconsistent with the general analogy of the Word, is certainly both unwise and unnecessary” (*ibid.*).

Finally, since God is both the originator and the fulfiller of Bible prophecy, *prophecy will be fulfilled whether believed or not*. “The refusal of man to believe does not alter the predictions or change God’s purpose in their fulfillment” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:722).

Rules For the Interpretation of Scripture

We interpret everyday language, whether spoken or written, according to basic, universally recognized and understood rules of speech, or rules of grammar. We don’t normally discuss these rules when speaking, writing, listening or reading, because they’re simply taken for granted. In everyday language, the plain, ordinary sense of language is always assumed by the listener or reader. However, for a variety of reasons, when reading and interpreting the Bible, many Bible interpreters feel compelled to reject the plain sense of the written text in favor of a more allegorical or “spiritual” sense. Because this spiritualizing of Scripture is so common, we need to discuss it here, and demonstrate that this “spiritualizing” of the text is almost never warranted. Instead, we suggest strongly that the same basic rules of grammar that we use for interpreting everyday language also apply to Scripture interpretation, and that, generally speaking, the further we stray from these basic rules, the further we stray from the true, intended meaning of Scripture.

Rules Are Important and Are Readily Available

Rules for Scripture interpretation are *important*. “...a bad methodology leads to a bad theology” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:440). And, these rules are *readily available*. “Our rules can be found in every grammar and rhetoric, and are common to all languages” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:244).

General Rules

We begin with the premise that *Scripture can indeed be interpreted correctly*. “and **you shall know the truth**, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). “But when He, **the Spirit of truth**, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come” (John 16:13). “Sanctify them in the truth; **Thy word is truth**” (John 17:17). “I have not written to you because you do not know **the truth**, but because **you do know it**, and because no lie is of the truth” (1 John 2:21). “The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also **all who know the truth**” (2 John 1:1)

Here are some basic rules of interpretation that we suggest:

First, *we should interpret Scripture using the normal rules of language*. “...limiting the interpretation of the Bible by the laws of language, as universally held” (Peters: *TTK*, 1:64)

Next, *we should allow Scripture to interpret Scripture*. “Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:420) “Much that is mystical, or purely inferential, is put on the phrase by various writers, which a simple comparison of Scripture avoids” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:115).

Simple problems should be solved before complicated ones. “The Cartesian principle of solving the more simple problems first...” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 18)

Clear passages should interpret obscure ones. “From the literal to the figurative, from the clearer to the more obscure, has been ever recognized as the law of Scripture interpretation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:20). “...the more obscure passages must be interpreted by those decisive” (*ibid.*, p. 26) “Hermeneutics teach that obscure and ambiguous places must be explained by the light of such clear and unambiguous places, and not the converse” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:425). “One should not use a disputed passage to prove a doctrine” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:336). “...difficult texts must be interpreted in light of clear ones rather than vice versa” (*ibid.*, p. 467).

Doctrine should not be derived from types or parables. “While parables may assist to illustrate a doctrine already given, a doctrine is itself derived from another class of Scripture” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:223). “Many an error has found its basis in some parabolic detail, e.g., the gradual and ultimate triumph of the Church in converting the world through the ‘leavening process’ of the Gospel. It is never safe to use either a type or parable to teach something not elsewhere taught directly and clearly in the Word of God” (McClain, *GK*, p. 324). “Typology is useful to illustrate a doctrine, but cannot be the basis of it” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 488).

We must not interpret Scripture to fit current events; rather, vice versa. “Let all men refrain from interpreting Scripture in the light of current events, rather than events in the light of Scripture. The latter course is the only trustworthy one” (Feinberg, *M*, p.167).

Finally, *we must not go beyond what is written*. “Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn **not to exceed what is written**, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other” (1 Cor. 4:6). “In reference to so important a matter as the Kingdom, we unhesitatingly adopt the language of Eaton (*Perm. of Chris.*, p. 46), ‘we cannot, however, accept, we can only repudiate and challenge all asserted im-

provements, whether by substitution or omission, in the subject matter of Christianity itself, effected by alleged advances in knowledge and civilization” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:492). The truly spiritual interpreters are those who, submitting themselves to the inspired Word of God, neither add to nor subtract from Scripture.

In order for our interpretation of the Bible to be correct, it must have the following characteristics:

First, it must be *systematic*. “A rejection of the systematic and logical statements of the Word forming a regular, unbroken series, is the source of much error” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:566).

Then, it must be *objective*. Not all Scripture is about us. “It has been said ‘All Scripture is for us, but all Scripture is not about us.’ It all bears a message to us, but is not all our rule of life. It will not do for Gentile believers to read themselves into the great portion of the Bible which treats distinctly of a chosen nation, still a separate people in the earth, under the special unbroken purpose of God and exactly where God intended them to be at this very hour” (Chafer, *KHP*, 7%). Also, we must be careful not to read our prejudices into the text. “He is the best reader who rather expects to obtain sense from the words than imposes it upon them, and who carries more away than he has brought, nor forces that upon the words which he had resolved to understand before he began to read” (Peters: *TTK*, 1:51). “So be it then, if men desire to elevate themselves to the judgment seat, deeming themselves perfectly adequate to decide what is proper and what improper for the Almighty to perform; what is worthy and what unworthy of credence in His Word” (*ibid.*, p. 165). “Van Oosterzee... (*Ch. Dog.*, vol. 2, S. 145)... ‘him who interprets the Scripture without preconceived views and allows his thoughts to be brought into captivity to the obedience of the Word’” (*ibid.*, 2:679). “Martin Luther [in *Basic Theological Writings*, p. 595]... ‘The best teacher is the one who does not bring his meaning into the Scripture but gets his meaning from Scripture’” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:438).

It must be *exhaustive*. “A painful lack of candor toward the entire truth, a specious, unsound form of reasoning, which takes just as much as suits its purpose and leaves out the most important in its bearing, characterizes the attacks upon the King and Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:296). “The doctrine of the Kingdom should be determined by an inductive examination of *all* the Biblical material on the subject, and it should not have to stand or fall by the inclusion or exclusion of isolated passages where interpretation may be in serious dispute” (McClain, *GK*, p. 16). The only way to be certain of any Bible doctrine is to consider *all* that the Bible teaches on the subject.

Our interpretation must be *contextual*. “*The Law of the Context*, which states: *A text apart from its context is a pretext*. A verse can only mean what it means in its context and must not be taken out of its context... The common saying, ‘You can prove *anything* by the Bible,’ is only true when this law is violated” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 6).

And, it must be *cultural*. “Modern systems of theology are erected in such an elaborate and systematic mode, a scientific and philosophical manner, that they are widely different from the simple and unscientific—yet purposely designed—treatment of doctrine in the Bible. The effect sometimes is, that the student, attracted by the elegance and magnitude of the superstructure of such systems, underrates the more rugged but firmer stones of the foundation in the Scriptures. Impressed by modern modes of thinking and the results of modern thought, he forgets to transport himself back to the ancient manner of thinking and expression. He lives in a world very different from that which existed when prophets predicted and disciples preached. This naturally leads to misconception and misinterpretation of the Scriptures. Hence it is, that the rule (which Horne, in *Introd.*, justly remarks, is constantly violated by commentators and others) appropriately commends itself: ‘We must endeavor to carry ourselves back to the very times and places in which they (the Scriptures) were written, and realize the ideas and modes of thinking of the sacred writers’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:183).

And, the vast majority of the time, it must be *literal*. For the most part, Scripture should be interpreted in its most plain, simple and obvious sense. “The premillennial position is that the Bible should be interpreted in its ordinary grammatical and historical meaning in all areas of theology unless contextual or theological reasons make it clear that this was not intended by the writer” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 128). “A literal promise spiritualized is exegetical fraud” (*ibid.*, p. 200). As much as any other kind of Scripture, prophecy should be interpreted literally. Nowhere do we find in Scripture that God ever suggested that prophecy should be interpreted less literally than any other kind of Scripture. Unwarranted spiritualization of Scripture, including prophetic Scripture, is not “progress;” it’s counterproductive. “We earnestly protest against this leavening process being introduced into—with the purest of motives—Protestantism—a process by which, under the plea of progress and development, the authority of Bible truth is certainly undermined. Let us be sure of this: that any professed increase of knowledge which conflicts with the plain meaning of the Bible is not in the direction of true development” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:203). We’ll cover this more fully in our discussion of the grammatical-historical method below.

Our interpretation must be *consistent*. “To the degree we have been inconsistent in the application of sound hermeneutical principles we have been in error in our conclusions and interpretations. The observance of these sound rules of prophetic interpretation will lead one into a correct interpretation of the Scriptures” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 64).

Finally, if we consistently follow these rules, the result will be *harmonious*. Peters summarizes, “In relation to the analogy of Scripture, which exhibits a general connection and agreement subsisting between the truths contained in Holy Scripture, such connection and correspondence is strikingly manifested. Thus we have first the covenant with its promises; then a Theocracy with a special ordering growing out of it; then the amplification of this covenant with David, owing to the foreseen fall; then the overthrow of the Theocratic Kingdom on account of sinfulness; then the prophetic announcements, based on the covenants, of the restoration of this Theocratic Kingdom (under a new arrangement) by David’s Son and Lord; then the First Advent of the promised Messiah, David’s Son, and the tender of this Kingdom on condition of repentance; then the rejection of it by the nation and the atoning death of Jesus, with the postponement of the Kingdom to the Sec. Advent; then, to provide a seed for Abraham, the call of the Jews and Gentiles; the establishment of the Chr. Church; the connection that this Church sustains to the postponed Kingdom; the relation that the Messiah maintains toward it; the assurances that we have in Christ’s ability in virtue of His death, resurrection, and exaltation to fulfill the covenanted promises; the fulfillment of covenant and promises at the Sec. Advent; the condition of the Church during this intermediate period, and the attitude of nations during the Times of the Gentiles—are all given, so unmistakably and connectedly by the different writers, as to form a complete chain, one link firmly fastened to another. A perfect historical connection is apparent in the Word, and is repeated in verified history, showing us, if we will accept of it, an agreement of Scripture in affirming God’s purpose to raise up a glorious Theocratic Kingdom, strengthened by the present abundant provision made through Christ for its consummation. Revelation, in all its varied utterances, constantly responds to this Theocratic idea, and upholds the blessed work of Redemption that is to be perfected and realized in the Theocratic Kingdom. So naturally does this run through Scripture, that we need not depreciate or set aside any portion of the Word (as e.g. the distinctive preaching of John, Jesus, and the disciples); there is no part of it that we find antagonistic (as e.g. Zech., ch. 14); there are no promises that we need to spiritualize away (as e.g. those to the Jewish nation as such); there is no portion that we must regard with mistrust (as e.g. the Apoc., 2 Pet., etc.);

there are no utterances that require toning down (as e.g. in reference to watching for the Advent, etc.); there are no sections of it that we must separate and subdivide in the most arbitrary manner (as e.g. Mill. prophecies in Isa. 25, etc.). Instead of this, one part of Scripture fully sustains another, and combined form a distinct related series from which, taken in its plain grammatical sense, we would not remove an iota either by direct denial, or by fastening upon it a sense not grammatically expressed in the words. But having already shown such a connection to exist under our propositions, we only add that this feature is corroborative of the truthfulness and logical correctness of our position. If this were lacking—if such a connection were wanting (as e.g. in the announcement of the postponement of the Kingdom)—then a material flaw would be found in our doctrinal teaching, and the Analogy of Scripture (which is the foundation of the Analogy of Faith) would lead to mistrust and doubt, instead of being, as now, confirmatory of faith and strength” (*TTK*, 3:343). “One of the sweetest consolations that this doctrine of the Kingdom affords, is that it thus supports, strengthens, and elucidates the other doctrines of the Bible, and binds them into a symmetrical whole, required to attain to the majestic design held by the Divine Purposes” (*ibid.*, p. 345).

The Grammatical-Historical Method

In theological terminology, this “plain sense” way of interpreting the Bible is called the *grammatical-historical* hermeneutical method. Dr. Geisler explains the terms *historical* and *grammatical*: “*Historical*... A common way of describing the literal means of interpretation is the *historical-grammatical method*. The word *historical* in this term means the sentences should be understood in their historical setting; they should not be taken out of the space-time, cultural context in which they were uttered. Dwight Pentecost (b. 1915) describes this point well: ‘[The exegete] will have to transfer himself mentally into the first century [when interpreting the New Testament]... He must place himself on the standpoint of the author, and seek to enter into his very soul, until he, as it were, lives his life and thinks his thoughts... [This is in order to] guard carefully against the rather common mistake of transferring the author to the present day and making him speak the language of the twentieth century.’ (*Things to Come*, 37) *Grammatical*... The term *grammatical* indicates that the true meaning of a sentence is rooted in its grammar, emerging from the structure wherein all parts of speech—including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, prepositions etc.—are placed in a form from which a specific meaning can be derived. Alleged textual meaning that ignores and/or is opposed to

grammatical structure is not the correct meaning. The historical-grammatical method involves giving each word ‘the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage, whether employed in writing, speaking or thinking.’ (*ibid.*, 9)” (*ST*, 1:415). Pentecost describes the historical-grammatical method concisely: “When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise.” [quoting David L. Cooper, *The God of Israel*, p. iii] (*TTC*, p. 42). Peters (*TTK*, 1:46), Fruchtbaum (*FM*, p. 4) and Geisler (*ST*, 4:419) concur with Pentecost on this.

One of the most important ideas that this writer would like the reader to take from this book is this “plain sense” or grammatical-historical way of interpreting the Bible. With it, the reader will be equipped to interpret the Bible for himself or herself. Because of its importance, we will explore the merits of this hermeneutical method in some detail.

Characteristics of the Grammatical-Historical Method

In this section, we’ll examine approximately one hundred reasons¹⁷ why this “plain sense” way of interpreting the Bible, otherwise known as the grammatical-historical hermeneutical method, is incomparably (in relation to all other methods) correct, helpful and God-honoring. We’ll be demonstrating that the grammatical-historical hermeneutic (henceforth abbreviated G-HH for brevity) is, in broad categories (each category containing several reasons): factual, biblical, in harmony with fulfilled prophecy, historical, acknowledged by orthodoxy, self-affirming, natural, comprehensive, universal, scripture-honoring, God-honoring, God’s people-honoring, fall-en-man-deprecating, edifying, unifying, protective and sufficient.

Before examining the one hundred reasons why the Bible means what it plainly says, let’s first take a look at some passages that have been commonly interpreted in ways other than in their plain, historical, grammatical sense. These are all passages that have some bearing on the nature of the Kingdom. Should these passages be interpreted plainly (meaning in most cases, literally), or figuratively? The answer to this question will to a high degree determine our view of the Kingdom. It is our contention that all of these passages should be interpreted *plainly* (and in most cases, *literally*).

¹⁷ This writer had considered writing a book on this subject, “100 Reasons Why the Bible Means What it Says,” but has decided instead to incorporate the material into this book. Confidence that the the plain sense of Scripture is the correct sense (in relation to Israel, etc.) is crucial for developing a correct view of the Kingdom.

It will then be with these passages in mind that we'll make our case (by citing our one hundred reasons) that the G-HH is the correct way to interpret the Bible.

First, consider these passages regarding *Christ's humanity*: "I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto **a son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan 7:13–14). "**Jesus** answered and **said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'** The Jews therefore said, 'It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But **He was speaking of the temple of His body**. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken" (John 2:19–22). "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**" (1 Tim. 2:5) Questions: Is the Kingdom to come to be given to an incorporeal spirit creature (as taught, for instance, by Jehovah's Witnesses), or to a human being? Was Jesus' human body raised from the dead? Is Jesus a man today? The G-HH will help us answer these questions.

Regarding *the Rapture of the church*, "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**, and thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:13–17). Questions: Will the Lord Jesus remain in heaven forever (again, as taught, for instance, by Jehovah's Witnesses), or will He return, as this passage seems to indicate, to the earth's atmosphere? Is this being "caught up... in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" something that will literally happen sometime, or is this passage speaking of a "spiritual" catching-up of some kind? Again, the G-HH will help us answer these questions.

Regarding Christ's Second Coming, "**And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on**

the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Zech. 14:4). **“BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him,** even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen” (Rev. 1:7). Questions: When Jesus returns, will it be a visible, or an invisible event? If visible, who will see Him, and where on earth will He return? Again, we believe the grammatical-historical hermeneutic will help answer these questions clearly and definitively.

Regarding Israel’s future, **“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely;** and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that they shall no more say, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, **As Jehovah liveth, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land”** (Jer. 23:5–8). **“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:** not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and **they shall be my people:** and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth **the sun** for a light by day, and the ordinances of **the moon** and of **the stars** for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: **If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.** Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all **the seed of Israel** for all that they have done, saith Jeho-

vah. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **the city shall be built** to Jehovah from the tower of Hananel unto the gate of the corner” (Jer. 31:31–38). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**’” (Matt. 19:28). “And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus**. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever**; and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:30–33). “For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so **all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob**: And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins” (Rom. 11:25–27). “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard **the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel**: from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naph-tali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed” (Rev. 7:1-8). Questions: Does national Israel have any future role in God’s Kingdom program? Are the Jews to be literally gathered back to the land of Palestine? With whom is the “new covenant” made? Who comprises the “all Israel” that is to be saved? Where is David’s throne, in heaven or on earth? Will ethnic Israelites have any special roles to play during the Tribulation? Again, the G-HH will suggest some clear, unambiguous answers to these questions.

Regarding *the government of the Millennial Kingdom*, “And it shall come to pass **in the latter days**, that **the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more**” (Isa. 2:2–4). “For unto us a **child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of **his government** and of peace there shall be no end, upon **the throne of David**, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6–7). “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood **men** from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and **they will reign upon the earth**’” (Rev. 5:9–10). Questions: In the Millennial Kingdom, from where will the law go forth? Is this location in heaven, or on earth? And again, where is David’s throne? And, where will Christ’s co-rulers reign, in heaven or on earth?

Regarding conditions under the Millennial Kingdom “**And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den.** They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:6–9). Question: In this passage, is Isaiah referring to people, or to animals?

Regarding *the duration of the Millennial Kingdom*, “And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain

in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for **a thousand years**, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until **the thousand years** were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and **they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. The rest of the dead did not come to life until **the thousand years** were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for **a thousand years**. When **the thousand years** are completed, Satan will be released from his prison” (Rev. 20:1–7). Question: Will the duration of the Millennial Kingdom be a *literal* thousand years, or a *figurative* thousand years?

Regarding life after death and eternal punishment, “And these will go away into **eternal punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matt. 25:46). “Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now it came about that **the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment**, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for **I am in agony in this flame.**” But Abraham said, “Child, remember that during **your life** you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.” And he said, “Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father’s house — for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment.” But Abraham said, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.” But he said, “No, Father

Abraham, but **if someone goes to them from the dead**, they will repent!” But he said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone **rises from the dead**”” (Luke 16:19–31). “And the devil who deceived them was thrown into **the lake of fire** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be **tormented day and night forever and ever**” (Rev. 20:10). Questions: Is it possible to experience conscious torment in Hades? What is the ultimate eventuality of the lost?

These passages could be multiplied a hundred times, and indeed they will be, in our detailed study of the Kingdom in Section 2, *The Biblical Kingdom*.

Now I will present my one hundred reasons why I believe the Bible, including the representative passages cited above, should be interpreted plainly, as per the grammatical-historical hermeneutic.

First, the grammatical-historical hermeneutic is *factual*. “It grounds interpretation in *fact*. It seeks to establish itself in objective data—grammar, logic, etymology, history, geography, archaeology, theology...” [quoting Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 54] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 11) “The test of any system of interpretation is its correspondence to the facts of history” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 53).

Next, the G-HH is *biblical*, unlike spiritualization. “From an evangelical point of view, perhaps the most telling argument against allegorism is that it is unbiblical. With the exception of one New Testament passage that clearly labels itself as a nonliteral allegory (or illustration—Gal. 4:21-31), there are no allegorical interpretations in the Bible” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:425). In the Bible, which is God’s revelation to mankind, *God never specified nor authorized any other method*. “Just so soon as God declares that the grammatical sense is the one not intended, then, and only then, other engrafted senses may be tolerated” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:349). “What satisfactory reason can be assigned for introducing an entire new element of interpretation which emasculates some of the most precious of God’s promises to man? Where is the authority for this most arbitrary dealing with the Word? Are the rules for such a proceeding given authoritatively by God or man; and if so, where found? Simple consistency, if nothing else, demands that if one portion of these prophecies is conceded to be literal (i.e. to mean what the laws of language present) then the other portion must be understood in like manner. For, having applied the literal interpretation, compatibility requires its continuance, unless God Himself, the only Being having authority to indicate a change, in express terms revokes it, or informs us that it is to be understood differently” (*ibid.*, 2:84). “Is it requisite that such an antago-

nism should exist between the plain language of the Bible and that of the dominant Theology? No! Never, for this would at once argue imperfection in God's Word, a mere accommodation to human weakness, and that He, the God of all truth, purposely led a host of believing people (both Jews and Christians) into gross error pertaining to the leading doctrine of the Bible. Before such a change of meaning can be adopted, it must be shown that God Himself directed such a transformation of the import and signification of language; that He cancelled the covenant made with David and the elect position of the Jewish nation; that He recalled the predictions of prophets, and that He altered the Divine Plan originally proposed" (*ibid.*, 3:223). The G-HH *fits biblical history*. Is it not true that all of biblical history is intended by God to be understood literally? If so, then why not biblical prophecy, which is only history told in advance?

The G-HH *fits fulfilled prophecy*. Regarding *prophecy in general*, "None could question with fairness that the prophecy now fulfilled has followed the literal method to the last detail. It is therefore both unreasonable and unbelieving to suppose that, to relieve some incredulity, the predictions yet unfulfilled will be realized in some spiritualized manner" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:288). "Inasmuch as all prophecies that have been fulfilled have been fulfilled literally, consistency demands that this method must be adopted for those portions of the prophetic Scriptures that, as yet, may be unfulfilled" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 84). "(Zech. 14:3)... 'his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east' (vs. 4)... 'behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass' (Zech. 9:9). Since this has been literally fulfilled, why should the other be rejected as unreasonable" (McClain, *GK*, p. 191)? "Bernard Ramm [*Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 261-262]... '...literal interpretation... The literal fulfillment of some of the prophecies within the Old Testament period indicates the validity of that principle'" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:455). George Peters offers an interesting example: "From what has taken place in the past, we rest assured that God means just what the words in their plain grammatical sense convey, and that as such they will, in God's own time, be realized. God has hitherto rejected substitutions of His Word. Abraham tried it, when, after waiting for some years he contemplated adopting a son, thinking that God probably meant an adopted son, and then after another waiting he went in to Hagar supposing that the seed would be his and not Sarah's, but God fulfilled His Word just as written" (*TTK*, 1:317). Regarding *prophecy concerning Israel*, "Planting ourselves on the past literal fulfillment, unswerving faith accepts of what is recorded still relating to the future of city and nation, as that

which shall become historical verity” (*ibid.*, 2:61). For example, Israel’s first three dispersions (into Egypt, into Babylon and into all nations) and first two regatherings (from Egypt and from Babylon) were literal; with these five precedents, wouldn’t we normally expect Israel’s third regathering (from all nations) to be literal, as well?

The GH-H *fits the prophecies concerning Jesus’ First Advent*, the fulfillments of which are all readily available for our inspection, enabling us to determine whether they were fulfilled literally or in some other way. Jesus Himself said, “And He took the twelve aside and said to them, ‘Behold, **we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished**” (Luke 18:31). And, “Now He said to them, ‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled**” (Luke 24:44). Peters says on this, “Simpson (*Plea for Religion*) makes the prophecies of the Old Test. to be fulfilled in Christ, literally in one hundred and nine instances; Horne (*Introd.*, vol. 1, pp. 126 and 461), and many others, produce a wonderful array of literal fulfillment as to (1) descent, (2) time of Coming and forerunner, (3) place of birth, (4) particulars of birth, (5) life and qualifications, (6) miracles, (7) special events, (8) rejection and sufferings, (9) death, (10) burial, (11) resurrection and exaltation. These embrace an astounding array of minute particulars, so that we can readily see how (Acts 18:8) ‘the Apostles mightily convinced the Jews shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ’ in a reference to them, confirmed as they were by their personal witnessing of them” (*TTK*, 3:413). Chafer adds, “Upwards of three hundred separate prophecies have been identified which belong to the first advent, and these, without exception, follow the plan of a literal fulfillment. It is, therefore, reasonable to expect that the yet future second advent program—far greater in extent—will be fulfilled after the same manner. Especially is this a natural conclusion since, as foreseen in the Old Testament, the features which make up the two advents are combined into one story. To introduce a literal fulfillment for those items which forecast the first advent—and such an interpretation cannot be avoided—with a spiritualizing conception of the features which preview the second advent is nothing short of violence to the Sacred Text” (*ST*, 4:304). And Feinberg, “Note how literally the Old Testament predictions were honored and fulfilled in the events of our Lord’s earthly life. There was a literal virgin birth; it was in literal Bethlehem that He was born; He was literally betrayed by a friend and sold for thirty pieces of silver; He literally rode into Jerusalem on a donkey; He was

literally crucified and that between transgressors; He was literally raised from the dead; He literally performed miracles before His death and after His resurrection” (*M*, p. 144). “According to Old Testament prophecy, Messiah would be the divine Son of God; yet also a descendant of David, born of a virgin, in the village of Bethlehem; who would present Himself as the King of Israel riding on the foal of an ass. He would be rejected, suffer, die, and rise again from the grave. In such details as these it is acknowledged that there is clear and literal correspondence between the Old Testament prophecies and their historical fulfillment as recorded in the New Testament” (McClain, *GK*, p. 259). “...at His first coming. Furthermore, this coming provided a pattern of literal fulfillment to guard the reader against any misinterpretation of unfulfilled prophecy” (*ibid.*, p. 261). “Even Berkhof would admit that at least most of the first coming prophecies were literally fulfilled, so why is the expectation of a literal fulfillment of the prophecies of ‘the future of Israel...entirely untenable’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 203)? “In dealing with the fulfillment of first coming prophecies, the New Testament takes a very literal approach. There is no reason not to expect other prophecies to be fulfilled in the same way” (*ibid.*, p. 207). “The ultimate proof that Old Testament prophecies should be taken literally and not spiritually (or allegorically) is that of its 113 messianic predictions that Christ has already fulfilled, *all* were fulfilled literally” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:426). “If the predictions surrounding Christ’s first coming are to be taken literally, then by logical extension there is no justification for spiritualizing predictions about His second coming” (*ibid.*). “Messianic events predicted by the prophets have literal identity with the life of Christ. Again, with all of these literally fulfilled, why should anything else be expected for the rest of the messianic oracles concerning a literal, political earthly kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 478)?

Because this is such an important point, let’s examine some of these prophecies regarding Christ’s First Advent and the manner in which they were fulfilled.

Jesus was *born of a virgin*: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, **a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel**” (Isa. 7:14). “Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘**Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,**’ which translated means, ‘God with us’” (Matt. 1:22-23).

He was *born in Bethlehem*: “But **thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose**

goings forth are from of old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). “And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them **where the Christ was to be born**. And they said to him, ‘In **Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet**’” (Matt. 2:4–5)

He was *heralded by a messenger*: “**The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah**; make level in the desert a highway for our God” (Isa. 40:3). “Behold, I send **my messenger**, and **he shall prepare the way before me**: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Mal. 3:1). “Now in those days **John the Baptist** came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ For **this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet, saying, ‘THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT’**”” (Matt. 3:1–3)!

He was *rested upon by the Holy Spirit*: “And **the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him**, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah” (Isa. 11:2). “And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw **the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him**, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased’” (Matt. 3:16–17).

He *performed miracles*: “It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellency of [Mount] Carmel and [the plain] of Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty and splendor and excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble and tottering knees. Say to those who are of a fearful and hasty heart, Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance; with the recompense of God He will come and save you. Then **the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped**. Then shall **the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing for joy**. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert” (Isa. 35:2–6). “**THE SPIRIT** of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed and qualified me to preach the Gospel of good tidings to the meek, the poor, and afflicted; He has sent me to bind up and heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the [physical and spiritual] captives and **the opening of the prison** and of the **eyes** to those who are bound, To proclaim the ac-

ceptable year of the Lord [the year of His favor] and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn” (Isa. 61:1-2, AMP) “And Jesus was going about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness**” (Matt. 9:3). “And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, ‘**THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE DOWNTRODDEN, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.**’ And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, ‘**Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing**’” (Luke 4:16–21).

He *rode into Jerusalem on a donkey*: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, **thy king** cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; **lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass.** And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth” (Zech. 9:9-10). “Now this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘**Behold your King is coming to you, Gentle, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden**’” (Matt. 21:4-5). McClain points out, “If the colt ridden by the King upon His arrival had to be literal, so also must the warfare be literal which will be abolished when He reigns. If Matthew had believed in a ‘present Messianic reign’ ushered in by the first coming of the King, here would have been the time and place to cite in full the details of Zechariah 9:9-10, but He says not a word about the wondrous things of verse 10” (*GK*, p. 347).

He was *hated without a cause*: “**They that hate me without a cause** are more than the hairs of my head: They that would cut me off, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: That which I took not away I have to restore” (Ps. 69:4). “Thus saith **Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth**, to a servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise; princes,

and they shall worship; because of Jehovah that is faithful, even the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee” (Isa. 49:7). “But **they have done this in order that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their Law, “THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE”**” (John 15:25).

He was *rejected by the Jews, particularly the Jewish leaders*: “**The stone which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner. This is Jehovah’s doing; It is marvellous in our eyes**” (Ps. 118:22–23). “**He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not**” (Isa. 53:3). “Jesus said to them, ‘Did you never read in the Scriptures, “**THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES**”’” (Matt. 21:42)? “This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, “**THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone**” (1 Pet. 2:7) “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and **those who were His own did not receive Him**” (John 1:10–11). “**For not even His brothers were believing in Him**” (John 7:5). “**No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he**” (John 7:48)?

He was *betrayed by a friend*: “**Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, Who did eat of my bread, Hath lifted up his heel against me**” (Ps. 41:9). “And while He was still speaking, behold, **Judas, one of the twelve**, came up, accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he who was **betraying Him** gave them a sign, saying, ‘Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him.’ And immediately he went to Jesus and said, ‘Hail, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, ‘**Friend**, do what you have come for.’ Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him” (Matt. 26:47–50).

He was *sold for thirty pieces of silver*: “And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my hire **thirty pieces of silver**. And **Jehovah said** unto me, **Cast it unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prized at by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them unto the potter, in the house of Jehovah**” (Zech. 11:12–13). “Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the **thirty pieces of silver** to the chief priests and elders, saying, ‘I

have sinned by betraying innocent blood.’ But they said, ‘What is that to us? See to that yourself!’ And **he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary** and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, ‘It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood.’ And they counseled together and **with the money bought the Potter’s Field** as a burial place for strangers. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. **Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, ‘AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET by the sons of Israel; AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER’S FIELD, AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME’**” (Matt. 27:3–10).

He was *silent before His accusers*: “**He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth**” (Isa. 53:7). “**And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer.** Then Pilate said to Him, ‘Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?’ And **He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge**, so that the governor was quite amazed” (Matt. 27:12–14).

The shepherd was struck; the sheep were scattered: “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts: **smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered**; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones” (Zech. 13:7). “Then Jesus said to them, ‘You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, “**I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED**”’” (Matt. 26:31). “**But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.**’ Then **all the disciples left Him and fled**” (Matt. 26:56). “And Jesus said to them, ‘You will all fall away, because it is written, “**I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED**”’” (Mark 14:27). “Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but **this has happened that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.**’ And **they all left Him and fled**” (Mark 14:49–50).

He was *mocked*: “All they that see me **laugh me to scorn**: They **shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, Commit thyself unto Jehovah; Let him deliver him: Let him rescue him, seeing he delighteth in him**” (Ps. 22:7–8). “And after **they had mocked Him,**

they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him” (Matt. 27:31). “And those passing by were **hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying**, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him, and saying, ‘He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. **HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET HIM DELIVER Him now, IF HE TAKES PLEASURE IN HIM;** for He said, “I am the Son of God.” And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him” (Matt. 27:39–44).

He *died a humiliating death*: “Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. **By oppression and judgment he was taken away;** and as for his generation, who among them considered that **he was cut off out of the land of the living** for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in **his death**; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because **he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors**: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:1–12). “and how the chief priests and our rulers de-

livered Him up to **the sentence of death, and crucified Him**” (Luke 24:20).

Consider these *details of the crucifixion*, all from Psalm 22: “For the Chief Musician; set to Aijeleth Hash-shahar. A Psalm of David. **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou answerest not; And in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee: They trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: They trusted in thee, and were not put to shame. But I am a worm, and no man; **A reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, Commit thyself unto Jehovah; Let him deliver him: Let him rescue him, seeing he delighteth in him.** But thou art he that took me out of the womb; Thou didst make me trust when I was upon my mother’s breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb; Thou art my God since my mother bare me. Be not far from me; For trouble is near; For **there is none to help.** Many bulls have compassed me; Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gape upon me with their mouth, As a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; And thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: A company of evil-doers have inclosed me; **They pierced my hands and my feet. I may count all my bones; They look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, And upon my vesture do they cast lots**” (Ps. 22:0–18). “**HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET HIM DELIVER Him now, IF HE TAKES PLEASURE IN HIM;** for He said, “I am the Son of God”” (Matt. 27:43). “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?’ that is, ‘**MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME**’” (Matt. 27:46)? “And when He had said this, He showed them both **His hands** and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord” (John 20:20). “The other disciples therefore were saying to him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I shall see **in His hands the imprint of the nails**, and put my finger into **the place of the nails**, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe’” (John 20:25). “**The soldiers** therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, **took His outer garments and made four parts**, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now **the tunic** was seamless, woven in one piece. They said

therefore to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but **cast lots for it**, to decide whose it shall be’; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, **‘THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS’**” (John 19:23–24).

Also at Jesus’ crucifixion, He was *numbered with transgressors*: “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because **he** poured out his soul unto death, and **was numbered with the transgressors**: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12). “For I tell you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, **‘AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS’**; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment” (Luke 22:37). and was *given gall and vinegar to drink*: “**They gave me also gall for my food; And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink**” (Ps. 69:21). “**they gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall**; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink” (Matt. 27:34).

He was *buried in a rich man’s tomb*: “And **they made his grave with** the wicked, and with **a rich man** in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth” (Isa. 53:9). “And when it was evening, there came **a rich man** from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him. And Joseph **took the body** and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, **and laid it in his own new tomb**, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away” (Matt. 27:57–60).

He was *resurrected*: “For **thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption**” (Ps. 16:10). “And he said to them, ‘Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. **He has risen**; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him’” (Mark 16:6). “Brethren, I may confidently say to you **regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day**. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE, **he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY**. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured

forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: “THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.” Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:29–36).

He *ascended*: “**Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led away captives; Thou hast received gifts among men**, Yea, among the rebellious also, that Jehovah God might dwell with them” (Ps. 68:18). “And after He had said these things, **He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight**” (Acts 1:9). “**Therefore it says, ‘WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.’** (Now **this expression, ‘He ascended,’** what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also **He** who **ascended far above all the heavens**, that He might fill all things.)” (Eph. 4:8–10)

And finally, He *sat at God’s right hand*: “**Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool**” (Ps. 110:1). “And He said to them, ‘How is it that they say the Christ is David’s son? For David himself says in the book of Psalms, “**THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, ‘SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET’**” David therefore calls Him “Lord,” and how is He his son” (Luke 20:41–44)? “For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: “**THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, ‘SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET’**” Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:34–36). “who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, **sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high**” (Heb. 1:3)

From these examples it is evident that Christ’s first-advent prophecies were fulfilled *literally*. If that be the case, then logically, how could we expect Christ’s second-advent prophecies to be fulfilled any other way than *literally*?

Next, the grammatical-historical hermeneutic is *historical*. First, *it was the only interpretive method accepted by the church during the first three centuries of her history*. “Let the reader consider that the grammatical in-

terpretation was for ages the only one used; and can a reason be given why it should suddenly be abandoned for another” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:49)? Second, the G-HH was *championed by the reformers*. Regarding *Luther*, “Luther (*On Deut.*, quoted Seiss’s *Last Times*, p. 253) pointedly says: ‘I here once more repeat, what I have so often insisted on, that the Christian should direct his efforts toward understanding the so-called literal sense of Scripture, which alone is the substance of faith and of Christian theology, which alone will sustain him in the hour of trouble and temptation, and which will triumph over sin, death, and the gates of hell, to the praise and glory of God. The allegorical sense is usually uncertain, and by no means safe to build our faith upon; for it depends for the most part on human opinion only, on which if a man lean he will find it no better than the Egyptian reed. Therefore Origen, Jerome, and similar of the Fathers are to be avoided, with the whole of that Alexandrian school which abounds in this species of interpretation’” (*ibid.*, p. 48). “In Luther’s *Pope Confounded* (quoted by Taylor, *Voice of the Church*)... ‘You will thus keep to one simple and uniform sense of Scripture, as I always do, and always have done... in every controverted subject we must abide by the literal sense, which is uniform throughout the Scripture’” (*ibid.*, 2:190). Regarding *Calvin*, “Calvin holds a unique place in the history of interpretation. Of him Gilbert [George Holley Gilbert, *The Interpretation of the Bible*, pp. 37 ff.] writes: ‘...For the first time in a thousand years he gave a conspicuous example of non-allegorical exposition. One must go back to the best work of the school of Antioch to find so complete a rejection of the method of Philo as is furnished by Calvin’” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 28). “Calvin states his own position very clearly. In the commentary to Galatians, he writes: ‘Let us know then, that the true meaning of Scripture is the natural and obvious meaning, and let us embrace and abide by it resolutely.’ [John Calvin, *Commentary on Galatians*, p. 136, cited by Gerrit H. Hospers, *The Principle of Spiritualization in Hermeneutics*, p. 11] In the Preface to Romans Calvin says: ‘It is the first business of an interpreter to let his author say what he does say, instead of attributing to him what we think he ought to say.’ [cited by F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 347]” (*ibid.*, p. 29). Third, the G-HH *interprets history correctly*. “Premillennialists take *both* history and prophecy literally” (McClain, *GK*, p. 141). We’ve already examined in some detail our premise that the grammatical-historical view of the Kingdom correctly explains human history in the section *Premises Regarding the Kingdom* of our previous chapter *Presuppositions and Premises*.

The G-HH is *acknowledged by orthodoxy*. It is *accepted by all orthodox (non-heretical) Christians on all foundational doctrines other than es-*

chatology. “...the same grammatical sense (unless this is shown to be invalid) which they employ to sustain other great, cardinal doctrines of the Word. They defend the birth, life, death, etc., of Jesus Christ, the rest of the doctrines of Salvation, the character, attributes, etc., of God, the sinfulness of man and necessity for Redemption, etc., by this sense” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:246) “It has had the greatest success in opening up the Word of God. *Exegesis did not start in earnest till the church was a millennium and a half old*. With the literalism of Luther and Calvin the light of Scripture literally flamed up... This method is the honored method of the highest scholastic tradition in conservative Protestantism. It is the method of Bruce, Lightfoot, Zahn, A.T. Robertson, Ellicott, Machen, Cremer, Terry, Farrar, Lange, Green, Oehler, Schaff, Sampey, Wilson, Moule, Perowne, Henderson Broadus, Stuart—to name but a few typical exegetes.” [quoting Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 62-63] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 11). “The whole Reformation movement may be said to have been activated by a return to the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures” (*ibid.*, p. 26). “In actuality, the charge of choosing a hermeneutic to fit preconceived theology can more appropriately be applied to the covenant approach. Most covenant (specifically) and amillennial (generally) theologians use the literal method to interpret the rest of Scripture but then inconsistently switch to an allegorical or symbolic method when it comes to texts that, if interpreted literally, would contradict their preestablished system” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:448). “...there is no more reason to change one’s hermeneutic when it comes to prophetic Scripture than there is for one to change to an allegorical hermeneutic when he moves from a newspaper’s local news to the weather forecast” (*ibid.*, p. 449). The G-HH is even *used (inconsistently) by anti-millenarians*. “It should be clear, however, that regardless of the terms chosen to designate the anti-millenarian scheme of prophetic interpretation, it is a combination of two different systems, shifting back and forth between the spiritualizing and literal methods. The hermeneutical plow is pulled by ‘an ox and an ass.’ For this reason, the scheme may appropriately be called eclectic” (McClain, *GK*, p. 144).

The G-HH is *self-affirming*. It is *self-evident*. It is *self-evident to everyone*. “the plain grammatical sense—one that all admit exists in the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:448) “In looking over the works of opponents, it will be found that not one of them denies the grammatical sense, but upon this sense fasten another to suit their theory” (*ibid.*, 2:571). It is *the only method that results in only one possible interpretation*. “John Walvoord [*End Times: Understanding Today’s World Events in Biblical Prophecy*, p. 10] adds correctly: ‘If a person does not interpret the plain statements of

prophecy literally, there is no rule by which any consensus of meaning can be established; the existence of a wide diversity of interpretations shows the failure of this approach” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:415). It is *the only method not subject to “interpretation.”* “Le Roy Pope (*Modern Fancies and Follies*, p. 337) takes the position, owing to the variety of interpretation, that the true meaning of the Bible cannot be obtained from the language of Scripture... But he forgets... that the variety of interpretation springs not so much from the grammatical sense as from the system of spiritualizing the language” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:65) “It is said... that ‘the prophecies themselves are typical.’ This conveniently enables the student to reject the literal sense, and engraft upon it whatever he may consider a suitable fulfillment of the type. It is a dangerous procedure, opening a wide door to arbitrary interpretation” (*ibid.*, p. 193) It is *self-interpreting*. It *allows Scripture to interpret itself*. “Luther says: ‘Every word should be allowed to stand in its natural meaning and that should not be abandoned unless faith forces us to it... It is the attribute of Holy Scripture that it interprets itself by passages and places which belong together, and can only be understood by the rule of faith’” [quoting Charles Augustus Briggs, *General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture*, p. 30] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 27). It is *self-affirming*. It is *the only method that is not self-defeating*. “Any other approach is self-defeating, for it claims that the literal truth is not the proper way to interpret, even though it expects its reader (listener) to take *its* words literally” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:421). “The allegorical method of interpretation is self-defeating, for the very claim that ‘all meaning is allegorical (nonliteral)’ is itself a claim to have the literal truth about this matter. To put it another way, no allegorist wants us to take his claims allegorically—he wants his writings to be interpreted literally” (*ibid.*, p. 424).

The G-HH is *natural*. It is *simple*. It *allows God to speak to us as plainly and as clearly as possible*. “Men in search of truth must return to the old-fashioned notion that God’s words are ‘pure words,’ and that His doctrine does not require the devices of human wisdom either to be remodeled, or changed, or burnished. They speak for themselves” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:204). “The whole field of complexity has by many been found to disappear when terms are taken in their normal, grammatical, and natural meaning—Israel is not the Church now, nor is the kingdom the Church; Zion is Jerusalem and not heaven; and the throne of David is precisely what David believed it to be, an earthly institution which has never been, nor will it ever be, in heaven” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:315). Isn’t His speaking to us plainly and clearly exactly what we would expect from a holy and loving God? The G-HH *allows Scripture to speak for itself*. “Let the Word give its own testi-

mony, and the plain grammatical sense will always be found to be the true one—in unity with all Scripture” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:51). It *allows Scripture to speak in simplicity*. “[allegorizing]... burdens the doctrine with a Kingdom-theory which tends to confuse the student and mars the simplicity of inspired statements” (*ibid.*, 1:657). It *allows Scripture to be true as written*. “in order that by two unchangeable things, in which **it is impossible for God to lie**, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us” (Heb. 6:18). “This method is the only one consonant with the nature of inspiration. The plenary inspiration of the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit guided men into truth and away from error. In this process the Spirit of God used language, and the units of language (as meaning, not as sound) are words and thoughts. The thought is the thread that strings the words together. Therefore, our very exegesis must commence with a study of words and grammar, the two fundamentals of all meaningful speech” [quoting Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 54] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 10). “The meaning is not found *beyond* the text (in God’s mind), *beneath* the text (in the mystic’s mind), or *behind* the text (in the author’s unexpressed intention); it is found *in* the text (in the author’s expressed meaning)” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:174). It *doesn’t rely on any extra-biblical presumptions*. “When we ask why this introduction of a sense so radically diverse from that entertained for thousands of years (and which, the latter, was a source of confident hope and joy to so many believers), the answer is given, that as the Kingdom as predicted by the prophets was not literally established at the First Advent, the Christian Church being then instituted, the Church must be the Kingdom intended. Upon this presumption—seized and used against Christianity by the destructive school—the superstructure of a Kingdom now present is reared, and the language of covenant, prophet, Jesus, and Apostle is spiritualized to fit the assumed theory. And in the contest it is strange to find that men materially differing in the use they make of it (as e.g. the author of *Ecce Homo* on the one side, and the writer of *Ecce Deus* on the other) still agree in taking for granted a premise utterly unproven, actually resisted by the Word, and which in its nature and tendency makes the Scriptures and Theology irreconcilable” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:223). It *eliminates the necessity of grafting another (non-literal) sense onto Scripture*. “If the literal interpretation is acceded to, then, as our opponents themselves admit, our doctrine is clearly and unmistakably taught. For the difference between us and the followers of Whitby, is not whether the Word contains our doctrine in its literal sense, but whether such a sense is to be retained” (*ibid.*, p. 180). It *eliminates the necessity of choosing between multiple possible interpretations*.

“Has any passage of Holy Writ more than one literal sense?... all admit that since the sacred books were composed by men, and for men, their writers naturally conformed to that most elementary law of human intercourse, which requires that only one precise sense shall be proximately and directly intended by the words of the speaker or writer...” [quoting Francis E. Gigot, *General Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures*, pp. 386-387] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 13) “Briggs, certainly no friend to the literal interpretation of the Word, quotes Tyndale himself, who says: ‘Thou shalt understand, therefore, that the Scripture hath but one sense, which is the literal sense. And that literal sense is the root and ground of all, and the anchor that never faileth, whereunto if thou cleave, thou canst never err or go out of the way. And if thou leave the literal sense, thou canst not but go out of the way’” [quoting Charles Augustus Briggs, *General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture*, pp. 456-57] (*ibid.*, p. 27). However, it is just this simplicity that often makes it *difficult to accept*. “The truth is, that the very plainness, the remarkable simplicity of ‘the Gospel of the Kingdom’ is its chiefest obstacle in the minds of many, for while it may do for ignorant Jews and unlettered fishermen, etc., as ‘a harmless error’ adapted to their capacities and circumstances, it is not sufficiently refined, etc., for the enlightenment afterward bestowed” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:229). The G-HH is *efficient*. It eliminates the necessity of wasting time and effort on interpretive dead ends. It is also *natural*. Really, it’s just amazing the odd, convoluted procedures that many Bible interpreters subject themselves and their students to in order to avoid the plain sense of Scripture. The G-HH is *comprehensible*. It *conforms to the normal laws of language*. “The difference between us lies in the fact that after the plain, unobscure sense is presented, then, in opposition to us who hold to the sense thus conveyed, another ungrammatical and unrhetorical operation must be performed, viz.: this sense thus obtained must have engrafted upon it (as e.g. David’s throne and kingdom) a different and very spiritual or mystical meaning; must be tortured by the Origenistic process until it evolves something that suits the taste or option of the interpreter; must, in brief, be explained by a mode that has never been applied to any other written document in existence, and which is utterly unknown to the laws of language” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:173). It *allows Scripture to be interpreted with the same hermeneutic used for non-Scripture*. “The skills of scriptural interpretation are the same as those for interpreting any other document: to understand in the text the author’s expressed meaning” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:87). “It is a profound insult to our God-given intelligence to suggest that we can read and understand the daily

news but need some infallible magisterium in order to understand God's Good News for all people" (*ibid.*).

The G-HH is *consistent*. It *allows all doctrine to use the same hermeneutic*. "Amillenarians use two methods of interpretation, the spiritualizing method for prophecy and the literal method for other Scriptures. They differ from early amillenarians who regarded all Scripture as an allegory" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 63). "To the extent the spiritualizing method is used, to that very extent their theology loses all uniformity and self-consistency" (*ibid.*, p. 73). It *allows all dispensations to use the same hermeneutic*. "No one doubts the propriety and force of this so far as it relates to the past and present, but just so soon as we undertake to insist upon the same grammatical sense pertaining to prophecies describing the future, then a multitude arises and derides our system of interpretation as crude, unreasonable, Jewish, etc." (Peters, *TTK*, 1:175). "The change of dispensation does not affect the interpretation of the Word, no change of the latter being anywhere intimated; and that the reason why so much is spiritualized respecting the church, etc., is simply owing to the sad fact that predictions solely relating to the future, to another dispensation, to the Jewish nation, to the period after the Sec. Advent, men apply to the present time, to this dispensation, to the Gentiles, and to the church, and the result unavoidably is, that an immense amount of spiritualizing and accommodation must take place to cause these things to fit into their system of belief. A system of interpreting prophecy that cannot be equally available in any period of history, in any dispensation, is open, at once, to the gravest suspicion of unsoundness. We, at least, with the early church, reject it as entirely untrustworthy" (*ibid.*, 1:175). "...dispensationalism with its single hermeneutic" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 171) "Only Premillennialism Employs a Consistent Hermeneutic" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:553) "Cast aside the old traditional idea that Jacob, and Israel, and Judah, and Jerusalem, and Zion must always mean the Gentile Church, and that predictions about the second Advent are to be taken spiritually, and the first Advent predictions literally... If you expect the Jews to take the 53rd of Isaiah literally, be sure you take the 54th and 60th and 62nd literally also. The Protestant Reformers were not perfect. On no point, I venture to say, were they so much in the wrong as in the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy" [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, p. 157] (Horner, *FI*, p. 347).

The G-HH is *comprehensive*. It is *applicable to all of Scripture*. "The greater part of the Bible makes adequate sense when interpreted literally" [quoting Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 54] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 1). It *allows for non-literal renderings as required*. "Some

Millenarian writers (as Dr. Craven in Lange's *Com. Rev.*, p. 98) prefer 'normal' to the word 'literal,' as more expressive of our views of interpretation, not discarding the figurative" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:52). "Literality best preserves and enhances the symbolical values" (McClain, *GK*, p. 142).

The G-HH is *universal*. It *makes the Bible understandable to everyone*. "A man may be learned and able, and yet utterly fail to receive the truth as intended (thus failing in his apprehension), while an unlearned believer, cordially accepting and appropriating personally the Scriptures, experiences their power in his own heart and life. ('If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God,' John 7:17); but both combined, learning and religious experience, elevates the man to the highest plane" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:67). "A literal fulfillment is adapted to all classes of minds, for which the Bible is designed" (*ibid.*, p. 167) "The truth is, that the Word of God does not need the testimony of learned and scientific men, for its best evidence it carries within itself corroborated by personal experience and history. This allusion to a prevailing skeptical tendency... Alas! if it were only confined to unbelievers! Many believers of the Word, savingly united to Christ by faith, who would shudder to adopt such a hopeless platform of unbelief, who actually receive these promises as divine, still by a fatal process so fritter them away or deny their intention or validity that they, too, with infidels, disbelieve in their ultimate fulfillment *as written*" (*ibid.*, p. 289). "Difficulty arises only for those who are determined to metamorphose a literal, earthly throne and kingdom into some vague and wholly imaginary spiritual idealism" (Chafer, *ST*, 5:321). "It delivers us from both reason and mysticism as the requisites to interpretation. One does not have to depend upon intellectual training or abilities, nor upon the development of mystical perception, but rather upon the understanding of what is written in its generally accepted sense. Only on such a basis can the average individual understand or interpret the Scriptures for himself" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 12). The G-HH is *understood by everyone*. "There is no difference of opinion as to what meaning the words in their common usage convey; this is conceded" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:349). "It is fully admitted by able writers, of all classes, that the Scriptures, taken in their literal aspect, do expressly teach a Jewish Kingdom; but our opponents contend that this literal rendering is to be discarded for a spiritual or mystical one, mainly on the ground that the literal has not been verified" (*ibid.*, p. 425).

The G-HH is *Scripture-honoring*. It *demands strict adherence to Scripture*. "The safeguard here, as always, is in adhering strictly to the Word of God" (Chafer, *MBT*, 29%). It *accepts Scripture unaltered*. "I testify to everyone who hears **the words of the prophecy of this book: if**

anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18) “...‘the things of God’ can only be obtained by observing what the Spirit has recorded and retaining what is written unaltered” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:627). “According to the Scriptures, no such change or modification was ever made under divine direction, and the same is fully sustained by the history of the early Church. Men, uninspired men, led by mere reason and supposing that they could improve what Scripture so plainly has given, under the mistaken notion of elevating ‘the One Hope’ by spiritualizing its substance, tampered with it and finally modified and so changed it, that as it appears in many works it bears no resemblance whatever to ‘the hope of the Gospel’ as recorded” (*ibid.*, 3:311). It *allows Scripture to speak for itself*. There is only one way for the Bible to speak for itself, and that’s when it’s taken plainly. It *confirms the inspiration of Scripture*. “Fairbairn (*On Proph.*, p. 171) not knowing what to do with this prophecy... he and others interpret the Coming from Teman, the mention of Paran, etc., as language taken from the past to heighten the effect; or, to be plain, a poetical license is taken to give proper coloring to the picture. Alas! When able writers thus explain prophecy, what confidence can we have in its inspiration? How can we possibly discriminate the play of fancy or imagination from the intended realities? Such interpretation is both dangerous and derogatory to the Word” (*ibid.*, p. 397). It *accepts Scripture as inerrant*. “If Scripture which teaches something contrary to a preconceived theory can be altered by spiritualizing it, of what importance is the concept of inerrancy” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 73)? It *allows Scripture to be authoritative*. “Making Scripture figurative which should be taken literally subverts its meaning and evades its authority. The result is the denial of the plain intent of the Scriptures” (*ibid.*, p. 25). “Allegorism is a way to ‘pervert the true meaning of Scripture’ rather than to interpret it; ‘the basic authority in interpretation ceases to be the Scriptures [and is instead] the mind of the interpreter’” [quoting J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 5] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:424). “Chafer [*Systematic Theology*, 4:266-267] points out that a ‘method of interpretation which is free to spiritualize’ is a short step away from an actual denial of the authority of Scripture” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 383). It *allows all Scripture to be meaningful*. “One of the obvious problems of amillennialism in the field of bibliology is that their method of interpretation leaves large areas, particularly of the Old Testament, without any generally accepted meaning” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 72). It *allows Scripture to mean what it says*. “...an Origenistic rule of interpretation which makes the Old Test. say one thing respecting the Kingdom but mean another; and which causes the Prophets to predict, in the grammatical sense, one

thing (believed in by the ancients) concerning the Kingdom but which must be understood differently” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:220). The G-HH is *covenant-honoring*. As we’ll mention again below, it *allows all Israel’s covenants and prophecies to have (eventual) fulfillment*. The G-HH is *prophecy-honoring*. It *allows us to accept most, if not all, prophecy at face value*. “If the nation of Israel is not to have priority in the Kingdom, then we must reject great areas of divine prophecy at its face value” (McClain, *GK*, p. 424). And finally, because of these characteristics, the G-HH *promotes certainty*. “The degree of certainty that we now possess is solely derived from the plain grammatical sense of the Scriptures, and so long as there is a continued rejection of this sense and the substitution of others, just so long will uncertainty continue and increase” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:224).

The G-HH is *God-honoring*. It *allows God to say what He meant to whom He said it*. “...we firmly hold that God’s promises are to be fulfilled just as they read; that He means what He says” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:571) “The Scriptures must be allowed to mean what they say and to whom they say it” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:19-21] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 376). “I wish never to learn the art of tearing God’s meaning out of his own words” [quoting C.H. Spurgeon, *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, I, no. 582, 1864, pp. 536-37] (Horner, *FI*, p. 12) It *allows God to be ethical in His manner of speech*. “Never, never can we receive any theory, however plausibly and learnedly presented, which thus reflects on God’s goodness, makes Him virtually a party to gross deception, and which degrades the intelligence and piety of former saints. Who can censure us for believing in a sense so generally admitted as given by God himself, placing ourselves where prophets, pious Jews, and the early Christians stood” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:191)? “...the bold expression of Pascal: ‘God owes it to mankind not to lead them into error’” (*ibid.*, p. 192) “The reader will consider how unnatural—even cruel—it would be, if the doctrine of a restoration is not to be received, to give so many predictions which in their plain grammatical sense teach a future glorious national restoration of the Jews to their once possessed land. Why thus excite the expectations and hopes of a multitude for many centuries of oppression and exile, if they are never to be realized? Would such a course of procedure be honorable even in man, knowing as he must the deception that would accrue from it? To trifle with the dearest, most heart-felt hopes of a nation by language pre-eminently calculated to excite the same, is not Divine, and we earnestly repudiate every theory which either directly or indirectly charges Holy Writ with such a mode of procedure. No, God’s Word is the truth, and the grammatical sense—the sense which all men agree is the most legitimate in

language—contains the plain truth, which God will fulfill at the appointed time” (*ibid.*, 2:73). “Would God give a sense, with which man is conversant, and which is connected with the common usage of language, knowing that for centuries it must inevitably lead Apostles and their successors into error” (*ibid.*, p. 166)? “If our doctrine is wrong, we are held responsible for it, and must render an account for holding it. But in the last day, we at least can put in two pleas before the Judge that would largely palliate our error, viz., that our doctrine was contained in the plain grammatical sense of the Word; and that we injured no man in urging him to live soberly, righteously and godly, because of an impending Advent, because of frightful judgments soon to be poured out, because the coveted first resurrection was nigh at hand, because the wicked would be destroyed, this earth be renewed and Christ and His saints reign. We can justly claim that the entire tendency of our view, thus given in the literal sense of Scripture, was to preserve men from sin that they might inherit with Christ and participate in His glory. But what if our doctrine is true and the opposite is an error?... then multitudes that have been deceived by ‘the peace and safety’ cry, when aroused from their Whitbyan dream of security by the persecuting and bloody demands of a culminated Antichrist, will accuse the ministry of having blinded them to the truth. To lead men on and on by a false hope until it gives place to appalling despair and martyrdom under Antichristian power is no trifling affair” (*ibid.*, 3:198). “He has a right to assume that no sensible author will be knowingly inconsistent with himself, or seek to bewilder and mislead his readers” [quoting Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, pp. 203-4] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 39). “If God did not mean what he said when he used those terms [‘Israel’ and ‘land’], then do they not lose their meaning? The Covenant Amillennialist leaves God open to the charge of unethical conduct” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 218). It *allows God, not man, to be the determiner of the proper interpretive method*. “If the grammatical meaning of the Word is to be changed, should not God Himself plainly tell us of the change, and not leave it to uninspired men, centuries after the canon is completed, to inform us of it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:241)? “Which is the safest to accept of, a God-given sense, or of one which is at the option of the interpreter” (*ibid.*, 2:311)? It *conveys God’s ideas, rather than man’s*. “...making Canaan a type of the third heaven without a particle of proof... Such writings cannot stand before a scriptural examination, and are misleading multitudes, causing them to put their faith and hope in man’s promises instead of God’s oath-bound declarations of inheritance. And yet the sad fact is that such writings, filled with perversions and leading the Church into unbelief, are extremely popular” (*ibid.*, p. 505). It *allows us to believe that God will*

fulfill His word as written. This is in contrast with those who would have “...an expressed doubt of God’s intention to fulfill His Word as written” (*ibid.*, p. 58). It *allows God’s originally-stated purposes for mankind to be realized.* It *allows God to accomplish His original purpose in creating man,* as we’ll see in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed.* It *allows God’s “very good” creation to be restored.* We’ll explore this idea also in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed.* It *enables God-honoring faith.* Faith that honors God is that which is attached to His revelation to us. And it *vindicates God.* “...time will vindicate God’s promises” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:96). “How wonderful will then the history of this people appear, and how astonishing that the Divine Purpose so plainly revealed should have been, by lack of faith and with the notion of exalting the meaning of Scripture itself, so persistently overlooked by the multitude” (*ibid.*). “Indeed, in that day, many a prediction now imperfectly understood, shall stand forth with a distinctness that will reproach the weakness of our faith in God’s Word, when the last prayer of Moses, the benedictions of Jacob, the covenanted relationship of the people, etc., are vindicated by this tremendous overthrow of enemies—then truly prophecy itself, now the sport of scientific unbelief and the butt of un-scholarly ridicule, will secure the profound esteem and praise of all nations” (*ibid.*, p. 114).

The G-HH is *God’s people-honoring.* It is *Israel-honoring.* It *allows all Israel’s covenants and prophecies to have (eventual) fulfillment.* “Both Orthodox and Rationalistic deem the principle of interpretation thus upheld irrelevant and untrustworthy, making the Old Test. to predict on its plain surface what shall never be realized in the form announced. The Jew, however, cannot object to our system of interpretation, charging it with inconsistency, seeing that we apply the prophecies pertaining to their nation continuously; not only receiving the temporary rejection, the punishment inflicted, but also fully admitting the importance of the nation, its near (Theocratic) relation to God, and its ultimate restoration and triumph just as the grammatical sense predicts” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:410). “The Press (quoted *Proph. Times*, June, 1877) remarks: ‘Rabbi Marks, of London, in a sermon, says the Jews reject Jesus Christ as the Messiah, because “of the three distinctive facts which the inspired seer of Judah inseparably connects with the Advent of the Messiah, viz., the cessation of war and the uninterrupted reign of peace, the prevalence of a perfect concord of opinion on all matters bearing upon the worship of the one and only God, and the gathering of the remnant of Judah and of the tribes of Israel”—not one of these prophecies has yet been fulfilled.’ Now our system of interpretation cordially receives these three characteristics as plainly taught and connected with the Advent

of the Messiah. We just as fully as the Jew believe that they will yet be realized just as predicted. And this confirms us the more in the Messiahship of the crucified Jesus, because (1) all these 'distinctive facts' are attributed to His Second Advent; (2) the reasons why they were not realized at the First Advent are fully given in the non-repentance of the nation, its rejection of the Christ, as shown in both the Old and the New Testaments; (3) the First Advent with its results, confirmed by a continuous fulfillment of prediction and promise down to the present, confirms the ability of this Jesus to fulfill the covenants and prophecies at the specified Advent; (4) but we do not confine ourselves to these 'three distinctive facts,' but compare and receive all the prophecies relating to the Messiah. Doing this, we find one class referring to the humiliation, rejection, suffering, and death of the Messiah verified in Jesus, and this only immeasurably confirms our faith in Him and that ultimately, as promised, all the Scriptures will be realized in and through Him. Thus that which forms an objection to the Jewish mind by only receiving a part of God's Word, becomes to us, when believing the whole Word, a tower of strength" (*ibid.*). We'll examine the fulfillments of Israel's covenants and prophecies in detail in our chapters *The Covenants of the Kingdom*, *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy* and others. It *allows Israel to keep her prophesied blessings*. "...take the predictions relating to the Jewish nation, and interpret the one part referring to its tribulation, desolation, etc. literally, and then, when the prophecies go on without any sign of a change to speak of the same nation, proceed to spiritualize the rest and apply it to us Gentiles, we do a violence to the text and manifest injustice to the nation of whom the things are specially predicted... To such an extent has this been carried that it is almost a proverb that curses belong to the Jews and blessings to the Gentiles" (*ibid.*). It *allows the expectations of the first-century Jews to be correct*. We'll take a detailed look at this in our chapter *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*. The G-HH is *Hebrew prophet-honoring*. It *allows the (inspired) prophets to not be mistaken*. "A second critical method of rejection is to admit the literal meaning of the prophets but deny, at least in part, its present validity... What did the prophets mean? 'And to this question there can be but one answer,' writes Davidson, '*Their meaning is the literal sense of their words*' (italics added). 'There is no question as to the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies; *the question is how far this meaning is now valid*' (italics added). [quoting 'Eschatology,' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I, p. 737] In substance, Davidson seems to reach much the same goal that appears in the 'spiritualizing' school of Dr. Allis, only by a different and more forthright road. Although we may regret his lack of concern with reference to Biblical inspiration, at

least Davidson's candor is to be commended" (McClain, *GK*, p. 145). And the G-HH is *apostle-honoring*. It *allows the apostles to have not been mistaken regarding their Messianic hopes*. "When men once assume a superiority of knowledge—which many today do—over the Apostles [i.e. Acts 1:6—*ed.*], it is scarcely practicable to influence them" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:135).

The G-HH is *(fallen) man-deprecating*. It *makes God, not man, responsible for determining truth*. "If the grammatical word contains foolishness, then the Spirit is justly chargeable in its production" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:62). "God holds us only responsible for the plain, naked, grammatical sense of the Word, and not for recondite, hidden senses that the ingenuity or imagination of man may concoct" (*ibid.*, p. 130). "If the Kingdom is not such as these Jews held it to be, who is justly chargeable with their error, if it be not the great Author of those prophecies" (*ibid.*, p. 192)? "If the Jews were 'fanatical' in their belief of 'an universal dominion' under the rule of the Messiah, it was a fanaticism inspired by the God-given, plain, grammatical sense of the Word" (*ibid.*, 2:100) It *makes man, not God, responsible for man's unbelief*. "If there is difficulty connected with the understanding of the essential doctrines of Scripture—and surely the *Kingdom* is one such doctrine—the problem must be found in man rather than in the revelation. As Schodde [G. H. Schodde, 'Interpretation,' *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. III, p. 1489] has correctly observed, 'The Bible is written for men... and accordingly there is no specifically Biblical logic, or rhetoric, or grammar.' This is why God can hold all men responsible for believing and meeting the essential demands of the written Word at every stage of revelation. If it is possible for human authors to make what they write sufficiently clear for the understanding of those who read, shall we say that God cannot do as much" (McClain, *GK*, p. 262)? "It is possible for men to know and yet to draw back in unbelief. This is true even of the saved, who may believe one part of the Word of God and at the same time hesitate at another part which is just as clear" (*ibid.*, p. 263). It is this writer's opinion that the problem is not that the Bible is unintelligible, but rather that so few people are able (i.e. willing) to receive its message. The G-HH *rebukes man's boasting about his impressive knowledge and interpretive skills*. "...exaggerating the knowledge of the present day over that of inspired men" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:122) It *has no need for man to add to the Scripture*. **"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are writ-**

ten in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19). *It has no need for man to “improve” the Scripture.* “...a sad commentary of human infirmity, which thinks to improve covenanted and oath-bound language by spiritualizing it, making it to mean something very different from the expressed grammatical sense” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:570). “...spiritualizing them to make them consistent with human opinions” (*ibid.*, p. 592) *It has no need for man to interpret the Scripture.* “Another serious cause of unbelief in this Kingdom arises from the infirmity of human nature, its reliance upon authorities outside of the Bible... Admitting the great value, the priceless influence of many human compositions, yet in our search after the truth they should not stand between us and God’s own revelation; for as the tree, however lovely and fruitful, standing between us and the sun will cast its shadow, so, more or less, will be the shading, the interception of light when humanity, however sincere and honest, is placed between us and the divine truth. The source of all true knowledge of the Kingdom is found alone in God’s Word, and to that Word, if wise and prudent, we should come for instruction and guidance, seeing that the words of God are mightier and more truthful than those of men however pious and learned. Indeed, in not a few cases, the lack of faith can be traced to a certain disposition of the heart, mentioned by Jesus (John 5:44), ‘How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor which cometh from God only?’ In this day of unbelief and reproach cast upon our doctrine, it requires courage to oppose the sweeping popular current of belief on the subject. Especially when a return to the early Church faith causes the charge of ‘credulity,’ ‘fanaticism,’ ‘heresy,’ etc. to come from the multitude, and even from brethren united by the same denominational ties. How many have had their attention directed to this subject, have promised investigation, have been persuaded of the truth, but have recoiled, fearful of the loss of reputation, influence, honor, and preferments... If honest, however, with ourselves and with God, human approval, however desirable and agreeable, should weigh nothing against truth, especially when warned that there will be a great departure from the truth as the times of the Gentiles draw to a close... To this class, who do not want doctrine but piety, it may be said that two extremes are to be avoided; first, theoretical knowledge of doctrine without practical application of the same, or personal piety conjoined; second, piety isolated from doctrine, just as if it could exist without a previous knowledge of the truth. The persons who make this objection against our doctrine are the very ones who deal largely in doctrine concerning the Church-Kingdom, Millennium, etc., in prayer, preaching, writing, etc., but as soon as something is said in conflict with their own doctrinal position

then we need no doctrine... The doctrine of the Kingdom is the teaching of God concerning it, and is not derived from the piety of men, but from God's Word" (*ibid.*, 3:225). It *has no respect for man's piety*. "Many refuse faith in the doctrine of this Kingdom because of the claimed piety, sanctity, prayerful spirit, gifts of the Holy Ghost, etc., bestowed upon those who have turned away from the ancient belief... after all that we can do we still remain unprofitable servants... making no great professions of humility... to God we stand or fall... we positively object to our making the experience of man the measure by which we are authoritatively to judge the Bible... the semi-infidel and infidel statement that 'doctrines are of little importance if the life is only right'... how important is the most valuable life in comparison with the Divine Purpose which involves the truthfulness and honor of God and the glory of His Son?... Alas, how often are we asked, 'what is the practical worth of your doctrine,' just as if God's utterances are to be measured by man's practice" (*ibid.*, p. 226). "The history of the Church abundantly proves that error may exist in connection with great piety, fervor, zeal, and usefulness" (*ibid.*, p. 254). "The appeals to superior piety, to special enlightenment, to personal assaults, to claims of exclusiveness, are of no weight whatever in an argument or presentation of truth. The question is, What do the Scriptures teach, not inferentially or spiritually, but, directly and in their plain grammatical sense" (*ibid.*, p. 272)? "The plea of superior piety, increased spirituality, honoring of Christ, or ignorance, will avail nothing before the plain teaching of the Word. Some think that by a continuous adhesion to 'milk,' 'the first principles,' they are advancing in the divine favor and assure themselves of a reward, but even such 'milk' is diluted and weakened by the rejection of the 'cream' and the 'meat' imparted by our doctrine" (*ibid.*, p. 328) It *exposes prejudice*. "Prejudice can refuse to receive the plainest statements of the Word" (*ibid.*, 1:600). It *makes allegorization unnecessary*. "Allegorization in the interpretation of Scripture is never called for" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 189). It *keeps man's imagination in check*. "Dwight Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, p. 10]... Literal interpretation is the only 'sane and safe check on the imagination of man'" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:421). It *makes philosophy unnecessary*. "What Luther, and many others said respecting the influence of philosophy in the Church can be truthfully repeated to-day, at least in reference to the subject of the Kingdom philosophy, whatever its mission may be intellectually and morally, is not necessary to an understanding of this Kingdom. The Kingdom is founded on covenant and prophecy, and not on human speculations. We find this Kingdom only in the Scriptures and not in human systems. We do not even require its aid in ascertaining the sense or meaning of Scripture. Philoso-

phy, if she is (as some claim, and justly too) a handmaiden to Christianity, is a very humble one, that has too often, under the desire to serve, injured her mistress” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:504). “...the hopeless dilemma of Platonic dualism, which is still the curse of much that is called Christian thinking in the field of eschatology” (McClain, *GK*, p. 521). “Christianity is not a philosophy. But Christianity has a philosophy—the best and the brightest of all philosophies. In fact, it will be the *final* philosophy, not only because it is founded upon divine revelation but also because it does justice to all points of view which have any value... In Christian philosophy both mind and matter are recognized as worth-while realities, each being given its proper place and function in the Kingdom of God” (*ibid.*, p. 527). “Others, also wrongly, have scorned the present life as of small or no account, even arguing that salvation consists in getting loose from it altogether. On this philosophic road, at various stages, were the Hindu religionists, the monastics of the middle ages; even Plato” (*ibid.*, p. 528) “Luther... his dislike of scholastic philosophy in general (he once called it a ‘whore’), and to metaphysical formulations applied to theology in particular” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:172) It *makes esoteric “keys” to the Scriptures unnecessary*. “...conclusions which are often arbitrary, mystical, and far-fetched. According to such schemes, in order to get at the hidden sense of prophecy it is alleged that we must find some ‘key’ which will unlock the mystery of Scripture. And almost always this ‘key’ turns out to be some exclusive theological emphasis or some New Testament text, the meaning of which may itself be in serious dispute. Then the interpreter insists that everything must be read according to this ‘key.’ Or, to vary the figure, the key text or special emphasis becomes a set of colored spectacles through which Old Testament prophecy is read, distorting some things and filtering out completely other things. Against such procedures the weight of Biblical testimony is both clear and convincing” (McClain, *GK*, p. 260). “There is no intimation that the Old Testament writings in general were esoteric in character, incapable of being understood except by the use of some ‘key’ given or discovered centuries after their composition” (*ibid.*, p. 261). And, it *frees us from slavery to allegorical interpreters*. “It is also a sad commentary on human weakness that tracts and books, containing doctrinal statements, interpretations of prophecy, etc., claim that their interpretations were given by special Divine inspiration or enlightenment through the Spirit. Without questioning the sincerity of these persons (for men are easily led to such a belief, if they assume themselves to be the special favorites of the Spirit in the reception of gifts), it is sufficient to say that every such a plea vitiates the value of their teaching, and imposes alone upon the weak, ignorant, or unreflecting, who are un-

able to test their utterances by the general analogy of the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:55). “If the Word is at the mercy of the interpreter, then the Bible is no longer a revelation, but a concealment of God’s will” (*ibid.*, p. 56). “...a professed spirit of self-renunciation, but which really exalted self in that it possessed a private inspiration” (*ibid.*, p. 60) “There is something anti-scriptural in the position of Romanism, Symbolic Lutheranism, Anglican High Churchism, Ultra Calvinism, Reformed Confessionalism—in brief, in all attempts to bring in the work of man as an authoritative interpreter of Scripture. However well intentioned the design, it is a virtual lowering of Scripture to a human level, and an abridgment of true Christian liberty” (*ibid.*, p. 127). “When argument is weak threats are resorted to in order to prop it up, thus repeating the painful history of the past” (*ibid.*, p. 481). “...all their monkish, popish tendencies... as if Scriptural doctrine depended on human learning and talent, and not on divine declarations” (*ibid.*, p. 487) “No wonder that we are so carefully cautioned to beware of mere human wisdom” (*ibid.*, p. 657). “Alas! How such men of ability lead the Church into blindness and unbelief” (*ibid.*, p. 696). “It is definitely not safe to allow any church creed, however good, to shape our thinking on the whole range of Bible truth” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 101). “Once we start with the rule that whole passages and books of Scripture say one thing when they mean another, the reader is delivered bound hand and foot to the caprice of the interpreter” [quoting F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 232] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 6). “He can be sure of absolutely nothing except what is dictated to him by the Church, and in all ages the authority of “the Church” has been falsely claimed for the presumptuous tyranny of false prevalent opinions” [quoting F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 238] (*ibid.*). “The biblical and historical evidence favors the Protestant view, which asserts that an infallible Bible is sufficient for faith and practice without any alleged infallible interpreter of it” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:101).

The G-HH is *edifying*. It is *convicting*. “...the language itself arrests unbelievers, and, in consequence, leaving them inexcusable in rejecting the truth as given” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:37). It is *salvific*. It brought this writer out of a pseudo-Christian cult (Jehovah’s Witnesses) and into saving faith in Christ (for a complete account, see my book *Pilgrimage Through the Watchtower*). When the gospel (of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, 1 Cor. 15:1-4) is interpreted literally and believed, salvation results (Eph. 1:13). It is *marvelous*. It is an amazing thing to this writer that all his theological studies have led him to nothing other than an ever-deepening satisfaction with the plain sense of Scripture! It is *satisfying*. It is an ongoing fact that the more fully this writer understands Scripture, the less he

finds that he wants to change any of it. It is *spiritual*. It is this writer's conclusion that the plain sense of Scripture is the ideal vehicle for conveying spiritual truth, and that unwarranted spiritualizing of Scripture is in fact not spiritual at all. It is *practical*. It makes Old Testament prophecy's and the Revelation's details useful (e.g. for the Tribulation saints in particular). "Let men sneer at it now; let professed believers turn away from it as an unwelcome subject; yet the time is coming when men shall profoundly study it in order to comfort and sustain themselves under Antichrist's fearful persecution" (*ibid.*, 2:770). "This Book [Revelation] was specially designed to sustain the Christian and the Church [Tribulation saints—*ed.*] under sore trial; its magnificent portrayals of ultimate deliverance, reward, and glory at the Coming of Jesus being most admirably adapted for such a purpose. It has done this in the past, comforting and strengthening the persecuted in his flight or in his dungeon, sustaining the martyr at the stake or in the presence of the wild beasts. It has, from the days of John down to the present, consoled, cheered, and confirmed in faith and hope many a depressed, discouraged, tried believer. It will again do this work during the interval between the two stages of the Advent, when the Church [Tribulation saints—*ed.*], enduring her most bitter and unrelenting persecution, needs special aid and strength to endure unto the end. Then this Book, so full of the events then experienced, so full of Antichrist and his doom, so full of ultimate glorious deliverance, will be studied with an interest and intensity never before realized. Then, too, it will impart the needed consolation and hope, so that a multitude, fortified by its precious promises, will come out of the great tribulation, and receive their reward for faithfulness and endurance" (*ibid.*, 3:387). "Dr. Schaff (*His. Apost. Church*) says: 'The Apoc. accordingly is a book of warning, encouragement, and hope, and is best understood practically in times of trial and persecution.'... In seasons of great security it was almost forgotten" (*ibid.*) It is likely that the New Testament, particularly Matthew chapter 24 and the book of Revelation, will be instrumental in opening Jewish peoples' eyes to Jesus' identity during the Tribulation, as Israel witnesses end-times prophecy being fulfilled in extraordinary precision and detail. During the Tribulation, Matthew 24 and Revelation will come alive!

The G-HH is *unifying*. It *unifies the Kingdom*. "The Old and New Testaments describe the same Kingdom—the same Theocratic arrangement under David's Son. All the writers, separated by centuries, independent of each other, residing in various countries but still under the influence of the same Spirit, locate this Kingdom in the future, link it with the Sec. Advent, and agree in portraying its distinguishing peculiarities and blessings. In a

comparison of their writings, entering even into details, there is no contradiction between them... The disagreement is found in the interpreters and not in the writers of the Bible; for the latter all start from the same point, holding up the same covenant as an everlasting one under which we receive the promises, and all declare the same provisional and preparatory process, and all insist upon the same literal fulfillment. Harmony of design, unity of purpose is seen throughout their writings, but only so long—as the infidel even has forcibly stated and proven—as the plain grammatical sense is retained. Forsake this sense, and then, notwithstanding all the protests to the contrary, this harmony is violated, this unity is destroyed to the confirmation of unbelief” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:222). It also *unifies believers*. “There is far more agreement between Pre-Millenarians than between Post-Millenarians” (*ibid.*, 1:491)

The G-HH is *protective*. It *safeguards all doctrine*. “If the Kingdom was symbolical, why not then repentance, faith, and everything else connected with this Kingdom? For, if the main subject is such, why not the subsidiary? This leads us where some have, from a false premise, logically landed, making the whole teaching of Jesus and the apostles a symbolical or typical one of that religion of humanity which is now arising” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:633). “If millennial prophecies could be spiritualized, why not the doctrine of inspiration, the deity of Christ, the substitutional atonement, the doctrine of resurrection, and the final judgment” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 35)? It protects us from *Gnosticism*. “One cannot go along with survivals of Gnosticism in the amillennial view, which makes them discountenance all that is material, as though directly antithetical to the spiritual and moral... Spiritualization in Scripture is indefensible even when employed in the interests of ‘a higher, spiritualized world’” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 259). It protects us from *delusion*. “I hold for a most infallible rule in expositions of the Sacred Scriptures, that where a literal construction will stand, the furthest from the letter is commonly the worst. There is nothing more dangerous than this licentious and deluding art, which changes the meaning of words, as alchemy doth, or would do, the substance of metals, making it anything what it pleases, and bringing in the end all truth to nothing.’ —Richard Hooker” (McClain, *GK*, p. 132) It protects us from *fanciful thinking*. “The writer has personally examined some fifty historical interpretations of Revelation, all of which would be rejected by any intelligent person today. The literal method which regards the bulk of Revelation as future is the only consistent approach possible. The spiritualizing method of interpretation is a blight upon the understanding of the Scriptures and constitutes an important hindrance to Bible study” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 73). It protects us from

liberalism. “...modern liberalism... its adherents are drawn almost entirely from amillennial ranks” (*ibid.*, p. 71) “Amillennialism clearly, then, offers no defense against modern liberalism” (*ibid.*, p. 72). “The amillenarian who wants to forsake conservatism for liberalism needs no change in method and the transition is not difficult. On the other hand, a premillenarian if enamored of modern liberalism would have to forsake all he had formerly stood for in order to adopt liberalism” (*ibid.*, p. 73). “...spiritualization and unbelief as they combine in modern liberal amillennialism” (*ibid.*, p. 108). It protects us from *apostasy*. “The amillennial method does not provide a solid basis for a consistent system of theology. The hermeneutical method of amillennialism has justified conservative Calvinism, liberal modernism, and Roman theology [and Jehovah’s Witnesses—*ed.*] alike” (*ibid.*, p. 67). “...premillennialists are less likely to slip into liberalism, while those who allegorize prophecy are more likely to spiritualize (and, thereby, perhaps deny) doctrinal nonnegotiables” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:553). It protects us from *heresy*. “They gave an allegorical interpretation to the historical portion of the Old Testament, and thus cast a sacred veil over their monstrous errors. Heresy is no friend to the plain grammatical sense of the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:51). “If the same liberty were taken in the interpretation of redemptive truth that is often taken in prophetic truth, the doors would be instantly flung open to every soul-destroying heresy of the present time” (Chafer, *KHP*, 76%). “Like all the other reformers he [Martin Luther] set aside the dreary fiction of the fourfold sense... ‘The literal sense of Scripture alone,’ said Luther, ‘is the whole essence of faith and of Christian theology.’ ‘I have observed this, that all heresies and errors have originated, not from the simple words of Scripture as is so universally asserted, but from neglecting the simple words of Scripture, and from the affectation of purely subjective... tropes and inferences” [quoting F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, pp. 325-30] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 28). “If every problem of Scriptural interpretation is to be solved by spiritualization, there are left no boundaries for proper doctrine, no certain basis for erecting a theology” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 66). And, it protects us from *cults*. Cults often know what the Bible *says*, but they’ve developed their own creative lines of reasoning as to why it supposedly doesn’t *mean* what it *says*. Cults claim that they “know better” than to believe all of the Bible as written; the G-HH demonstrates that theirs is a lethal mistake. “Cults, especially New Age and pantheistic types, are infamous for their allegorical approach to God’s Word; Mary Baker Eddy’s (1821-1910) entire *Science and Health With Keys to the Scriptures* uses allegorical interpretation. Eddy denied the reality of Satan, the material world, all evil, death, and hell. Broadly, Christian Sci-

ence rejects any literal interpretation that contradicts its assumed pantheistic and spiritualistic foundation. This includes all evangelical doctrines, including the Virgin Birth, Christ's deity, the (substitutionary) Atonement, Christ's bodily resurrection, and the literal Second Coming" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:422).

And finally, the G-HH is *sufficient*. It *needs no other, added sense*. "...spiritualizing (i.e. adding another sense to the one given in the text)" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:155) The bottom line of this discussion: ***If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense.*** "We unhesitatingly plant ourselves upon the famous maxim (*Eccl. Polity*, B. 2.) of the able Hooker: 'I hold for a most infallible rule in expositions of the Sacred Scriptures, that where a literal construction will stand, the furthest from the letter is commonly the worst. There is nothing more dangerous than this licentious and deluding art, which changes the meaning of words, as alchymy doth, or would do, the substance of metals, making of anything what it pleases, and bringing in the end all truth to nothing'" (*ibid.*, 1:46). "As in the perusal of other books, so in reading the Bible, there is no better general rule than that the obvious meaning is the true" (*ibid.*, 1:57). "If the careful reader finds that this literal sense produces a harmonious whole, an unbroken unity in the Divine Purpose (the great test after all), he surely is authorized, in confirmation of faith to receive and treasure it as a most precious guide" (*ibid.*, p. 191). "Of any particular passage the most simple sense—or that which most readily suggests itself to an attentive and intelligent reader, possessing competent knowledge—is in all probability the genuine sense or meaning" [quoting Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, I, 325-26] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 35). "Since the literal is the most usual signification of a word, and therefore occurs much more frequently than the figurative, any term will be regarded as literal until there is good reason for a different understanding... The literal or most usual meaning of a word, if consistent, should be preferred to a figurative or less usual signification" [quoting Clinton Lockhart, *Principles of Interpretation*, p. 49] (*ibid.*, p. 40). "...extensive allegorization. This runs contrary to all the principles of sound Bible interpretation, and leaves us with no way of determining which portions of Scripture should be understood normally and which should be taken as allegorical or mystically symbolic. The serious student of Scripture, on the other hand, will approach these important issues by letting the plain language of the Bible speak for itself. Unless there is a good reason in the sacred text to understand it other than normally and literally, the words of the Bible should logically be understood according to their real and intended meaning" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p.

143). “The Golden Rule of Interpretation: When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning, unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 4). “Milton Terry [*Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 40]... [The interpreter is to] proceed on the presupposition that the word is literal unless there is a good reason for deciding otherwise (*ibid.*)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:455). “As the dictum goes, When the literal sense makes good sense, seek no other sense, lest it result in nonsense” (*ibid.*, p. 419).

In summary, the grammatical-historical hermeneutic is indeed factual, biblical, in harmony with fulfilled prophecy, historical, acknowledged by orthodoxy, self-affirming, natural, comprehensive, universal, scripture-honoring, God-honoring, God’s people-honoring, (fallen) man-deprecating, edifying, unifying, protective and sufficient. Make no mistake: Scripture *means what it says!* Israel always means Israel; never the church, and never the Jehovah’s Witness organization. If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense. In this way, God is sure to receive the glory, not man. It is His word, inspired and written in such a way that anyone with an open mind and heart can receive and understand it. Regardless of what church magistrates and cultic organizations would tell us, we don’t need their “*has God really said?*” (Gen. 3:1) help to “understand” what God has caused to be plainly written. Though sinful man would twist, allegorize and spiritualize away the obvious meaning of Scripture, the Holy Spirit would have us “believe everything that is written” (Acts 24:14), to self-aggrandizing and manipulative man’s rebuke, but to our salvation and entrance into the Kingdom, and to God’s eternal glory.

Chapter 5: Five Facets of the Kingdom

Who, what, why, when and where is the Kingdom of God? Who, what, why, when and where was the Kingdom of God back in ancient times, and who, what, why, when and where is it today? Who, what, why, when and where will it be in the future? Are there multiple Kingdoms of God, or just one? How are we to reconcile passages of Scripture regarding the Kingdom that seem to be contradictory? For instance, how can the Kingdom be both temporal and eternal, and both physical and spiritual? In this chapter, we'll answer these questions by suggesting that while there is only *one Kingdom*, the Kingdom has *multiple facets*.

The Kingdom of God is *the reign or rule of God*. “and He will **reign** over the house of Jacob forever; and His **kingdom** will have no end” (Luke 1:33). “And Thou hast made them to be a **kingdom** and priests to our God; and they will **reign** upon the earth” (Rev. 5:10). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The **kingdom** of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will **reign** forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15). “Any rule of God at any time is kingdom in its character” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:79). “The ‘Kingdom of God’ may be defined broadly as *the rule of God over His creation*” (McClain, *GK*, p. 19). “A general survey of the Biblical material indicates that the concept of a ‘kingdom’ envisages a total situation containing at least three essential elements: first, a *ruler* with adequate authority and power; second, a realm of subjects to be ruled; and third, the actual exercise of the function of *rulership*” (*ibid.*, p. 17). “The Kingdom of God, that is, God’s rule, has always been around, and there are various aspects and facets of God’s kingdom program” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 196). “A good definition is that the Kingdom of God is *God’s rule*” (*ibid.*, p. 607).

The Kingdom of God in the Bible deals with the rule of God in *this* world; not in other worlds. “The Bible deals almost exclusively with this world—this earth, and not with others, or the universe... it teaches us how Divine Sovereignty in and through Man himself, by a specially delegated Kingdom under ‘the ordained Man,’ i.e. David’s Son, is to save man and restore him to a forfeited position in the moral government of God without any violation of the immutable principles of justice” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:562).

The Kingdom of God has both *spiritual* and *physical* aspects. “The Kingdom of God is both spiritual and physical” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 661).

Dr. McClain summarizes the biblical Kingdom of God, “This reign of God arises out of His own sovereign nature, was reflected in the ‘dominion’

bestowed by God upon the first Adam, was forfeited quickly by reason of the sin of man, has been restored judicially in the Last Adam, will be realized on earth in the final age of human history, and reaches out endlessly beyond history where we behold a throne which, as John explains, is ‘the throne of God and of the Lamb’ (Rev. 22:3)” (*GK*, p. 5). And, “It seems quite certain that we shall never again be even measurably safe here on earth until all men without exception have become good men, or until God Himself breaks once more into human history supernaturally—this time to establish with divine omnipotence a Kingdom of righteousness and compassion upon earth, thus supplanting the misrule and impotence of men. Of the two alternatives, the latter seems by far the most plausible and fraught with better hope for the future. In the meantime, the wise will not forget that above all the uncertainties and tragedy of human action there is a present Universal Kingdom of God which even now ‘ruleth over all,’ and that its Invincible King will have the last word in history” (*ibid.*, p. xiii).

In Scripture, the *Kingdom* can refer to any of a number of different things. “The Bible speaks of the Kingdom of God in more than just one term, and even in contradictory terms. It is seen as both eternal and temporal, both universal and local, both administered by God and by man” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 391).

Pentecost notes that in the Bible, the term “Kingdom” is used in seven different ways. “In the Scriptures the term kingdom is used in seven different ways: (1) the Gentile kingdoms; (2) the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; (3) the kingdom of Satan; (4) God’s universal kingdom; (5) a spiritual kingdom; (6) the millennial Davidic kingdom; and (7) the mystery form of the kingdom” (*TTC*, p. 142). Five of these ways, (2, 4, 5, 6 and 7) relate to five different facets of *God’s* kingdom, and are the subjects of this chapter. The other two ways (1 and 3) relate to *man’s* and *Satan’s* kingdoms, respectively, and will be discussed later, in *Section 2: The Biblical Kingdom*.

Fruchtenbaum confirms that the Kingdom of God has multiple facets. “Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 7:223-224] also shows that the kingdom program of God had several facets... The first is the ‘theocratic’ kingdom which was God’s rule over Israel through ‘divinely appointed leaders, judges, and patriarchs.’ The second is the ‘covenanted’ kingdom which is the Messianic Kingdom or the Millennial Kingdom as promised in the Davidic Covenant by which it became ‘the national hope of Israel.’ The third is the ‘predicted’ kingdom which is the Messianic Kingdom as portrayed by the Old Testament prophets and so anticipated ‘a glorious kingdom for Israel on earth.’ The fourth is the ‘announced’ kingdom which is the Messianic Kingdom announced as being *at hand* by John the Baptist, Jesus, and the

Apostles. It was an offer of the Messianic Kingdom to the nation but the prerequisite was to accept the King. However, that offer was rejected. The fifth is the ‘postponed until Christ returns’ aspect which is the Messianic Kingdom that was rejected and, therefore, the offer was rescinded. Where Covenant Theology goes wrong is that they fail to understand the nature of the kingdom that was offered to Israel and so try ‘to build a kingdom on the first advent of Christ as its basis, whereas... it will be realized only in connection with the second advent.’ The sixth is the ‘mystery’ kingdom which is the present facet of God’s kingdom program resulting from the rejecting and rescinding of the Messianic Kingdom. The Mystery Kingdom is defined as ‘Christendom’ and constitutes ‘the new message of the New Testament.’ The seventh is the ‘realized’ kingdom which is the Messianic Kingdom when it will be established on earth after the second coming. As Chafer states, ‘Not until the millennium will the kingdom... come to realization’” (*I*, p. 384).

McClain sees at least three facets of the Kingdom of God: the Universal Kingdom, the mediatorial kingdom and the church. “...antinomies... *two kingdoms* revealed in the Bible... In seeking for terms which might best designate these two things, I can find nothing better than the adjectives ‘universal’ and ‘mediatorial’” (*GK*, p. 21). “...the Mediatorial Kingdom and the Church, both of which must be regarded as within the Kingdom of God” (*ibid.*, p. 425).

Fruchtenbaum sees the Kingdom of God has having five primary *facets*. “In total, there are five facets. Four of these facets were already known in the Old Testament; the fifth facet is the mystery that is only now revealed in the New Testament” (*FM*, p. 662). These five facets, the Universal Kingdom, the Spiritual Kingdom, the Theocratic Kingdom, the Millennial Kingdom and the “Mystery” Kingdom, are the subjects of this chapter.

The Kingdom also has multiple *stages*. Dr. Geisler sees seven primary stages in the overall Kingdom program: “God’s plan to defeat evil was and is (and will be) carefully and gradually executed in seven primary stages: (1) the creation of free creatures; (2) the fall of humankind; (3) the preparation for the Savior; (4) the incarnation of the Savior; (5) the present session of the Savior (in heaven); (6) the return and reign of the Savior (the final judgment); and (7) the new heaven and the new earth” (*ST*, 3:164). These seven stages will be presented in detail in *Section 2: The Biblical Kingdom*.

1. The Universal or Eternal Kingdom

The first of the five facets of the Kingdom of God is the *Universal or Eternal Kingdom*.

Definition of the Universal or Eternal Kingdom

The Universal or Eternal Kingdom can be defined as *the universal sovereignty of God*. Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, “The first facet of the kingdom program is called the Universal Kingdom or the Eternal Kingdom. This facet refers to God’s rule in providence, in sovereignty, in that God is always in control. Nothing ever happens outside of God’s will. What happens might be because of God’s directive or decretive will or it might be because of God’s permissive will. The point is, God is always in control. The reason for the two names is to emphasize two different aspects of this facet of the kingdom. The term *eternal* emphasizes the timeless aspect, the fact that God is always in control; He is eternally in control. The term *universal* emphasizes the sphere and scope that no matter where things exist, everything is within the sovereign will and control of God. This includes the angelic realm. Pentecost gives four characteristics of this facet of the Kingdom of God: timeless, universal, providential, and miraculous. This first facet of God’s kingdom program emphasizes His eternal, sovereign rule everywhere over His entire creation. This facet is spoken of in 1 Chronicles 29:11-12; Psalm 10:16; 29:10; 74:12; 90:1-6; 93:1-5; 103:19-22; 145:1-21; 148:8; Proverbs 21:11; Jeremiah 10:10; Lamentations 5:19; Daniel 4:17, 25, 32; 6:27; Acts 17:24; *et al.* This is the kingdom that the believer enters upon death (1 Cor 15:50; 2 Tim. 4:18). The dispensations are the outworking of this kingdom in human history” (*I*, p. 609).

Description of the Universal Kingdom

This *universal sovereignty* applies not only to that of God the Father, but to that of God the Son, as well. Scripture says regarding the Son, “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, **‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’**” (Matt. 28:18). “**For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together**” (Col. 1:16–17). “**But of the Son He says, ‘THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM’**” (Heb. 1:8). Peters comments, “We gladly receive the declaration that ‘all power in heaven and on earth is given to Me;’ that He is above all earthly kings; that all things are subject to Him; that He can do all things in behalf of His people, etc.; but we add to all this, precisely what the Bible adds, that, aside from His Divine nature, we do not yet see ‘the Christ’ as ‘the Son of Man’ openly exercise this power, outwardly manifest this ex-

altation, visibly bring all things into subjection, and here on the earth perform all things that are promised” (*TTK*, 1:564). McClain concurs, “Any adequate discussion of the Universal Kingdom of God must give some recognition to the high place occupied by the Son of God in relation to that Kingdom. Sometimes men have thought too narrowly of His regal activity, restricting it almost exclusively to His office as the incarnate Ruler of a purely Messianic Kingdom... the creation of the universe and the establishment of the Universal Kingdom must be regarded as contemporaneous events... the creation with its divine control was and continues to be a standing revelation of the invisible God. As the Apostle Paul argues, ‘The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead’ (Rom. 1:20)... the Son of God is spoken of in the Gospel of John as the eternal ‘Word’ (Grk. *logos*), who is from the beginning both the ‘life’ and the ‘light’ (1:1-5). Now since it is the nature of light to shine and overcome the darkness, we must conclude that the creative and sovereign power of Deity has always been revealed in and through the activity of the eternal Son who in the fulness of time became our incarnate Saviour” (*GK*, p. 31). “The passage in Hebrews 1:8 unquestionably refers to the eternal throne of Deity, which our Lord shares in His own right as ‘the Son’ in the Universal Kingdom of God” (*ibid.*, p. 436).

God is sovereign over *everything, for all time*. “Thine, O **Jehovah**, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for **all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom**, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and **thou rulest over all**; and in thy hand is power and might; and in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all” (1 Chron. 29:11-12). “Yet **God is my King of old**, Working salvation in the midst of the earth” (Psalm 74:12). “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place In all generations. Before the **mountains** were brought forth, Or ever thou hadst formed **the earth and the world**, Even **from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God**. Thou turnest **man** to destruction, And sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight Are but as yesterday when it is past, And as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: In the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; In the evening it is cut down, and withereth” (Psalm 90:1-6). “**Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens; And his kingdom ruleth over all**. Bless Jehovah, ye his **angels**, That are mighty in strength, that fulfil his word, Harkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless Jehovah, all ye his hosts, Ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless Jehovah, all ye his works, In all places of his dominion: Bless Jehovah, O my soul” (Psalm 103:19-22). “I will extol thee, my **God, O King**; ...They shall speak of the glory of **thy kingdom**, And talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, And the glory of the majesty of **his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And thy dominion endureth throughout all generations**” (Psalm 145:1-13). “In one sense, everything is in God’s kingdom, for since He reigns over the entire universe and nothing is out of His control, it is appropriate to speak of everything as under His dominion” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:464).

God is sovereign over *nature*. “**Jehovah sat as King at the Flood; Yea, Jehovah sitteth as King for ever**” (Psalm 29:10). “**Jehovah reigneth**; He is clothed with majesty; Jehovah is clothed with strength; he hath girded himself therewith: The world also is established, that it cannot be moved. Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from everlasting. The **floods** have lifted up, O Jehovah, The floods have lifted up their voice; The floods lift up their waves. Above the voices of many waters, The mighty breakers of **the sea, Jehovah on high is mighty**. Thy testimonies are very sure: Holiness becometh thy house, O Jehovah, for evermore” (Psalm 93:1-5). “**Fire and hail, snow and vapor; Stormy wind, fulfilling his word**” (Psalm 148:8) “Because God is in the operations of what men are pleased to call ‘natural law,’ He is able to ‘tip the scales’ of nature in ways indiscernible to the eyes of men” (McClain, *GK*, p. 26). “He does concern Himself with small affairs, because the fall of a raindrop or the sleeplessness of a king may, under God, have momentous consequences” (*ibid.*, p. 28).

His sovereignty *affects all people*. “I said unto **the arrogant**, Deal not arrogantly; And to **the wicked**, Lift not up the horn: Lift not up your horn on high; Speak not with a stiff neck. For neither from the east, nor from the west, Nor yet from the south, cometh lifting up. But **God** is the judge: **He putteth down one, and lifteth up another**” (Ps. 75:4-7). “Thou, O **Jehovah**, abidest for ever; **Thy throne is from generation to generation**” (Lamentations 5:19). “And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed **the Most High**, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever; for **his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the**

earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou” (Dan 4:34-35)? “We can be grateful that God has left a place for personal choice and freedom in His dealings with men, but we must understand that there is no room for any freedom with respect to this divine rule. It is not for men to choose whether or not they will be under the rule of the Universal Kingdom. Whether they like it or not, they are already under it (Ps. 75:4-7)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 31). “...the Universal Kingdom of God... ‘He reigns, but He is invisible, and the world at large knows it not; the nations pay Him no conscious obedience” [quoting S. J. Andrews, *God’s Revelations of Himself to Men*, pp. 284-285] (*ibid.*, p. 437).

He is sovereign over *nations*. “**Jehovah is King for ever and ever: The nations** are perished out of his land” (Psalm 10:16). “But **Jehovah is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King:** at his wrath the earth trembleth, and **the nations** are not able to abide his indignation” (Jer. 10:10).

He is sovereign over *governments*. “Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of **God** for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons; **he removeth kings, and setteth up kings;** he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding” (Dan 2:19-21) “The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that **the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will,** and setteth up over it the lowest of men” (Dan 4:17). “that thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee; till thou know that **the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will**” (Dan 4:25). “and thou shalt be driven from men; and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen; and seven times shall pass over thee; until thou know that **the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will**” (Dan 4:32). “Daniel (e.g. chs. 2 and 7)... The prophecies indicate the Divine Sovereignty controlling all things, even while the Kingdom of God did not exist on earth as promised” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:251). “This is the providential factor, for the most part overlooked or ignored by men, which confounds at last all the Hamans and the Hitlers and wrecks their well-laid schemes” (McClain, *GK*, p. 28).

He is sovereign over *the church*. “For the husband is the head of the wife, as **Christ** also **is the head of the church**, He Himself being the Savior of the body” (Eph. 5:23). “Our Lord is never called the King of the Church, nevertheless there is no abrogation of the Universal Kingdom of God, and the Church cannot be set outside of it” (McClain, *GK*, p. 30).

2. The Spiritual Kingdom

The second facet of the Kingdom of God is the *Spiritual Kingdom*.

Definition of the Spiritual Kingdom

The Spiritual Kingdom can be defined as *all the saved people of all dispensations*. Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, “The second facet of God’s kingdom program is called the Spiritual Kingdom. The Spiritual Kingdom is composed of all who have experienced the new birth in all times by the Holy Spirit. From Adam until our day and as long as men continue to be born on this earth there will be the existence of the Spiritual kingdom. Every individual since Adam onward who has been born again by faith through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is a member of this kingdom. This is the Kingdom of God that Jesus spoke of to Nicodemus when he said that unless one is born again he cannot see, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. This is God’s rule in the heart of the believer. For some Covenant Amillennialists, this is the totality of God’s kingdom program on earth, but for Dispensationalists it is only one facet of it. Dispensationalists do not deny the fact of God’s rule in the hearts of the saints. They simply refuse to force every Scripture on the Kingdom of God into this one facet when it simply does not fit. This facet is found in Matthew 6:33, 19:16 with 23-24; John 3:3-5; Acts 8:12; 20:25; 1 Corinthians 4:20; Colossians 1:13-14; 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; et al. In this present age, from Acts two until the Rapture, the spiritual kingdom and the Church are synonymous. However, the spiritual kingdom was in existence before the Church began and will continue to exist after the Church is removed in the Rapture” (*I*, p. 610).

Description of the Spiritual Kingdom

Time-wise, the Spiritual Kingdom *covers all dispensations*. “Just as there were believers in God before there was a theocratic nation of Israel, even so there were Israelites before there was a church of Christ. The kingdom of God is broader than Israel and broader than the church” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:26). “God’s family of all ages has many basics in common, such as one God, one Savior, one brotherhood as God’s children, one great plan of God, and one ultimate purpose to glorify God” (*ibid.*). “*The kingdom of God is*

broader than the church. All who are in the church are in the kingdom of God, but not all in the kingdom of God are in the church—again, such as Old Testament saints, John the Baptist, and other believers who died before the message of Pentecost came to them” (*ibid.*, p. 464).

The Spiritual Kingdom *encompasses this present dispensation.* “For **He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son**, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13-14). “No Millenarian writer ever noticed by the writer but ascribes to Jesus, in some form, a present reigning—a present exercise of exalted power” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:580). “Of the seventeen passages [in the epistles] dealing with the kingdom, there are only three (Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:20; Col. 1:13) that can be taken to apply to the present time” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 255). “Those who contend that dispensational pre-millennialists hold to no present spiritual phase of the kingdom (see Col. 1:13), reveal that they do not understand that position relative to the kingdom of heaven in mystery form” (*ibid.*, p. 269).

The Spiritual Kingdom involves *individual believers*, rather than nations. “The Spiritual Kingdom is offered to individuals, not nations, and received by individuals by means of faith” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 625).

The Spiritual Kingdom was *the focus of Jesus’ ministry.* “But **seek first His kingdom** and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). “And Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Truly I say to you, **it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.** And again I say to you, **it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God**’” (Matt. 19:23-24). “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**’ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God**’” (John 3:3-5). “...the Messiah... His *total* work, within which the spiritual aspect was supreme and the foundation of everything else” (McClain, *GK*, p. 287).

The Spiritual Kingdom is also the focus of the church’s ministry. “strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, **Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God**” (Acts 14:22). “And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom **I [Paul] went about preaching the kingdom**, will see my face no more” (Acts 20:25). “for **the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy**

Spirit” (Rom. 14:17). “For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power” (1 Cor. 4:20). “For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13-14). “and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only **fellow workers for the kingdom of God** who are from the circumcision; and they have proved to be an encouragement to me” (Col. 4:11). “so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the **God** who **calls you into His own kingdom** and glory” (1 Thes. 2:12). “This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so **that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering**” (2 Thes. 1:5). “Peter used the ‘keys’ to open the door of God’s spiritual kingdom to both Jews (Acts 2) and Gentiles (Acts 10)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:187). Dr. Pentecost comments regarding Philip’s ministry, “But when they believed **Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God** and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike” (Acts 8:12) “It is interesting to note that Philip’s preaching of Christ is called the ‘good news of the kingdom of God.’ Philip was not preaching concerning the earthly Davidic kingdom; rather, he was preaching the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, which was called the good news of the kingdom of God. This reveals that the ‘kingdom of God’ as is used here is a reference to God’s program in this present age of bringing men to Himself through the preaching of the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God is made up, then, of all who by faith have received Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. The kingdom of God as used here is soteriological (salvation-related), not eschatological (prophecy-related). And those who believed the message became a part of that present form of theocracy” (*TKC*, p. 276). Dr. Geisler comments regarding Paul’s ministry, “1 Thessalonians 2:12... Paul reminds the Thessalonians of his ministry that is ‘encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, *who calls you into his kingdom and glory.*’ Since by virtue of being saved they were already in His kingdom (cf. John 3:3, 5), it makes sense to take this as speaking of God’s present spiritual kingdom” (*ST*, 4:497).

3. The Theocratic or Mediatorial/Monarchial Kingdom

The third facet of the Kingdom of God is the *Theocratic* or *Mediatorial/Monarchial* Kingdom.

Definition of the Theocratic or Mediatorial/Monarchial Kingdom

The word “theocratic” means “God ruling over men.” “the very essence... of a Theocracy is that of God ruling over men as an earthly ruler” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:478). “...the establishment of a theocracy: Israel accepted the role of being directly ruled by God. They were God’s kingdom on earth, and He was their King” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:466).

The Theocratic or Mediatorial/Monarchial Kingdom is the facet of the Kingdom of God that relates to *God’s ruling over, in and through the nation Israel*. It is *the theocratic kingdom of Israel*. Dr. Fruchtenbaum continues, “The third facet of God’s kingdom program is called the Theocratic Kingdom. This facet refers to God’s rule by means of and through a theocracy over one nation: Israel. The Theocratic Kingdom was God’s rule over Israel. The Theocratic Kingdom was established by Moses. With the giving of the law the foundations of Israel as a Theocratic Kingdom were laid. The Theocratic Kingdom underwent two aspects in its history. First came the mediatorial form, meaning that God ruled through mediators. From Moses until Samuel God ruled by means of mediators. These mediators were Moses, Joshua, and then the Judges, of which Samuel was the last. The second aspect was the monarchial form in that God ruled through monarchs from Saul, the first king of Israel, until Zedekiah, the last king. Samuel marked the transition for he was not only the last Judge, he also anointed the first two kings: Saul and David. David, in turn, began a dynasty which continued to occupy the throne until Zedekiah. It is during the latter stages of the monarchial form of the Theocratic Kingdom that the kingdom went into a decline in quality. With the decline, the prophets began announcing a future form, a better form of God’s kingdom program which would be the Messianic Kingdom. Finally, the Theocratic Kingdom came to an end with the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. With Babylon, the Theocratic Kingdom came to an end and the Times of the Gentiles began, which has continued until this day. Old Testament history from Exodus 19 to 2 Chronicles 36 is a history of the Theocratic Kingdom” (*I*, p. 610).

Description of the Theocratic Kingdom

The Theocratic Kingdom is *different from the Universal or Eternal Kingdom*. Peters points out, “The reader will carefully observe (as use will be made of it hereafter) that this Theocracy is very different from God’s universal, general sovereignty exercised by virtue of His being the Creator. Kurtz (*His. Old Cov.*, vol. 3, p. 104) says: ‘As the Creator and Governor of the world, He was the Lord and King of every nation, but He did not base His kingly relation to Israel upon this foundation; He founded it rather

upon what He had done especially for Israel: it was not as Elohim, but as Jehovah, that He desired to reign over Israel” (*TTK*, 1:224).

The Theocratic Kingdom is *mediatorial* because in it God rules men through a mediator. “Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels **by the agency of a mediator**, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one” (Gal. 3:19–20). McClain explains, “The Mediatorial Kingdom may be defined tentatively as: (a) the rule of God through a divinely chosen representative who not only speaks and acts for God but also represents the people before God; (b) a rule which has especial reference to the earth; and (c) having as its mediatorial ruler one who is always a member of the human race” (*GK*, p. 41) He continues, “The English term ‘mediator’ does not occur at all in the Old Testament, and only six times in the New Testament... Yet scholars are quite generally agreed that the *idea* of mediation between God and man permeates the entire field of written revelation. In fact, D. Miall Edwards [‘Mediation,’ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. III, p. 2025] asserts that in this idea we have the ‘key to the unity of the Bible’” (*ibid.*).

The Theocratic Kingdom is a God-ordained *union of church and state*. “Is God’s Kingdom, which requires, as essential to its very existence, the union of church and state, never to be re-established” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:664)?

The Theocratic Kingdom *will be restored* in the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom. “**In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old**” (Amos 9:11–12) “This theocracy, insignificant as was its origin in Israel, has a world-embracing destination” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:557). “The Theocracy is a visible, outward Kingdom. Now indeed overthrown, but its restoration promised under this ‘Son of Man,’ and so openly, so visibly that all flesh shall realize and acknowledge it... an external organized form” (*ibid.*, p. 569). “There is only one covenanted Kingdom promised to David’s Son here on the earth, and that is the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom now still withdrawn and overturned as Bible and history testify” (*ibid.*, 3:527). This writer would also point out that it is likely not by accident that a large portion of the world’s attention is even now focused on this tiny nation Israel.

The Theocratic Kingdom will be covered in detail in our chapter *The Theocratic Kingdom*.

4. The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom

The fourth facet of the Kingdom of God is the *Messianic* or *Millennial Kingdom*.

Definition of the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom

The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom is *a future, literal, global government administered by Christ from David's throne in Jerusalem*. Fruchtenbaum explains, "The fourth facet of God's kingdom program is also given two names: the Messianic Kingdom or the Millennial Kingdom. The name, Messianic Kingdom, emphasizes that this kingdom will be ruled directly by the Messiah Himself. The name Millennial Kingdom emphasizes how long this kingdom will last: one thousand years. The form of the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom is that of an earthly literal kingdom which Jesus will rule from the Throne of David. It is rooted in the Davidic Covenant. When God made a covenant with David He promised that David would have an eternal house, an eternal kingdom, an eternal throne and an eternal descendent. It is this fourth facet of the kingdom program, the Messianic Kingdom, that was a major area of Old Testament prophecy. This was the kingdom proclaimed as being at hand by John the Baptist. This was the kingdom Jesus offered to the Jewish people. It is this kingdom that was rejected. As a result of the rejection of the Messianic Kingdom, the offer was rescinded or 'taken away' from that generation and from a human perspective the Messianic Kingdom was 'postponed' and not to be set up at this time. From the divine perspective, this rejection was part of God's plan and the means by which the Messiah would die to provide the atonement and by which the gospel would extend to the Gentiles (Isa. 49:1-13). Instead, the Messianic Kingdom will be re-offered to the Jewish generation of the Tribulation, which will accept it" (*I*, p. 611). Geisler adds, "...the messianic kingdom, which will be an overarching religious, moral, political, and economic system" (*ST*, 4:465). And, "With regard to the messianic kingdom, several comments are in order. From Genesis to Revelation there are promises of a literal, political kingdom in which the Ruler (King), who is Christ, will reign on earth. This kingdom (1) was promised in the Old Testament, (2) was offered by John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples to the Jews in the Gospels, (3) was rejected by the Jewish authorities, (4) was, in accord with God's eternal plan, put on hold while He brought Gentiles into a new body (the church), (5) will be offered again by Jesus at His return, and (6) will be accepted by the Jewish nation and fulfilled in the Millennium (Rev. 20:1-6). Any attempt to spiritualize away these yet unfulfilled prophecies is a violation of literal, historical-grammatical biblical interpretation; if this same al-

legorical hermeneutic were applied to the rest of Scripture, it would undermine the fundamentals of the historic Christian faith” (*ibid.*, p. 497).

The Millennial Kingdom *is not an obscure subject in the Bible*. Walvoord says, “One of the most significant facts relating to the millennial doctrine distinguishing it from the amillennial point of view is the teaching that the millennial kingdom is a rule of God on earth, thereby distinguishing it from a purely spiritual reign in the hearts of men through centuries of human history and distinguishing it from the will of God as expressed in heaven or in eternity future. The evidence for this is so abundant that it is strange that learned men have been able to deny this plain teaching of the Word of God” (*MK*, p. 297). “In short, with regard to the messianic kingdom of Israel, (1) The Old Testament predicted it. (2) Jesus confirmed it (Luke 21:24; Acts 1:6-7). Peter promised it (3:19-21). Paul reaffirmed it (Rom. 11:11-36). (5) God never revoked it (v. 29; cf. v. 26)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:492).

The Millennial Kingdom is a major component in the overall Kingdom program. “In the Premillennial view the coming Kingdom becomes the consummating link between history and the eternal order” (McClain, *GK*, p. xii).

Description of the Millennial Kingdom

The Millennial Kingdom *is not the Universal or Eternal Kingdom*. “The Davidic throne, which once existed, which was withdrawn, and which is promised to be restored under David’s Son, is something widely different from the general Sovereignty of the Almighty over the universe” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:557).

It is *a re-establishment of the Theocratic Kingdom*. “**In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old**” (Amos 9:11) “The main features of this Kingdom of good may be found, at least in germ, in the Mosaic theocracy, and also in the prophets who not only called their contemporaries back to its moral principles but also at the same time predicted a future and more perfect reestablishment of the Kingdom on earth” (McClain, *GK*, p. 288).

It is *a literal kingdom*. “The Kingdom at the time of the covenant was literal; the promise of inheriting is literal, confined as it is by the express terms to the literal Theocracy; the Coming of the Heir is literal; the postponement is literal; all is literal” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:204).

It *supersedes all other earthly empires*. “And in the days of those kings **shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom** which shall never be de-

stroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but **it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. 2:44–45). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever’**” (Rev. 11:15). “Able writers, under the influence of a spiritual Church-Kingdom theory, that warps their interpretation, fall into mistakes, showing that they do not correctly apprehend the covenanted and predicted Kingdom that is to take the place and sway of the preceding world empires” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:600).

It is *future*. “Pray, then, in this way: “Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth** as it is in heaven”” (Matt. 6:9–10). “There is no divine objective in the present age unto the setting up of that earthly kingdom” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:111). “Merrill Tenney [*Interpreting Revelation*, p. 145]... ‘The more literal an interpretation that one adopts, the more strongly will he be construed to be a futurist’” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:455).

It is *visible* and *tangible*. “**Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold a land** that reacheth afar. Thy heart shall muse on the terror: Where is he that counted, where is he that weighed the tribute? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see the fierce people, a people of a deep speech that thou canst not comprehend, of a strange tongue that thou canst not understand. Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: **thine eyes shall see Jerusalem** a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But **there Jehovah will be with us** in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; he will save us” (Isa. 33:17–22). “**and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together**; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 40:5). “**BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him**. Even so. Amen” (Rev. 1:7). “The Word always speaks of this Kingdom as something visibly, externally manifested in the form covenanted” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:599). “The Kingdom

when established is something recognizable by all men, something that all will acknowledge as indisputable in its manifestation” (*ibid.*, p. 619) McClain agrees, “In concluding our discussion of the relation of the future Mediatorial Kingdom to historical considerations, it should be said that this indubitable relationship goes far toward establishing the literality of the Kingdom of Old Testament prophecy. Although in a real sense an embodiment of the finest ideals and aspirations of men, it is not merely an ‘ideal’ kingdom like the Kantian ‘kingdom of ends’ toward which man must ever strive but never wholly attain. On the contrary, the coming Kingdom will be as concrete and literal in the realm of sense experience as the historical kingdom of Israel or the kingdom of Great Britain today. All prophecy from first to last asserts and implies this genuine tangibility: ‘Thine eyes shall see the king... they shall behold the land’ (Isa. 33:17); and ‘all flesh shall see it together’ (Isa. 40:5). While it is true that only the pure in heart will ever see God in a moral and spiritual sense (Matt. 5:8), and there are some things which must by their very nature remain forever invisible even to the pure in heart (1 Tim. 6:16), it is nevertheless also true that some of the ‘invisible things’ of God can be made tangibly manifest to the eyes of men, regardless of their moral condition. Because of the derangement caused by sin, men may become vain in their reasonings and arrive at false conclusions, but this cannot erase the tangible facts of divine revelation which ‘are clearly seen’ (Rom. 1:20-22). It is wrong, therefore, in the interest of a purely philosophic ‘spirituality,’ to close our eyes to what the Scriptures so unmistakably assert about the future Kingdom of Old Testament prophecy” (*GK*, p. 160).

It is *on Earth*. “Ask of Me, and **I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession**” (Ps. 2:8). “But **the meek shall inherit the land**, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (Ps. 37:11). “And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of **men**; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron doth not mingle with clay. And **in the days of those kings** shall the God of heaven set up **a kingdom** which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but **it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, and it shall stand for ever” (Dan. 2:43-44). “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto **a son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and **a kingdom**, that all the **peoples, nations, and languages** should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13–14). “For **the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea**” (Hab. 2:14). “And **Jehovah shall be King over all the earth**: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). “Blessed are **the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth**” (Matt. 5:5). “Pray, then, in this way: “Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth** as it is in heaven. “Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors”” (Matt. 6:9–12). “with a view to **an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth**” (Eph. 1:10). “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood **men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth**’” (Rev. 5:9–10). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘**The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever**’” (Rev. 11:15). Peters comments, “The predicted Kingdom of the Messiah, David’s Son, is nowhere specified to be a Kingdom in the third heaven, but ‘of heaven’ or rather ‘of heavens’ or ‘of heavenlies.’ According to the Covenant it could not be in heaven, but it is of heaven; that is, given by God, made as God designs it, fashioned after the will of heaven, and containing in itself ‘heavens,’ or ‘heavenlies’” (*TTK*, 2:13). “When this earth has a God-man for its Ruler, a Theocratic ordering manifested in its glory, a God again dwelling with man and disseminating His blessings, the will of God done on earth as in heaven, etc., then we have ‘the heavenly country’ which (Heb. 11:16) the Patriarchs sought, and this is consistent with the inheritance covenanted to them, which then is ‘filled with the glory of the Lord’” (*ibid.*, p. 15). “In every aspect that we view the subject, it seems suitable and necessary to have such a Theocracy as predicted. Besides the reasons adduced derived from covenant, the faithfulness of God, the redemption of the earth, etc., it does appear eminently proper that the theatre of King Jesus’ humiliation, sufferings, and death should witness also His exaltation and glory. The Bible, in addition to the pleas presented by us, points to the time coming when Christ shall be openly and visibly recognized as the glorious One, who, as the Second Adam, having substituted Himself through love, is the efficacious Head of humanity in its newly begun destiny; who, as Re-

deemer, having offered expiation to and honored the justice of God, now practically manifests the fruits of salvation; who, as prophet, having taught restitution, now exhibits Himself as the Truth evidenced by the work performed before Him; who, as Priest, having made an acceptable sacrifice, now presents before the world the fruit resulting from it; who, as King, in virtue even of His Divine union and showing it by guidance, supporting, etc., now manifests it in the special ordained manner as Sovereign Ruler. In brief, this Theocracy is the restoration of a God again dwelling with man, accessible, and constituting in Jesus an infallible Head, just such as the world needs, just such as man for ages has longed for, and just such as will place David's Son in honor and glory in a world where He suffered and died. The past treatment and brief stay of the Son of God and David's Son insures a triumphant return, and a sojourn in power among men whom He will save, verifying the name Immanuel, God with us, in the Theocratical sense" (*ibid.*, p. 129). "Abraham—to whom this earth, *and not another*, was promised" (*ibid.*, p. 514) "The place where this reign is to be manifested is expressly stated: 'We shall reign on (or as Stuart, over) the earth.' In the very nature of the case, if they inherit with David's Son, the restored Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom, it must be a reign here on and over the earth. It is after the Coming of the Son of man, after the rise and progress of the fourth beast, the ten horns and the little horns, and at the destruction of these Gentile and Antichristian powers (Dan. 7:22) that 'the time came that the saints possessed the Kingdom,' and that 'the Kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.' It is taking an unwarranted liberty with covenant, prophecy, and promise to locate this Kingdom and reign in any other place than this earth; and yet multitudes venture to assume it, believing themselves, under a spiritual interpretation, not only justified, but that they are actually exalting the Word by so doing" (*ibid.*, p. 574). "The benefits resulting from the work of Christ are both spiritual and temporal; refer to soul, body, race, and earth... it is astonishing that they cannot see that Redemption itself would be imperfect without the direct conference of earthly good and blessing. Indeed more than this, the very nature of the Kingdom includes a bountiful and continuous supply of temporal good for the restored Jewish nation and spared Gentiles... The Kingdom of Christ, with all its extraordinary spiritual manifestations, is over nations living in the flesh, and in an earth dispensing the favors of bountiful seasons... the revived Gnostic idea of the innate sinfulness of matter (at least it assumes or takes for granted some such notion), which the Bible repudiates in the person of Jesus, in the original creation, and in the recreation. To confine

Redemption exclusively to one aspect, either spiritual or temporal, is to make it one-sided and imperfect; both must be included to give a perfect representation" (*ibid.*, 3:457). "Ladd [G. E. Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism*, p. 59, 63]... 'The biblical idea of redemption always includes the earth... The Old Testament nowhere holds forth the hope of a bodiless, nonmaterial, purely "spiritual" redemption as did Greek thought.'... He rightly states: 'There is no Greek dualism or Gnosticism in the Old Testament hope'" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 279). "The Kingdom will be on *earth*" (McClain, *GK*, p. 148). "The theocratic kingdom, therefore, of which the prophets spoke is an earthly kingdom which can find its fulfillment only in a literal reign of Christ upon the earth" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 299).

It is *Jewish*. "And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**'" (Matt.19:28). "And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever**; and His kingdom will have no end" (Luke 1:31–33). "To illustrate, aside from the covenants and reasoning already given, how intensely Jewish this Kingdom is, we refer (by way of anticipation) the reader to two or three particulars. (1) At the restoration of this Jewish nation, while Gentile nations shall experience great blessedness, the supremacy among all nations is accorded to the Jewish nation, as e.g. Micah 4:8, and 7:15-20; Zeph. 3:14-20; Zech. chs. 10, 12, 14, etc. (2) Jerusalem shall be wonderfully exalted in that day, as e.g. Zech. 8:3; Jer. 3:17; Joel 3:17; Isa. 24:23, etc. (3) The land itself shall be highly honored, as e.g. Ezek. 36:34, 36; Isa. 51:3; Zech. 2:12; Isa. 60:15 and 62:4, etc. To separate these predictions from their connection with the Jewish nation, is a destroying of their consistency and force, for the same identical nation, Jerusalem, and land that was suffering under Gentile dominion, is to enjoy such honor and happiness. To apply these predictions to another and mystical nation, city, and land is to make the threats all 'Jewish' and the blessings all of a Gentile nature;—which procedure is a gross violation of the well-founded laws of language. Hence we reject it as unwarranted, deceptive, a degradation of the election, and as virtually making God unfaithful to oath-bound promises" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:427).

It is *monarchial*. "Behold, **a king shall reign** in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice" (Isa. 32:1). "This Theocracy will realize the idea

of universal Empire, the darling wish of mighty monarchs” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:127). “Concerning this there can be no question. The Mediatorial Kingdom of Old Testament prophecy is monarchial in form” (McClain, *GK*, p. 206). “...the Messianic concept was primarily *regal* in nature” (*ibid.*, p. 413).

It is *theocratic*. “This is a Theocracy in deed and in truth, for in this re-organized Kingdom we find the Theocratic idea—God’s idea of a perfect government—fully consummated. The Rulership is safely and powerfully lodged in one Person, who in Himself unites the human and the Divine” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:123) “...perfect government can only come directly through God” (*ibid.*, p. 126). “Our trust is in God, that the Kingdom of this world shall yet be His in the appointed, covenanted Theocratic order. Plato (and with him many others) will yet be verified: ‘In the end, lest the world should be plunged into an eternal abyss of confusion, God, the author of the primitive order, will appear again and resume the reins of empire; then He will change, embellish, and restore the frame of nature, and put an end to decay, sickness, and death.’ Unbelief sarcastically tells us, if the Bible is true, why does not God in our day appear, set up a Theocratic Kingdom, and make Himself felt as a Ruler indeed. The fact of a non-Theocratic government in actual force influences them to reject the entire Theocratic idea as of mere human invention. We point, however, to the most solid reasons for the withdrawal of the Theocracy (evidenced e.g. even in the past history of the Jewish nation), and its delay to the future Advent (shown e.g. in gathering out a people to sustain it in power and glory when restored)” (*ibid.*). “While civil government is ordained of God as something that necessarily proceeds from the nature of man and society, God has nowhere excepting only the Theocratic—given His approval to a special form” (*ibid.*, p. 776). “Men will be surprised that this Theocratic feature so plainly revealed should ever have been doubted” (*ibid.*, 3:545). “A Theocracy... cannot be spiritualized away without doing violence to a thousand promises and calling into question the faithfulness of God” (*ibid.*, p. 582).

It is *political*. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and **the government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government** and of peace **there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom**, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6–7). “Did not the ancient Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom include political rulership, and, if restored, as covenanted and predicted, must it not embrace the

same? Will not the restored Jewish nation and spared Gentile nations be, of necessity, in order to meet the requirements of prediction, under political rule” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:600)?

It is *a union of legislative, executive and judicial branches of government*. “Thine eyes shall see **the king** in his beauty: they shall behold a land that reacheth afar. Thy heart shall muse on the terror: Where is he that counted, where is he that weighed the tribute? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see the fierce people, a people of a deep speech that thou canst not comprehend, of a strange tongue that thou canst not understand. Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there **Jehovah will be with us** in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For **Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king**; he will save us” (Isa. 33:17-22). McClain explains, “All the functions of government are centered in the glorious Person of this Mediatorial King. The prophet Isaiah paints a vivid picture of the political situation in the days of the established Kingdom: Then the eyes of men ‘shall see the king in his beauty’ ruling upon the earth as a ‘Judge,’ ‘lawgiver,’ and ‘king’ (Isa. 33:17, 22)—a remarkable forecast of the conventional divisions of modern government; judicial, legislative, and executive” (*GK*, p. 207). He adds, “The founding fathers of our own American state, approaching their task with a deep suspicion of human nature, designed an ingenious system of checks and balances to separate these three functions into departments and keep any one of them from usurping too much power. Although it seems clumsy and inefficient at times, lacking both in unity and economy, nevertheless our government has furnished a welcome refuge for political liberty in a sinful world, and will continue to do so—if we can keep it... But this precarious balance of powers is not the most ideal political form. When God’s own glorious King takes over the kingdoms of earth, it will be safe at last to concentrate all the functions of the state in one Person” (*ibid.*).

It is *a union of church and state*. “And **Jehovah shall be King over all the earth**: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to **worship the King, Jehovah** of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to **worship the King**, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain”

(Zech. 14:16-17). “And **Melchizedek king** of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a **priest** of God Most High” (Gen. 14:18). “For this **Melchizedek, king** of Salem, **priest** of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him” (Heb. 7:1) “For it is witnessed of Him [Jesus], ‘Thou art a **priest** forever **According to the order of Melchizedek**’” (Heb. 7:17). “Blessed and holy is **the one who has a part in the first resurrection**; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:6). “In the future Kingdom there is a perfect union of church and state under one Head without absorption or prejudice to either one or the other” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:651). “Let us be content with our ‘stranger and pilgrim’ allotted condition until the time comes when God and His Son shall unite church and state, not under rulers liable to corruption, etc., but under tried and immortal ones” (*ibid.*, p. 652). “The nature of a Theocracy... the inseparable union of State and Church” (*ibid.*, 2:607) “The inseparable union of Church and State, the Head of both Church and State being God Himself” (*ibid.*) “With the Jew politics and religion were inseparable. Every hope of spiritual blessing rested on the coming of Messiah” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 40). “A union between church and state is safe only when inaugurated and controlled by the one true God in a kingdom of His own (Zech. 14:9, 16-21)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 75). “...in that day what we call ‘religious freedom’ must come to an end. Today men are allowed to rebel against the true God, but there is no freedom to rebel against the State” (*ibid.*, p. 245)! “Under the immediate and personal reign of the divine Mediatorial King, what is called ‘freedom of religion’ will properly come to an end” (*ibid.*, p. 295).

It is *the central theme of the Bible*. “A. G. Hebert [*The Throne of David*, p. 39]... ‘The Messianic Hope is the central theme of the Bible. It is that which gives to the two Testaments their unity’” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 84).

It is *not carnal*. “If contact with the earth makes carnal, then Christ must have been carnal in living here; and Adam in his innocence carnal, simply because he lived in Eden on earth” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:556).

And, it is *not demeaning to Christ*. “Surely if the Christ came, in the covenanted way, as a babe—if He died on the cross after a life of humiliation—is it unreasonable or a lowering of Him to expect His return in great power and glory, and to anticipate a reign which only shows Him forth as the Mighty Redeemer and the King of kings” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:552).

We’ll have more to say about the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.

5. *The Mystery Kingdom*

The fifth and final facet of the Kingdom of God is the *Mystery Kingdom*.

Definition of the Mystery Kingdom

The Mystery Kingdom is the present “mystery” form of the Kingdom, commonly known as “*Christendom*.” Dr. Fruchtenbaum sums up, “The fifth facet of the kingdom program is the Mystery Kingdom. The name is derived from Matthew 13 where, following the rejection of His Messiahship, Jesus introduced this facet of God’s kingdom program by means of the mysteries of the kingdom. Paul defines what a divine mystery is in Ephesians 3:3-5, 9 and Colossians 1:26-27. A New Testament mystery is a divine truth which was not revealed in the Old Testament, but is revealed in the New. In Paul’s words, in the Old Testament it was not made known unto the sons of men because it hath been hid in God and hath been hid for ages and generations. In New Testament times, it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in order to make all men see what is... the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God and so it has now been manifested to the saints. The Mystery Kingdom is the one facet of the kingdom program which was not revealed in the Old Testament” (*I*, p. 611). “Because of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, instead of the Messianic Kingdom, the fifth facet of the kingdom program, the Mystery Kingdom, is to be initiated. The parables of Matthew 13 describe the mystery form of the kingdom program. The Mystery Kingdom covers the age between the two comings of the Messiah, between the first and second coming. More specifically, it begins with the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus in Matthew 12-13 and continues until the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus by Israel just before the second coming. Perhaps the best single word to define the Mystery Kingdom is the term ‘*Christendom*.’ It describes conditions on this earth while the King is absent from the earth and is in heaven” (*ibid.*, p. 612).

Description of the Mystery Kingdom

The Mystery Kingdom includes *all the hidden aspects of this present Church Age, an age that was itself entirely hidden from the purview of the Old Testament saints and prophets*. “And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ And He answered and said to them, ‘To you it has been granted to know **the mysteries of the kingdom** of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hear-

ing they do not hear, nor do they understand” (Matt. 13:10–13). “Behold, I tell you **a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**” (1 Cor. 15:51–53). “that by revelation there was made known to me **the mystery**, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into **the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit**” (Eph. 3:3-5) “and to **bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God**, who created all things” (Eph. 3:9) “For **He** delivered us from the domain of darkness, and **transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son**” (Col. 1:13) “that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**” (Col. 1:26-27). “and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only **fellow workers for the kingdom of God** who are from the circumcision; and they have proved to be an encouragement to me” (Col. 4:11). “so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the **God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory**” (1 Thes. 2:12).

The Mystery Kingdom *includes both believers and unbelievers*. “**Allow both to grow together until the harvest**; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather up **the tares** and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather **the wheat** into my barn” (Matt. 13:30). Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, “The Mystery Kingdom... This is a present facet of God’s kingdom program that comes between the two comings of the Messiah. This kingdom can be defined as ‘Christendom’ for it includes ‘true believers, professing people, rejecters, and even opponents.’ In this case, ‘the ruler is God.’ ‘The ruled are people on the earth who have related themselves in a positive, neutral, or negative way to “Christendom.”’ The place is the earth and the timing is ‘the period between His comings.’ The relationship of the Church to this kingdom is that of being part of it: ‘Since the church is part of Christendom, she is part of this concept of the kingdom’” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, pp. 397-399] (*I*, p. 387).

The Mystery Kingdom *affirms that the Kingdom of God includes the rule of God in the heart of the believer*. “Premillennialists do not deny that there is a facet of God’s kingdom program that is a present reality. Among Dispensationalists this is known as the Mystery Kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 193). “It should be obvious that Dispensationalism does not deny that the Kingdom of God includes God’s rule in the heart of the believer” (*ibid.*, p. 388). “Dispensationalism does not deny the claim of Covenant Amillennialism that the rule of God is to be found in the hearts of the believers. In fact, Dispensationalists affirm it” (*ibid.*, p. 389). “As we survey Paul’s ministry as recorded in the Book of Acts, we see that he was an ambassador of the kingdom of God—but his message was salvation through the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. No reference is made to support the notion that the earthly Davidic kingdom had been established. Rather, the message concerns entrance into a present form of the kingdom of God by faith in Jesus Christ” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 280). “Christ, following His resurrection, spent time with those whom He had chosen (John 15:16), instructing them concerning the new form of the kingdom and preparing them for their ministry of introducing the new form of the kingdom to Jew and Gentile alike. He reiterated His promise of empowerment by the Holy Spirit for the discharge of their ministry. On the Day of Pentecost the promised Spirit was poured out and came to indwell believers as His temple. In the Book of Acts their ministry of proclaiming the new message of the new form of the kingdom is recorded, by which the Gospel was proclaimed and spread throughout the world” (*ibid.*, p. 281). “The term *kingdom* is used... in the Epistles... the *third* and most common use by far is in reference to the present form of the kingdom, that into which a believer enters by faith in Jesus Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 283).

The Mystery Kingdom is *still a mystery to many people*. This is true both of people who are passive or neutral toward the church and the gospel, and also of those who actively oppose the church and the gospel, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses. “For **the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness**, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18). “And even if **our gospel is veiled**, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:3–4).

We’ll have more to say about the Mystery Kingdom in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.

So, with a modest amount of effort, we're able to discern five distinct facets of God's overall Kingdom program. While these five facets each have as their basic purpose the accomplishing of the will of God, if we are to understand the Bible correctly, it is essential that we keep these five facets clearly delineated in our minds, lest we mistakenly apply Scripture passages and/or theological concepts to one facet, when they actually belong to another. In this way, we will be greatly aided in "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15, NKJV).

Now while these five facets of the Kingdom are each unique and distinct, we should point out too that they do all work in concert to accomplish the one singular overarching purpose of the Kingdom of God, which is to glorify God. The Universal Kingdom glorifies God everywhere, at all times; the Spiritual Kingdom glorifies God through the salvation of men throughout all human history; the Theocratic Kingdom glorified Jehovah on earth through the nation Israel; the Millennial Kingdom, which is to be a restoration of the Theocratic Kingdom, will glorify God on earth for a thousand years via perfect human government, regenerated and holy subjects and an ideal environment; and finally, the Mystery Kingdom glorifies God now through the salvation of men, and will glorify Him forever by exhibiting the surpassing riches of His grace toward the church in the ages to come (Eph. 2:7).

In review, we began this *Section 1: Introductory Considerations* by first reviewing five popular views of the Kingdom. We then traced chiliasitic/premillennial eschatology through church history. Then, we listed our relevant presuppositions and premises, then we took a look at some basic hermeneutical principles. We concluded this *Introductory Considerations* section by reviewing the five primary facets of the Kingdom. We're now ready to trace the revelation of the Kingdom of God through the Bible itself, from Genesis to Revelation. We'll do this in *Section 2: The Biblical Kingdom*.

Section 2: The Biblical Kingdom

Chapter 6: God and Creation

Before the world was, *God* was.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”
(Gen. 1:1).

With quintessential elegance and simplicity, these first ten words of the Bible set the stage for all that is to follow. In these first words of inspired Scripture the eternal God is differentiated from His temporal creation, and God is stated to be the creative cause of everything that has come into existence. (See also John 1:1-3.)

According to the Bible, in contrast with their eternal Creator, the present “heaven and earth” had a beginning, and they will also have an end. “Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for **Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created**” (Rev. 4:11). “**Heaven and earth will pass away**, but My words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35). “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for **the first heaven and the first earth passed away**, and there is no longer any sea” (Rev. 21:1). Again, in stark contrast with His creation, almighty God is eternal, having neither beginning nor end of existence. “Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, Even **from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God**” (Ps. 90:2).

God

Because God is invisible to us, whatever we can know about Him must come from either general (i.e. nature) or special (i.e. the Bible) *revelation* from Him. Thankfully, He has chosen to reveal to us specific information about Himself via inspired Scripture. By examining His written revelation, then, we are able to learn much about Him, including His nature and attributes.

God's Nature

Regarding God's *nature*, the Bible presents us with *three eternal Persons*: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Individually, Scripture teaches that each of these three is eternal. Jesus said the Father was “before the world was.” “And now, glorify Thou Me to-

gether with Thyself, **Father**, with the glory which I had with Thee **before the world was**” (John 17:5).

Likewise, the Son was also in existence before anything that came into existence came into existence. “But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me **that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting**” (Mic. 5:2). “**In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being**” (John 1:1–3). “And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, **Father**, with **the glory which I had with Thee before the world was**” (John 17:5). “And **He** [Jesus, vs. 3] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created by Him and for Him. And **He is before all things**, and in Him all things hold together” (Col. 1:15–17). We’ll have more to say regarding the Son’s eternity and deity in our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.

According to inspired Scripture, the Holy Spirit is a Person (John 14:16–17, 16:13–15; Acts 5:3; Eph. 4:30) and is also eternal. “how much more will the blood of Christ, who through **the eternal Spirit** offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Heb. 9:14)?

Now, we also know from Scripture that there is only one God, not three. “That they may know that **thou alone**, whose name is **Jehovah, Art the Most High over all the earth**” (Ps. 83:18). “Jesus answered, ‘The foremost is, “**HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD**”’” (Mark 12:29) “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, **the only God**, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Tim. 1:17). Scripture therefore presents us with *one God* existing eternally in *three eternal Persons*: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We suggest that this is why Jesus commanded Christians to baptize in the name (singular) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in **the name [singular] of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit**, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:19–20). (For a more complete discussion of God’s nature, including His tri-unity, see this writer’s book *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witness-*

es, or the “Theology Proper” section of a good Systematic Theology, such as Chafer’s or Geisler’s.)

God’s Attributes

Regarding God’s *attributes*, according to the Bible, God was, is and forever will be *holy*, “Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts:** the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa. 6:2–3). “I charge you in the presence of **God**, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time — He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality and **dwells in unapproachable light**; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen” (1 Tim. 6:13–16). “And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, **‘HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME’**” (Rev. 4:8). *righteous*, “The Rock, his work is perfect; For all his ways are justice: A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, Just and **right is he**” (Deut. 32:4). “Gracious is **Jehovah**, and **righteous**; Yea, our God is merciful” (Ps. 116:5). “And they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, ‘Great and marvelous are Thy works, **O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways**, Thou King of the nations’” (Rev. 15:3). *loving*, “Nevertheless Jehovah thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but Jehovah thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because **Jehovah thy God loved thee [Israel]**” (Deut. 23:5). “For **God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). “Husbands, love your wives, just as **Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her**” (Eph. 5:25) “The one who does not love does not know God, for **God is love**” (1 John. 4:8). *just*, “The Rock! His work is perfect, For **all His ways are just**; A God of faithfulness and **without injustice**, Righteous and upright is He” (Deut. 32:4). “Righteousness and **justice are the foundation of thy throne**: Lovingkindness and truth go before thy face” (Ps. 89:14). “What shall we say then? **There is no injustice with God, is there?** May it never be” (Rom. 9:14)! *omnipresent*, “For **the eyes of Jehovah**

run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him” (2 Chron. 16:9). **“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there”** (Ps. 139:7–8). “And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are **the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth**” (Rev. 5:6). *omniscient*, “then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and render unto every man according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for **thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men**” (1 Kings. 8:39) “**And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do**” (Heb. 4:13). “in whatever our heart condemns us; for **God** is greater than our heart, and **knows all things**” (1 John. 3:20). *omnipotent*, “And looking upon them Jesus said to them, ‘With men this is impossible, but **with God all things are possible**’” (Matt. 19:26). “And He was saying, ‘Abba! **Father! All things are possible for Thee**; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt” (Mark 14:36). “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says **the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty**” (Rev. 1:8). *eternal*, “**The eternal God** is thy dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deut. 33:27). “but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of **the eternal God**, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:26) “And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of **God, who lives forever and ever**” (Rev. 15:7). and *immutable*. “**For I, Jehovah, change not**; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed” (Mal. 3:6). “**Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever**” (Heb. 13:8). “Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from **the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow**” (James 1:17).

Creation

Knowing God’s nature and attributes helps us understand what motivated Him to create *anything*, and more specifically, what motivated Him to create *this* particular world.

Why Create Anything?

Why create anything? Is it not true that a holy and loving God, subsisting in three perfect Persons, must have been self-sufficient and self-satisfied from all eternity? Yes, this is true. However, because true love is *giving* love (Acts 20:35), it seems reasonable that a loving God might desire to give to someone or something beyond Himself, if that be possible. But in order to do that, He would have to first create that someone or something else. Then He would be able to give to that someone or something else many good things: life, love, joy, goodness, peace, etc.

God's Vision

Because Christians were chosen before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), it is evident that before God actually *created* anything, He must have first *envisioned* what He was going to create. It is evident now that His vision included both animate and inanimate things: angels, the cosmos, and man, at least. And if the animate things (angels and man) were to love God in return for His love, they must be given the capability for doing so via free will, true love requiring the ability to freely choose whether to love or not to love.

Since saved persons' names have been "**written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb**" (Rev. 13:8, 17:8), before anything had even been created, we know that this vision included the salvation of men, which necessitates there being something to be saved from, namely sin and death. So, God's vision must have included sin and death, and sin's accompanying judgments and punishments.

As sin and death were envisioned by God before the foundation of the world, so must He have envisioned His ways of dealing with them. Therefore, it is not surprising that God's Kingdom program, through which He would deal with the issues of sin, death, redemption, judgment and punishment, was also envisioned before anything was actually created. "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit **the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**'" (Matt. 25:34). This would be the same Kingdom program that would in due time sum up all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. "He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him **with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth**" (Eph. 1:9–10).

God's envisioned Kingdom program also included the saved persons of this (church) age. Paul wrote of God's pre-creation vision and plan in Ephesians and in Second Timothy: "just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before Him" (Eph. 1:4). "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, **that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel**, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of **the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things**; in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. **This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord**" (Eph. 3:1–11) "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to **His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity**" (2 Tim. 1:8–9)

Why Create This World?

Now, the question arises, if God had the ability to create any kind of world that He desired, why then did He create *this* world? Why create this world, which is now suffering under the burdens of sin, death and deterioration, when He could have created one that would have remained entirely devoid of these things?

Above, we touched briefly on the fact that if God had desired to have creatures who were genuinely capable of loving Him (and therefore also capable of *not* loving Him), then He would have had to have created them with free will. And, it may well be that it would have been *impossible* for God to have created truly free creatures without some of them choosing to

rebel. If that be the case, then the rebels may simply be an unavoidable byproduct of free will. In that case, God obviously foresaw that some of His creatures would rebel, and chose to create free creatures anyway, because the net result would still be better than had He not chosen to create free creatures at all.

On another track, we know the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). But how could God demonstrate patience without first having wayward creatures with whom He could be patient? Or, for that matter, in a world without sin, how could God demonstrate grace, mercy, forgiveness, wrath or justice? May it not be the case that God desires to exercise and demonstrate *all* these attributes, including those that can only be exercised and demonstrated in a world that contains sin? If that be the case, then our world just might be the ideal world, at least for that purpose. Opportunities for God to be glorified for His patience, grace, mercy, forgiveness, wrath and justice would have been missed had our world never fallen into sin. We'll have more to say on this subject in the section *Why Evil is Allowed By God* of our chapter *The Fall*.

Creation

God's creation includes the cosmos, angels and man. He created *the heavens and the earth*, "**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**" (Gen. 1:1). "**The heavens** declare the glory of God; **And the firmament** showeth **his handiwork**" (Ps. 19:1). "**Thus saith God Jehovah, he that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; he that spread abroad the earth and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein**" (Isa. 42:5) "and swore by **Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT**, that there shall be delay no longer" (Rev. 10:6) *angels*, "Thou wast **the anointed cherub** that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that **thou wast created**, till unrighteousness was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:14–15). "For **by Him all things were created**, both **in the heavens** and on earth, visible and **invisible**, whether **thrones** or **dominions** or **rulers** or **authorities** — all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Col. 1:16–17). "And of the angels He says, '**WHO MAKES HIS AN-**

GELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE” (Heb. 1:7). and *man*. **“And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”** (Gen. 2:7). **“Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it”** (Deut. 4:32)? **“But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE”** (Mark 10:6) Indeed, God created *all things*. **“Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created”** (Rev. 4:11).

After creating all things, God pronounced His entire creation *good*. **“And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.** And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day” (Gen. 1:31). Dr. McClain comments, “We should also observe that in the record of the creation of the physical environment placed under man’s dominion, the Creator six times pronounces it ‘good’ (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25); and in the final summary we are told that God saw ‘everything that He had made, and it was very good’ (vs. 31). Thus, at the very beginning of man’s physical existence on earth, the Word of God declares it to be something eminently worth-while, not something evil per se after the platonic tradition. This is an important point... modern theories which decry as ‘carnal’ any doctrine of a genuine Kingdom of God on earth short of the eternal state” (GK, p. 44).

The Age of Innocence

Upon creation’s completion, man was given dominion over all earthly things. This dominion was actually earth’s first theocratic Kingdom, having been formally covenanted to Adam by God.

Man’s Original Kingdom

As part of the creation program, a well-defined *dominion* was given to man by God. **“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and mul-**

tiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food: and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so” (Gen. 1:26-30).

This dominion was in fact a *theocratic Kingdom* over all God’s earthly creation. “What is **man**, that thou art mindful of him? And **the son of man**, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than God, And **crownest him** with glory and honor. **Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet:** All sheep and oxen, Yea, and the beasts of the field, The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas” (Ps. 8:4-8). “But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘What is **man**, that Thou rememberest him? Or **the son of man**, that Thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; **Thou hast crowned him** with glory and honor, And hast **appointed him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.**’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (Heb. 2:6-8). “As God’s son, Adam inherited God’s earth” (Showers, *M*, p. 83). “The concept of dominion is inherent in the image or likeness given to man. God is sovereign, and man was to exercise delegated authority and thus reflect the authority that belongs to the Creator. In exercising dominion, man would subjugate all creation to the Creator. He would establish a kingdom in this sphere, one in which the God of heaven ruled and demonstrated His right to rule. This purpose for man is reaffirmed in Psalm 8:5-8 and again in Hebrews 2:6-8, and even though this purpose has not yet been realized, it ultimately will be—through the reign of the Son of Man at His second advent” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 32). “In the Genesis account of the creation of man, the very first of the divine injunctions laid upon him was regal in character: ‘Let them have dominion,’ says the Creator, ‘over all the earth’ and every created thing upon it (Gen. 1:26). The Hebrew word here is *radah*; the same term was used later significantly of the reign of Messiah Himself in His Kingdom: ‘Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies’ (Ps. 110:2). Thus, among other important likenesses to his Creator, man was given a limited sovereignty in relation to the earth. To borrow the fine words of Franz Delitzsch [*Com-*

mentary on the Psalms, on 8:7-9] concerning man's original position: 'Man is a king, and not a king without a domain; the world around, with all the works of creative wisdom, is his kingdom'" (McClain, *GK*, p. 42).

This Kingdom was *God's original purpose for mankind*, a purpose that has never been rescinded. "...looking back to see what He Himself intended this race of man to become, we find in His expressed intention the Divine Will in the matter" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:536) "God's purpose for Creation had been accomplished with the establishment of a miniature theocracy in Eden in which He ruled as sovereign through man as His delegated representative. This was God's unchanging purpose for man and for the earth, as clearly seen in Psalm 8" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 33). "Our sovereign God, in every period of theocratic administration, has ruled through those to whom He assigned His authority. In the garden, Adam was the appointed theocratic administrator whose responsibility it was to subject all creation to himself, so that through him creation might be subject to the authority of God" (*ibid.*, p. 292).

This Kingdom *extended also over the race of men*. This concept is known in theological circles as *federal* or *Adamic headship*. That Adam's headship had profound implications for all of future mankind, whether for good or for bad, is made evident in several New Testament passages: "Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned** — for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless **death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam**, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if **by the transgression of the one the many died**, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. And the gift is not like **that which came through the one who sinned**; for on the one hand **the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation**, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if **by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one**, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as **through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men**, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as **through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners**, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. And the Law

came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:12–21). “For since **by a man came death**, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as **in Adam all die**, so also in Christ all shall be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:21–22). “So also it is written, ‘The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. **As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy**; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as **we have borne the image of the earthy**, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Cor. 15:45–49). “For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; **THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.**’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone” (Heb. 2:5–9). McClain comments, “This original dominion over the earth and the animal creation was undoubtedly bestowed on man regarded generically as a race, not merely upon the first man Adam. However, if due consideration be given to the New Testament typical comparison between Adam and Christ as the respective heads of the old and new creations, there must have been some sense in which the first Adam was given dominion not only over the animal world but also over the race of men which would in the process of time issue from him by natural generation. This view of the matter harmonizes with the doctrine of Adamic headship as set forth in the Word of God. (cf. Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-28, 45-49; Heb. 2:5-9). The plural ‘let them have dominion,’ on this view, could have some reference to Adam and his wife Eve; for in the antitype the Last Adam also has a ‘wife’ who, though subject to her divine Head, will nevertheless sit regally with Him in His Mediatorial Kingdom (Rev. 19:7; 20:6)” (*GK*, p. 43).

Covenant #1: The Edenic Covenant

God's Kingdom covenant or contract with man in the garden of Eden can be appropriately called *the Edenic Covenant*. "And God blessed them: and **God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.** And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food: and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so" (Gen. 1:28-30). "And **Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**" (Gen. 2:15-17). This is the first of eight covenants that God has made with mankind. We'll point out the other seven covenants as they appear throughout history, as we progress in our study of the biblical Kingdom, and we'll also review them all in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*. Regarding the Edenic Covenant, Dr. Fruchtenbaum summarizes, "The Edenic Covenant was made between God and Adam in which Adam stood as the representative head of the human race. Thus, the actions of Adam are attributed to the whole of humanity" (*EC*, p. 7). "The sixth provision was that man was forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17a). This was the only negative commandment in the entire Edenic Covenant and was the one point that would test man's obedience. He was free to eat of all the other trees of the garden but was to refrain from eating of that one. This was the one test to see how man would respond to the will of God; it was a test of the recognition of and the submission to the will of God. Man was not to assume that, because he was given authority over the earth and the animal kingdom, he himself was independent of God and exempt from God's law. The question that raises is, 'Will man, like Satan before him, reject God's right to rule and declare himself independent of God'" (*ibid.*, p. 8)?

Chapter 7: The Fall

As we saw in our previous chapter, man was given, via the Edenic Covenant, a Kingdom over all the earth and over all its creatures. However, sin soon entered the world, and the Edenic Covenant was broken. As Dr. Pentecost summarizes, “God prepared a new sphere in which He would develop a kingdom, and He populated it with creatures made like Himself so that they might know Him, love Him, and submit themselves to Him because He is worthy. Satan, however, entered into that sphere and enticed those who were in subjection to God into submission to himself. He usurped God’s right to rule, suggesting that he, Satan, possesses the right to rule, and that he—not God—is worthy to be obeyed. God demonstrated His authority by passing judgment on the earth, its creatures, on Satan, and on mankind—and He promised a coming One through whom this judgment would be executed and by whom subjection would be restored” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 39).

Philosophical Concepts Related to Evil

Before continuing our biblical narrative, we’ll now take a short detour to explore some foundational ideas related to evil and sin.

Definition of Evil

First, we’ll *define* and *describe* evil, and its manifestation, sin.

Evil is *the corruption of good*. It is a *parasite*, and has no substance in itself. Without a good host, it cannot exist. Chafer says, “Good has no need of evil for its self-realization; love would be eternally the same, and ever conscious of its own nature, though there were no hatred. Evil, on the other hand, is so far dependent upon good that it comes into existence only as a contrast thereto. As opposition implies something which is opposed, evil presupposes good, and is conceivable only as a departure or fall therefrom. If evil be regarded as wholly primary and original, it cannot in any true sense be called evil or ‘that which ought not to be’” (*ST*, 2:238). “Evil has in itself no uniting or concentrating power; it can only produce an inwardly hollow semblance of unity, an ever vanishing appearance of fellowship” (*ibid.*). “Evil in our earthly life is obliged to submit to some extent to the law of good, if it is not to destroy its own subjects and instruments” (*ibid.*, p. 239). “Evil, I say, has in itself no productive or formative power; it cannot give itself any complete or historical reality in forms and arrangements of human life peculiar to itself; it cannot attain supremacy in any sphere or

society, save by resorting to principles which have their origin in good” (*ibid.*). “Evil has no original substance in itself” (*ibid.*, p. 242).

Sin is *lawlessness*. “Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and **sin is lawlessness**” (1 John. 3:4). “The very essence of sin, the Apostle John tells us, is ‘lawlessness,’ and ‘the devil sinneth from the beginning’ (1 John 3:4, 8, ASV). Thus Satan is described as the primal and original rebel against the control of God’s Universal Kingdom; and with him are the ‘angels that sinned’ (2 Pet. 2:4)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 31).

Sin is *unbelief*. “But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and **whatever is not from faith is sin**” (Rom. 14:23). “Distrust was the turning point in the creature’s fall, for the overt act of sin was but the fruit of unbelief. How natural, then, that trust should be the turning point in his recovery” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 104)! “Even our spiritual blindness is a result of the choice not to believe” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:129).

Sin is also *pride*. “At the root of all sin is pride, which was the evil that prompted Lucifer’s rebellion against God” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:104).

Sin is *rebellion against and independence from God*. “The creature—angel or man—is designed to be guided by God alone” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:66). “The lamentable sins which follow the repudiation of God are but the innumerable lies which are the legitimate offspring of the first lie” (*ibid.*, p. 67). “The root evil in the cosmos is that in it there is an all-comprehensive order or system which is methodized on a basis of complete independence of God” (*ibid.*, p. 84). “As before demonstrated, there is but one way in which any creature—angel or man—may attempt to be like God, and that is to seek to be independent as God is independent” (*ibid.*, p. 93). “...the one original idea which characterizes it all, namely, *independence of God*” (*ibid.*, p. 101). “Man’s actions are right when conformed to the character of God, and wrong when not conformed to the character of God. No other basis for a distinction between good and evil exists” (*ibid.*, p. 131). “The holy character of God is the final and only standard by which moral values may be accurately judged” (*ibid.*, p. 227). “The Scriptures indicate the extensive and complex character of sin’s expression, but in every case, whether it be doctrine or human experience, the one original evil is found to be in the sphere of the creature’s relation to the Creator” (*ibid.*, p. 251). “While there is always a very wide field open for the multiplied manifestations of sin, sin is, in its essential nature, twofold: repudiation of God and promotion of self” (*ibid.*, p. 259). “To say that sin is lawlessness assigns a very wide field of application to it if all forms of law are considered, yet it is more extensive

and complete to assert that sin is any want of conformity to the character of God” (*ibid.*, p. 267).

Sin is *self-centered*, “The creature—whether angel or human—is created to be God-centered. To become self-centered is a contradiction of the basic law of creature existence” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:31). “The self-centered nature of all sin” (*ibid.*, p. 43) “It may be concluded that, in its ultimate form, untruth is a substitution of self for God and the assumption of a self-designed plan of life for that purposed by the Creator” (*ibid.*, p. 67). and it is *self-willed*. “Satan’s doctrine exalts self and directs in the way of Cain, or self-promoted righteousness. It is a way of life wholly independent of God whatever elements of truth it may borrow or incorporate” (*ibid.*, p. 73). “They [Satan and his fallen angels] can suggest evil, but cannot coerce the will of another creature. They may spread snares and devices to ruin the children of God, but they cannot compel any other being to comply with their designs” (*ibid.*, p. 75).

Sin is *irrational*, “Sin, being a contradiction of reason and irrational in itself, is not subject to reason” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:30). “A cause may be assigned for sin, but it is never rational” (*ibid.*, p. 212). “It is spiritual insanity” (*ibid.*, p. 242). and it is always *destructive*. “Sin always carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and it will destroy the one performing this sin unless there is repentance and confession” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 554).

Sin is *not personally satisfying*. “Passion strives with passion, one affection counteracts another; man, while slavishly dependent on the various objects of desire, never finds that rest and satisfaction which he seeks in the service of sin. He cannot attain these even by a total surrender to any one passion; for—it can never attain sufficient strength perfectly to free him from the calls of other impulses striving after unbridled freedom” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:240). “Evil is at variance not only with good but with itself; good has but one enemy, evil; but evil has two enemies, good and evil” (*ibid.*, p. 241).

And, sin is *total*. “A partial or compromising departure from God is impossible” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:67). “Total depravity means the entire absence of holiness, not the highest intensity of sin” (*ibid.*, p. 219). “Since God is infinite and His goodness unbounded, sin is infinite and its evil character is beyond all human computation. Sin inflicts not only an immeasurable injury upon the one who sins, but is more specifically characterized by the injury it inflicts upon God, the Creator’s rights being disregarded, His holy law broken, and His property being damaged through sin” (*ibid.*, p. 249). “Depravity is the inability to do good in the manner which is pleasing to God” (*ibid.*, p. 284). “The doctrine of depravity is often rejected through misunderstanding. This doctrine does not imply that there is no good to be

seen in men as men observe each other; it rather asserts that, because of the fallen nature, God sees nothing in them which commends them to Himself” (*ibid.*, p. 293).

Evil is Not Caused by God

Next, it is important to recognize that *evil is not caused by God*. “God is not responsible for the ugliness in the world, only the beauty” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:245). “Unsolvable as the dilemma seems, Christian theism gives a forthright answer. God *did* create every *thing* (substance), but sin is not a thing or substance: *Sin is a privation or lack in a good substance*, a distortion of something pure. Evil is an ontological parasite—it *exists only in something good, as a corruption of its goodness*. For example, evil is like rot to a tree or rust to a car; both rot and rust corrupt the good substance (tree or car), but neither rot nor rust exists *in and of itself*” (*ibid.*, 3:106).

Why Evil is Allowed by God

And finally, *why is evil allowed by God?* We cannot completely fathom all the reasons why God allows evil, but we do have hints. “The divine purpose relative to sin has not been revealed, and, doubtless, the human mind could not comprehend all that is involved” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:229). “Though it is impossible for a creature to understand how a holy God could permit sin, either in heaven or on earth, it is evident that the realization of His greatest purposes necessitates its permission. The entire problem is illustrated to a limited extent in the experience of a Christian who has sinned. He first admits that God, who could have hindered the sin, did nevertheless permit it, He likewise recognizes that he has profited in the ways of understanding and experience by the sin; and, finally, he admits that God, through permitting the sin, is in no way complicated with its guilt and wickedness” (*ibid.*, p. 233). This is undoubtedly a case in which *the end justifies the means*. “It may be concluded, then, that sin is in the universe by the permission of God who hates it perfectly and who, being sovereign, had power to keep it from manifestation, had He chosen to do so. That He did not hinder the manifestation of sin, demonstrates that He, being what He is, must have a purpose in view other than the averting of sin. Here as nowhere else in the affairs of the universe, the end justifies the means” (*ibid.*, 1:238). Summarizing, Dr. Geisler suggests, “In the end, God will have used human history, with its varied conditions and administrations (dispensations), to show in eternity that (1) sin is always wrong, (2) God is always right, and (3) evil is justly put away forever” (*ST*, 3:163).

We suggest that evil is allowed by God in order *to produce the best possible world*. Dr. Geisler reasons, “An all-wise God knows the best way to the

best world. So God must have permitted this world (which is not the best world) in order to produce the best world possible. Therefore, this present world is the best way to the best possible world” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:222). “The odds are that it is not God’s intelligence that is lacking in making the design, but rather ours in understanding it” (*ibid.*, p. 224). “The omniscience of God is His unerring ability to choose the best means to the best ends. This attribute is rooted in several others: omniscience, omnibenevolence, and omnipotence. As omniscient, God knows all ends and all means. Further, He knows which of these means are the most effective to achieve these ends. What is more, His omnibenevolence assures that He will choose the best means to the best ends. Finally, His omnipotence enables Him to achieve His ends by the means He chooses” (*ibid.*). “The best possible world is the one that achieves the greatest good—which, as Scripture makes clear, is achieved by allowing first-order (lower) evils in order to achieve second-order (higher) goods. For example, patience is not achievable without tribulation, nor forgiveness without sin, nor courage without fear, nor mercy without tragedy. *All* of these greater goods are dependent on permitting the precondition of evil. If, then, the greater good cannot be achieved without allowing evil, and if God must achieve the greatest good (because He is the greatest Good), then it seems to follow that it would not have been best for God to have chosen to create a free world where sin would not occur (even if it were actually possible)” (*ibid.*, 3:157). “It has not been demonstrated that any theorized world-variant is morally better than the one we have. As a result, opponents have failed to show that God did less than His best in creating our world. This, of course, does not mean we are committed to the belief that this present world is the best world achievable. God is not yet finished: *This world is only the best way possible to the best world achievable*” (*ibid.*, p. 158). “By His omniscience God knows the end of all things; by His omniscience He knows the best means to this end” (*ibid.*, 4:34).

Specifically, evil is allowed by God in order *to allow truly free will*, “While a free world where no one ever sins is *logically* possible, it may not be *actually* possible. Hence, it is possible that God could *not* have created only those who wouldn’t sin, since he knew with certainty that in any group He made some would choose evil” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:157). *to manifest divine grace*, **“He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us.** In all wisdom and insight He made known

to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him” (Eph. 1:5-9) “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, **in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus**” (Eph. 2:4-7). “There was that in God which no created being had ever seen. The angelic hosts had seen His wisdom, His power, and His glory, but they had never seen His grace. They had no conception of the goodness of God to the undeserving. They may have seen something of His love, but love and grace are not the same” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:232). “There is no way for us to experience the joy of being forgiven without God’s allowance for our fall into sin (e.g. Luke 7:36-48)” (Geisler, 3:158). (We’ll have more to say regarding God’s purpose of showing the riches of His grace in the church in the ages to come in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.) *to enable creation of the church*, “Much suffering and sorrow might have been averted had sin been wholly crushed at its beginning, but again we must believe that much more has been gained by the long delayed termination of evil. From the above passage [2 Thess. 2:3-10, concerning the ‘restrainer’] it would seem that evil would have long concluded its own course in the lawlessness of fallen hearts had its natural energy not been restrained. It has been restrained, we are led to believe by the evidence, that the body and bride of Christ may be made complete” (Chafer, *KHP*, 61%). *to demonstrate that sin doesn’t work*, Chafer suggests, “Again, it seems the course of Divine wisdom to make a sufficient and final trial of every claim of His adversaries; and when this age, with all its developments, shall have passed by, every mouth will be stopped, and the whole world and Satan will know their own failure and sin before God. They will stand self-condemned; and nothing could accomplish this but the testing, by actual trial, of all the self-sufficient claims of Satan and man” (*S*, C1:26/34). “It may also be concluded from the study of the ages that God has not been pleased to meet the presumptuous claims of Satan or of man by a simple denial of those claims; He has chosen, rather, to bring everything to an experimental test. One advantage of this method is obvious: every mouth will be stopped, and the entire universe of beings will see clearly the utter folly of that which might have been arbitrarily denied” (*ibid.*, C4:1/31). “Evil must run its course and make its full demonstration that it may be judged, not as a theory, but as a concrete reality” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:32). “The cosmos is not a battleground whereon God is contending with

Satan for supremacy; it is a thing which God has permitted, that the lie may have its fullest unveiling” (*ibid.*, p. 84). “Granting the truthfulness of the claim that God does put the creature’s assumptions to an experimental test, it becomes clear that Satan’s determination—which constituted his initial sin—to build a vast structure of independent relationships around himself as the center and wholly autonomous with respect to the Creator to whom all allegiance and obedience rightfully belong, was permitted of God to be tested experimentally to its bitter end” (*ibid.*, p. 91). “When Satan and his theory come up for final judgment and execution, ‘every mouth will be stopped’ and all will be guilty—not alone in the light of God’s ideals, but as those who are absolutely guilty in the light of the colossal failure of the whole enterprise” (*ibid.*, p. 92). “A guilty cosmos, proved to be such to the extent that every mouth is stopped—even that of Satan himself—is a stupendous achievement. What such a conclusion may contribute to the felicity of the universe in eternity to come, none would attempt to declare” (*ibid.*). And Geisler, “Untold throngs from all the ages will be able to testify from their experience, under a wide variety of conditions, that God is just, that sin is destructive, and that submitting freely to His will is the only way to obtain true and permanent blessedness. In effect, God will have defeated sin by permitting it in virtually every possible way” (*ST*, 3:164). *to prove that man without God is always a failure*, “Through the ages of God’s dealing with a fallen race, He has tested its members under many different conditions; and in every test, apart from the grace of God, man has always proven to be a failure” (McClain, *GK*, p. 482). *to demonstrate God’s hatred of sin*, “What if **God**, although **willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known**, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction” (Rom. 9:22–23) “The Apostle declares that God was ‘willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known’ (Rom 9:22); but no judgment, wrath, or power in relation to sin could be disclosed apart from the permitted presence of active sin in the world” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:232). *and to enable God to defeat sin*. “If evil is not permitted, it cannot be defeated. As with automobiles, a tested world is better than an untested one. Or to put it another way, no boxer can actually defeat an opponent unless he gets into the ring with him. God, then, may have permitted evil in order to defeat it (and thus achieve a greater good)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:158). “Permitting Adam and Eve to sin was part of God’s plan to defeat evil” (*ibid.*, p. 165).

The Fall of Satan

Who or what is Satan? Is he a real person, or merely a personification of evil? What is his origin, and how did he fall? What are his nature, attitude, purpose and works?

Satan's Identity

The Bible has much to say about Satan. “More Scripture is employed to elucidate the truth concerning Satan than is employed to elucidate the truth concerning all the fallen angels together” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:113). Regarding Satan’s *reality*, “Being uninformed and misinformed, people, to an appalling degree, become an easy prey to the power of the enemy of souls. Modern Sadducees seek to resolve this awful being into a ‘figure of speech,’ ‘a metaphorical personification of evil,’ or a ‘delusion of unsound minds.’ They deny his personality as they do that of the demons. Satan would encourage such impressions since they disarm prejudice and fear in relation to his infernal undertakings” (*ibid.*, p. 34). And regarding his *identity*, “Lucifer... This, the most exalted one of the angels—both by creation and by appointment—occupies a place in the text of Scripture next to the Persons of the Godhead. By his sin—the first in the universe, so far as revelation discloses—he became Satan and appears in the Word of God under about forty different titles” (*ibid.*, p. 19). As was Adam, Satan was created perfect; sin was only “found in” him later. Many scholars believe Ezekiel chapter 28 is referring to Satan when it says, “Thou wast **the anointed cherub** that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee**” (Ezek. 28:14-15).

Satan's Origin

Regarding Satan’s *origin*, Chafer summarizes, “Satan himself experienced a besotting of the mind which to some extent made his sinful course a possibility” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:63). “The all-important fruit of Satan’s pride is the fact that ‘he abode not in the truth [John 8:44].’” (*ibid.*, p. 64) “His lawlessness was not a mere disregard for an existing code of regulations; it was a complete rejection of the Lawgiver and all His benevolent intentions for an endless life” (*ibid.*, p. 67). “Satan’s sin was not merely *negative* in its rejection of God; it was *positive* also in that it constructed a philosophy of life, a line of action, which originated with Satan, was self-centered, and excluded God” (*ibid.*). “Against what inconceivable light these beings sinned is not revealed” (*ibid.*, p. 227).

Satan's Fall

Regarding Satan's *fall*, "**How art thou fallen from heaven, O day-star, son of the morning!** how art thou cut down to the ground, that didst lay low the nations! And **thou saidst in thy heart**, I will ascend into heaven, **I will exalt my throne above the stars of God**; and I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High**" (Isa. 14:12–14). Dr. Fruchtenbaum observes, "Whenever the word 'stars' is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of angels with one possible exception. With the second *I will*, he declared his desire to become the sole authority over all the angels that God had created. By so doing, he intended to depose Michael from his position and become the Archangel all by himself" (*FM*, p. 551). "Whenever the word cloud is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of God's glory, that unique glory called the *Shechinah* Glory" (*ibid.*). Again, Ezekiel chapter 28: "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and **perfect in beauty. Thou wast in Eden, the garden of God**; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was in thee; in the day that thou wast created they were prepared. **Thou wast the anointed cherub that covereth**: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; **thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee.** By the **abundance of thy traffic** they filled the midst of thee with violence, and **thou hast sinned**: therefore have I cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed thee, O **covering cherub**, from the midst of the stones of fire. **Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness**: I have cast thee to the ground; I have laid thee before kings, that they may behold thee. By the multitude of thine iniquities, in **the unrighteousness of thy traffic, thou hast profaned thy sanctuaries**; therefore have I brought forth a fire from the midst of thee; it hath devoured thee, and I have turned thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. **All they that know thee among the peoples shall be astonished at thee**: thou art become a terror, and thou shalt nevermore have any being" (Ezek. 28:12–19) Dr. Fruchtenbaum continues, "The first sinner ever was Satan. The first sin ever was the sin of pride" (*FM*, p.

550). “Looking at his wisdom, beauty, power, and authority, and meditating upon these things, ultimately led to the rise of pride (*your heart was lifted up*), and thus Satan sinned. That it was pride that led to the fall of Satan is clearly stated in 1 Timothy 3:6 [and not a new convert, lest he **become conceited** and fall into the condemnation incurred by **the devil**.]” (*ibid.*) “...*till unrighteousness was found in you*. This is the closest the Bible comes to describing the origin of sin” (*ibid.*, p. 552) “*By the abundance of your traffic... going from angel to angel slandering God in order to win their allegiance. Eventually, he convinced one-third of all the angels that God was in the wrong (Rev. 12:4). In that way, Satan became the father of lies (Jn. 8:44), because he originated lying*” (*ibid.*). “...a conflict between good angels and bad angels, an angelic conflict that continues to this day, and will continue until the middle of the Tribulation, at which point it will finally end (Rev. 12:7-12)” (*ibid.*, p. 553). “...*you have profaned your sanctuaries... The fact that it says your sanctuaries means ‘Satan’s sanctuaries,’ and this also shows that Satan did have a priestly function in Heaven... The word sanctuaries is in the plural because the heavenly Tabernacle had both a Holy Place and a Holy of Holies*” (*ibid.*). “By performing sinful deeds in Heaven, he brought corruption to Heaven. This is the reason Hebrews 9:23-26 states that the heavens themselves needed cleansing by the blood of the Messiah. The heavens were corrupted and defiled by the fall of Satan. It took the blood of Jesus to cleanse the heavenly sanctuaries and that is why He had to take His blood into Heaven to cleanse the heavenly sanctuaries” (*ibid.*, p. 554). “*All they that know you among the peoples shall be astonished at you... angels... also includes... humanity. Those who knew him will some day be astonished at him because of his demise. They thought that he would be their leader, their savior, their victor over God Himself. He will prove to be a failure, and this will astonish them*” (*ibid.*, p. 555). Dr. Pentecost summarizes Satan’s fall, “The Bible reveals two kingdoms existing in the realm of the heavenlies. The first is the kingdom of the God of heaven, with the unfallen angels as its subjects, while the second is the kingdom of Satan, with the fallen angels as its subjects. The two are in absolute opposition to each other. At no point will there be any agreement between the two—they are diametrically opposed to one another. While God’s kingdom is as timeless as God Himself, Satan’s kingdom had its beginning with Satan’s rebellion. Thus the two kingdoms are not to be misconstrued as coexistent from eternity past. While good existed eternally because God is good, evil was introduced by Lucifer’s rebellion against the kingdom of God. Although God passed judgment on that false ruler and his false kingdom (Luke 10:18), and its ultimate subjugation to Himself is cer-

tain (Phil. 2:10), that subjugation has not yet been accomplished. Therefore two kingdoms coexist in the heavenly realm: the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan” (*TKC*, p. 26).

Satan’s Nature, Attitude, Purpose and Works

Regarding Satan’s *nature*, he is *proud*, “and not a new convert, lest he become **conceited** and fall into the condemnation incurred by **the devil**” (1 Tim. 3:6). “The evil character of Satan will be found embraced in the twofold wickedness—ambitious pride and untruth—which is charged against him” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:63). he is *a liar*, “You are of your father **the devil**, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for **he is a liar, and the father of lies**” (John 8:4). “Satan is a living personification of deception” (*ibid.*, p. 35). he is *vicious*, “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. **Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour**” (1 Pet. 5:8). “That he was told by Jehovah *not* to destroy Job, is evidence that he both *could* have done so and *would* have done so had this restraint been lifted” (*ibid.*, p. 84). he is *wholly evil*, “The fall of this mighty angel was not a compromise between good and evil. He became the embodiment of evil and wholly void of good” (*ibid.*, p. 35). “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because **there is no truth in him**. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies” (John 8:4). but he is *finite and limited in power*. “the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might **destroy the works of the devil**” (1 John. 3:8). “And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And **the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough**, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and **Satan**, who deceives the whole world; **he was thrown down** to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev. 12:7–9) “Submit therefore to God. **Resist the devil and he will flee from you**” (James 4:7). “The power of Satan and his fallen angels is limited. They are but finite creatures who can do nothing outside the permissive will of God” (*ibid.*, p. 75). Chafer makes an interesting observation, namely, that *he would likely be admired by today’s common man*. “Doubtless, if called to face the truth of the precise nature of

Satan's sin, the man of the world would find little fault in him" (*ibid.*, p. 63).

Regarding Satan's *attitude*, He is *arrogant*. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O day-star, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, that didst lay low the nations! And **thou saidst in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God**; and I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High**" (Isa. 14:12-14). "...Satan himself, who from the beginning has not hesitated to match his strength and ingenuity against the omnipotence of Deity (Isa. 14:12-14)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 480). "It would seem to be indicated that he does not lose faith in his enterprise until that yet future time when he is cast out of heaven" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:93). He is also likely *jealous*. "Satan may be offended that a plan of salvation has been put into action by which his victims can be rescued and lifted to heights of glory to which no angel will ever attain" (*ibid.*, p. 97). "That otherwise doomed creatures may, by faith in a crucified and risen Savior, be constituted righteous to the degree of the perfect righteousness of God, which Christ is, must be most disconcerting and obnoxious to Satan" (*ibid.*).

Regarding Satan's *purpose*, his goal is *to be like God*. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O day-star, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, that didst lay low the nations! And thou saidst in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, **I will exalt my throne above the stars of God**; and I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High**" (Isa. 14:12-14). "Satan's dominant purpose is not, as the popular impression supposes, one of attempting to be *unlike* God. Satan has explicitly asserted concerning himself, as recorded in Isaiah 14:14, that his transcendent objective is to be like the Most High" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:99). "Satan's sin may thus be summarized as a purpose to secure (1) the highest heavenly position; (2) regal rights both in heaven and on earth; (3) Messianic recognition; (4) glory which belongs to God alone; and (5) a likeness to the Most High, the 'possessor of heaven and earth'" (*ibid.*, p. 50). "*I will be like the Most High.*' This... may be considered as a key to the understanding and tracing of his motives and methods. In spite of an almost universal impression that Satan's ideal for himself is to be *unlike* God, he is here revealed as being actuated with the purpose to be *like* God. However, this ambition is not to be like Jehovah, the self-existent One, which no created being could ever be; but to be like the Most High, which title signifies the 'possessor of heaven and earth' (Gen. 14:19, 22). Sa-

tan's purpose, then, is to gain authority over heaven and earth" [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 7:223] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 431). He also aims *to mar the lives and service of Christians*. "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. **Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour**" (1 Pet. 5:8). "But whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, in order that no **advantage be taken of us by Satan**; for we are not ignorant of **his schemes**" (2 Cor. 2:10–11). "Satan has no controversy or warfare with his own, unregenerate people, but there is abundant Scripture to prove that he makes unceasing effort to mar the life and service of the Christian" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:101)

Regarding Satan's *works*, he *rules the world*. "Now judgment is upon this world; now **the ruler of this world** shall be cast out" (John 12:31). "I will not speak much more with you, for **the ruler of the world** is coming, and he has nothing in Me" (John 14:30) "in whose case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4). We'll examine Satan's rulership of the world more fully in the section *The Fall of Man* below. He *blinds the minds of the unbelieving*. "in whose case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**, who is the image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4). Chafer comments, "His ideal is ever reflected in his ministers who are said to be 'ministers of [personal] righteousness' (2 Cor 11:13-15). It is concerning this gospel of grace by which lost men may be saved, that Satan has cast a veil over the minds of all unregenerate human beings 'lest the light of the glorious gospel... should shine unto them' (2 Cor 4:4). Every observing soul-winner is sooner or later impressed with the more than natural inability of the unsaved to comprehend the offer of salvation apart from human merit by faith alone" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:97). "This blighting, satanic opposition may be detected in every effort for the salvation of the lost" (*ibid.*, p. 103). He *had the keys of death until the resurrection of Christ*. "Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless **him who had the power of death, that is, the devil**" (Heb. 2:14) "and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and **I [Jesus] have the keys of death and of Hades**" (Rev. 1:18). "The keys of death apparently were in Satan's hands until the resurrection of Christ (cf. Heb. 2:14 with Rev. 1:18)" (*ibid.*, 5:251).

The Fall of the Angels

Satan is not the only angel who fell; there were others who joined him in his enterprise. “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for **the devil and his angels**’” (Matt. 25:41) “For if God did not spare **angels** when **they sinned**, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment” (2 Pet. 2:4) “And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, **a great red dragon** having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And **his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven**, and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child” (Rev. 12:3–4) “And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And **the dragon and his angels** waged war” (vs. 7) “And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and **Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and **his angels** were thrown down with him” (vs. 9) Chafer comments regarding the possibility of salvation, the degrees of wickedness and the self-righteous façades of these fallen angels: “There is no basis for a belief that redemption through Christ’s death is extended to the fallen angels” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:25). “There seem to be degrees of wickedness represented by these spirits; for it is stated in Matthew 12:43-45 that the demon, returning to his house, ‘taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself’” (*ibid.*, p. 120). “Demon possession in the present time is probably often unsuspected because of the generally unrecognized fact that demons are capable of inspiring a moral and exemplary life” (*ibid.*). “And no wonder, for **even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light**. Therefore it is not surprising if **his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness**; whose end shall be according to their deeds” (2 Cor. 11:14–15).

The Fall of Man

What is meant by “the fall of man,” and what were its effects?

The Fact of Man’s Fall

It is a sad fact of history that our first parents Adam and Eve disobeyed the Edenic Covenant’s one prohibitive command, thereby plunging themselves and their progeny into sin and death. “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of

the garden we may eat: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, **God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it**, neither shall ye touch it, **lest ye die**. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, **she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat**. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden. And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And Jehovah God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? And **the woman said**, The serpent beguiled me, and **I did eat**. And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto **Adam** he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and **hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it**: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them. And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of

Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:1-24). Chafer comments, “God knew that when placed under the circumstances which obtained, Adam would fall” (*ST*, 1:230). “The original sin with all its fruitage is never linked to God in any way” (*ibid.*, p. 237). “Only in the one respect—independence—could either angel or man be as God” (*ibid.*, p. 239). “So universal has this form of sin become that man thinks he has accomplished much when, if ever, he, through divine grace, reaches the place where his will is surrendered to God—the place, indeed, from which man should never have departed” (*ibid.*, 2:49). “But the plan of becoming as Elohim by merely assuming independence of God originated with Satan, and its proposal to Adam marks the course of Satan’s unchanging purpose” (*ibid.*, p. 95). “Sin did not begin with the body, but is rather a rebellion of the will against God, and it ever continues the same” (*ibid.*, p. 157). “Satan is even bolder in his response when he asserts, ‘Ye shall not surely die,’ which is a flat contradiction of Jehovah’s decree. It is possible that, as Satan was seeking the allegiance of Adam and Eve in his own great cause which involved his independence of God, he was promising that by power which he would exercise they would be saved from this divine judgment” (*ibid.*, p. 210). McClain adds, “The important point in this history of beginnings, however, is that man’s original dominion, being wholly derived and mediatorial in character, was to be exercised under the direction of God. It was just here that the first Adam dismally failed. Setting aside the ultimate sovereignty of his Creator, and arrogating to himself the perilous authority to decide what was good for him and his posterity, Adam lost his immediate contact with God, invalidated his mediatorial position, and brought down a whole train of disasters upon the realm where he might have brought unmeasured blessing. This failure of the first Adam, with reference to his mediatorial dominion, introduced into the stream of human history a hiatus which to the present hour has not at any time been wholly remedied. In the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, written about A.D. 70, concerning our Lord as ‘Son of Man’ and His mediatorial dominion, ‘But now we see not yet all things put under him’ (2:8)” (*GK*, p. 43). Pentecost observes, “It is interesting to observe that when this sin is referred to throughout Scripture, it is not referred to as the sin of Eve—but rather as the sin of Adam! The phrase in [Gen. 3] verse 6, ‘with her,’ seems to suggest that Adam was at Eve’s side when she was tempted by Satan. As God’s theocratic administrator, and as the appointed head of the family, it was Adam’s responsibility to safeguard Eve and to assure that she remained in

submission to the command of God. But Adam failed in his God-given responsibility and permitted Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit. While it was Eve's responsibility to obey, it was Adam's responsibility as theocratic administrator to see to it that subjects of the kingdom obeyed the law of the kingdom. Adam did not exercise this responsibility; therefore he was held responsible for the sin of Eve. Added to this was the fact that Adam did not resist the solicitation of Eve. By submitting to her he gave up his headship" (*TKC*, p. 37).

The Effects of the Fall

It is difficult to overstate the gravity of man's fall. He was *tested*, "It has been held by some that, had Adam stood the test, he would have become immortal in the absolute sense. He would have put on, it is claimed, a spiritual body; but there is no clear assurance of such a prospect. It is certain, however, that, had the test been withstood, it would not have returned again. Its pressure was not to have remained as a constant experience until the first parents were broken down" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:213). "These new impressions were but for the moment. Had they been resisted, the test would have passed forever. The experience of these two parents is not a norm or pattern of temptations which beset fallen humanity, whose experience is that of a ceaseless stress and trial with the depressing consciousness of many failures and defeats" (*ibid.*). he was *tempted* and *failed* to resist the temptation, "In the role of philanthropist he [Satan] appeared to our first parents, and sowed in their hearts the seeds of distrust" (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 119). *so man became a fallen creature*. "The unregenerate masses of humanity are said to be deceived by Satan. Their delusion is both tragic and pitiable. They are imposed upon by Satan's subterfuge, treachery, and fraud. There is no abiding substance in any objective upon which they set their hopes" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:99). "Both Lutherans and Calvinists subscribe to the highest view of man in his unfallen estate, and to the darkest picture of man in his fallen estate" (*ibid.*, p. 169). "Depravity as a doctrine does not stand or fall on the ground of man's estimation of himself; it rather reflects God's estimation of man" (*ibid.*, p. 218). "A child goes naturally in the ways of evil" (*ibid.*, p. 221). "In the view of heaven all men are sinners" (*ibid.*). "Finally, the estate of unregenerate man may be summarized, (a) as being subject to death in all its forms, because of participation in Adam's sin; (b) as being born in depravity or spiritual death and forever separated from God unless regenerated by the saving power of God; (c) as guilty of personal sins, each one of which is as sinful in the sight of God as the first sin of Satan or the first sin of Adam; (d) as under sin, in which estate all—both Jew

and Gentile—are now placed by divine decree and in which estate every human merit is disregarded to the end that uncompromised saving grace of God may be exercised toward those who believe; and (e) as under the influence of Satan who is in authority over them, who energizes them, who blinds them concerning the gospel, and who deceives them concerning their true relation to himself” (*ibid.*, p. 324). *The magnitude of the evil of the first sins was immense.* “Adam’s guilt and Jewish sinfulness, which to unbelief seems to have been punished too severely, is seen to receive its merited punishment, not so much from the acts themselves committed (i.e. considered isolated) as from the effects which naturally resulted from them, viz., making them unworthy of being the representatives of God’s Theocratic rulership, and thus forcing God, in respect to His own honor and glory, to a personal withdrawal. The first sin is a blow at Theocracy” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:501). *The entire human race was affected.* “Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men**, because all sinned —” (Rom. 5:12) “Adam had the God-given power of attorney for the whole human race” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 124).

The results of man’s fall are deep and wide. They include:

The Edenic Covenant was broken and came to an end. “But they like **Adam** have **transgressed the covenant**: there have they dealt treacherously against me” (Hos. 6:7). “Eve gave in to the temptation and disobeyed the one negative commandment. Adam recognized what had happened, but he still chose to join his wife in disobedience. Their first reaction was an attempt to hide from the presence of God, which only illustrated the truth of Genesis 2:17 [but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for **in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**]. Man at that very moment died spiritually and could no longer share the same communion with God he had experienced before his disobedience. With that act, the Edenic Covenant, being conditional, came to an end” (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 9).

We died and became totally depraved. The fact that we, the members of the human race, died through Adam’s transgression is clear from Scripture. “but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die**” (Gen. 2:17). “Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned** —” (Rom. 5:12) “Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless **him who had the power of death, that is, the dev-**

il” (Heb. 2:14) “...death, in view of disobedience, is a penal entailment as the Bible represents” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:228) “The penalty threatened to fall upon Adam was death, and death in all its forms—spiritual, physical, and eternal. On the day they disobeyed God, the first parents died spiritually; they began to die physically having become mortal; and they were at once subject to eternal death unless redeemed from it” (Chafer, *ST*, p. 213). We died *spiritually*, “but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die**” (Gen. 2:17). “And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and **the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God** amongst the trees of the garden. And **Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself**” (Gen. 3:8–10). “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned... for on the one hand the judgment arose from **one transgression resulting in condemnation**, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:12–17). “even when **we were dead in our transgressions**, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (Eph. 2:5) “Death is separation, and spiritual death is spiritual separation from God” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:126). “The tempter won that battle—he brought death and its fear upon humankind (Heb. 2:14 [Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless **him who had the power of death, that is, the devil**])” (*ibid.*, 4:565). we died *physically*, “Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned** — for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless **death reigned from Adam until Moses**, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the

free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if **by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one**, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:12–17). “...death as no Saviour but as the dire result of sin, a grievous portion of the curse” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:173). and we died (potentially) *eternally*. “**And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt**” (Dan. 12:2). “**Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels”**” (Matt. 25:41) “And the devil who deceived them was thrown into **the lake of fire** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**” (Rev. 20:10). “And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is **the second death, the lake of fire**. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the **book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire**” (Rev. 20:14–15). “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in **the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death**” (Rev. 21:8). (We’ll explore this second, *eternal* death later in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*.) and *we became totally depraved*. “What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, **THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE. THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING, THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS; WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS; THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, AND THE PATH OF PEACE HAVE THEY NOT KNOWN. THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES**” (Rom. 3:9–18). “Humans are born wholly, not partially, depraved; that is, every aspect of our being is affected by sin. No element of human nature is unaffected by inherited evil, even though no aspect is completely destroyed by it” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:146). “...the appalling wickedness of the unregenerated human heart” (McClain, *GK*, p. 508).

We became blind, lost and unable to seek God. We became spiritually blind. “Woe to you, **blind** guides, who say, “Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated.” You fools and **blind** men; which is more important, the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold” (Matt. 23:16-17)? “And the **light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it**” (John 1:5). “And this is the judgment, that the **light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light**; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God” (John 3:19-21). “I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not **remain in darkness**” (John 12:46). “to open their eyes so that they may turn from **darkness** to light and from **the dominion of Satan** to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18). “and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the **blind**, a light to those who are **in darkness**” (Rom. 2:19) “in whose case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**” (2 Cor. 4:4). “being **darkened in their understanding**, excluded from the life of God, because of the **ignorance** that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart” (Eph. 4:18) “for **you were formerly darkness**, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8) “And do not participate in the unfruitful **deeds of darkness**, but instead even expose them” (Eph. 5:11) “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the **world forces of this darkness**, against the **spiritual forces of wickedness** in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12). “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of **darkness** into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9) “Even the believer has no present power to discern his glorious position and security in the Father’s hand, apart from the assurance of the written Word. Much less, then, can the unbeliever come to realize his own position in the arms of Satan, when, under the direction of Satan, he gives no heed to the testimony of God” (Chafer, *S*, C3:25/29). “The unregenerate are, then, unconscious of their position in the arms of Satan, and blind in their thoughts toward the gospel of mercy and favor,—their only hope for time or eternity. Satan, like a fond mother, is bending over those in his arms, breathing into

their minds the quieting balm of a ‘universal fatherhood of God’ and a ‘universal brotherhood of man;’ suggesting their worthiness before God on the ground of their own moral character and physical generation; feeding their tendency to imitate the true faith by great humanitarian undertakings and schemes for the reformation of individuals and the betterment of the social order. God’s necessary requirements of regeneration are carefully set aside, and the blinded souls go on without hope, ‘having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart’ (Eph. 4:18). How important, as a preparation for salvation, is the illuminating work of the Spirit in conviction, by which He lifts the veil and opens the mind to a new vision of the redemption and glory that is in Christ! Without this God-given vision there can be no understanding of the way of life, nor any intelligent decision for Christ” (*ibid.*, 27/29). “Many are easily led to fix their attention upon the secondary things, and to neglect wholly the one primary thing; especially is this true since the secondary things are tangible and seen: while the one essential thing is spiritual and unseen; and Satan has blinded their eyes toward that which is of eternal value” (*ibid.*, C10:9/36). “...scriptures indicate that the sphere of darkness is ruled by evil angelic beings (Eph. 6:12) and that, as a result of being in that sphere, the understanding of the unsaved is darkened (Eph. 4:18). They do not understand ultimate reality and the true purpose of life and history; therefore, they are oblivious to the judgment that is coming, and they practice the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11)” (Showers, *M*, p. 200). We also became *lost*. ““But we had to be merry and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was **lost** and has been found”” (Luke 15:32). ““For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was **lost**”” (Luke 19:10). “No more misleading or injurious word can be given the unsaved than to impress upon them that they are lost only on the ground of their personal sins. If this be true, they are lost only to the degree to which they have thus sinned. Men are lost by nature— ‘by nature the children of wrath’ (Eph 2:3)—and there is deep significance, reaching far beyond the realms of personal wrongdoing, in the words of Christ, ‘Ye are of your father the devil’ (John 8:44)” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:220). And, we became *unable to seek God*. “There is none who understands, **There is none who seeks for God**” (Rom. 3:11) “Human will cannot, unmoved by divine grace, seek God” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:147).

We became enemies of God. We became alienated from God. “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for **in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**” (Gen. 2:17). “And the eyes of them both were opened, and **they knew that they were**

naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and **the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God** amongst the trees of the garden. And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and **I was afraid**, because I was naked; and **I hid myself**. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat” (Gen. 3:7-10)? **“Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look on perverseness,** wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he” (Hab. 1:13) “remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and **without God** in the world” (Eph. 2:12). *God became our enemy.* **“The world cannot hate you; but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil”** (John 7:7). “If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and **hated Me and My Father** as well. But they have done this in order that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their Law, **“THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE”**” (John 15:24–25). “And just as **they did not see fit to acknowledge God** any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, **haters of God**, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them” (Rom. 1:28-32). “as it is written, “There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, **There is none who seeks for God;** All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one. Their throat is an open grave, With their tongues they keep deceiving, The poison of asps is under their lips; Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; Their feet are swift to shed blood, Destruction and misery are in their paths, And the path of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:10-18). *We became enemies of God.* “And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being

filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and, although they know the ordinance of God, that **those who practice such things are worthy of death**, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them” (Rom. 1:28-32). “For if while **we were enemies**, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation” (Rom. 5:10-11). “Among them **we** too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest**” (Eph. 2:3). “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself **an enemy of God**” (James 4:4). “Sin not merely alienated man from God, it alienated God from man. A just and holy God could not but regard him as an enemy. But ‘while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son’” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 112). In other words, *the enmity is mutual*. We became *condemned by God*. “He who believes in Him is not judged; **he who does not believe has been judged already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And **this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil**” (John 3:18–19). “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but **he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him**” (John 3:36). “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but **he who has disbelieved shall be condemned**” (Mark 16:16) “So then as **through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men**, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (Rom. 5:18). “But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be **condemned along with the world**” (1 Cor. 11:32). “they are individually under condemnation before God (Jno. 3:18); their borrowed interest in morality and charity being a poor commendation, in view of their fallen and Christ-rejecting attitude before God” (Chafer, *S*, C4:14/31).

We lost our stature and inheritance. We lost our stature as the representatives of God on earth. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the

fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food: and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so” (Gen. 1:26-30). “therefore **Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden**, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So **he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life**” (Gen. 3:23-24). “What is **man**, that thou art mindful of him? And **the son of man**, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than God, And crownest him with glory and honor. **Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet:** All sheep and oxen, Yea, and the beasts of the field, The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas” (Ps. 8:4-8). “And he led Him up and showed Him **all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time. And **the devil** said to Him, ‘I will give You **all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me**, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours” (Luke 4:5-7). “But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘What is **man**, that Thou rememberest him? Or **the son of man**, that Thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, And hast **appointed him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.**’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. **But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him**” (Heb. 2:6-8). “This dominion was, in a great measure, lost, and that man, shorn of his power, could no longer act as the representation of God” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:572). *We lost our inheritance of tenant possession of the earth to Satan.* “And he led Him up and showed Him **all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time. And **the devil** said

to Him, ‘I will give You **all this domain and its glory**; for **it has been handed over to me**, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours” (Luke 4:5–7). “Now judgment is upon this world; now **the ruler of this world** shall be cast out” (John 12:31). “I will not speak much more with you, for **the ruler of the world** is coming, and he has nothing in Me” (John 14:30) “and concerning judgment, because **the ruler of this world** has been judged” (John 16:11). “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:3-4). “in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to **the prince of the power of the air**, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). “For our struggle is **not** against **flesh and blood**, but against **the rulers**, against **the powers**, against **the world forces of this darkness**, against **the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places**” (Eph. 6:12). “We know that we are of God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one**” (1 John. 5:19). “Adam’s scepter of authority and dominion (Gen. 1:26-28) was evidently surrendered to Satan to some extent and has been held by Satan by right of conquest” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:323). “Satan usurped the tenant possession of the earth and has continued to rule the world system ever since mankind’s fall” (Showers, *M*, p. 97). “Satan... As a result of Adam’s Fall, he is now the prince of this world (Jn. 12:31), the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4), and the prince of the kingdom of this world and can offer them to whomever he wills (Lk. 4:5-7)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 557). We’ll have more to say regarding mankind’s loss of his inheritance of tenant possession of the earth to Satan in our next chapter *A Kingdom is Needed* and in the *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.

The earth was cursed. “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground** for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life” (Gen. 3:17) “and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh because of **the ground which Jehovah hath cursed**” (Gen. 5:29). “For **the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it**, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:20–21).

God's purposes for human the race were delayed. "...the eternal purposes of God respecting the race, for a time ('a moment') delayed by the fall of man" (Peters, TTK, 2:544)

Chapter 8: A Kingdom Needed

In light of the things we discussed in the previous chapter, it should be evident that if humanity is ever to recover from the consequences of the Fall, it is going to take a major and multi-faceted operation. A comprehensive Kingdom program is needed.

A Kingdom is Needed To Do What Only God Can Do

The fall resulted in dire and far-reaching consequences, consequences involving such diverse and intractable things as sin and death, Satan, nature, and government of the world. If God's Kingdom is to comprehensively and effectively deal with all the problems existing in all these areas, it is obviously going to have to be a Kingdom whose objectives and abilities are far beyond those of mortal men. It is this writer's conviction that we are, both as individuals and as a race, doomed to failure, as Scripture plainly states (John 6:53, Matt. 24:22), without God's direct and supernatural intervention. For us to ignore and/or reject God's graciously revealed Plan, therefore, in favor of our own grossly inadequate personal, societal and global schemes, would reveal our blindness and foolishness in these matters. "...just as if man can be his own deliverer, while the Deliverer provided by a merciful God is studiously ignored" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:157). "No amount of enlightened sentiment can establish a kingdom without a king; and no universal blessedness can be experienced in this world until the enemy is dethroned and banished. Sadly has the world failed to include these two necessary Divine movements, in its vain dream and godless attempt at a perfected universe" (Chafer, *S*, C2:22/37)! "We need to be taught again and again that our fallen human nature deeply resents the truth that there are some things wholly beyond our power to do, and which only God can supernaturally accomplish. Men may indeed *improve* themselves and society in many ways; but just as the regeneration of the human soul is a miracle from above, so also is the regeneration of society" (McClain, *GK*, p. 505). Indeed, genuine regeneration of ourselves and society is beyond our abilities; a Kingdom is needed to do what only God can do.

A Kingdom is Needed To Accomplish God's Plan

The more we correctly identify and understand the purposes of the biblical Kingdom of God, the more apparent it becomes that this Kingdom must of necessity be God's undertaking, not man's. This will be seen as we outline in this chapter the major objectives of the Kingdom of God as they relate to sin, Satan, individuals, mankind as a group, creation, all created

beings, and even God Himself. “The design of previous dispensations, the orderings of Providence, the probation of saints, the longsuffering and patience of God, the permission of evil—in brief, all that has preceded, will find their *solution* in the incoming Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:144). “It is in this Kingdom that the Father’s eternal purpose in the incarnate Son shall be certainly and completely fulfilled” (McClain, *GK*, p. 5).

In Relation to Sin

In relation to sin, God’s Kingdom is needed to execute justice, defeat evil and right all wrongs.

The Kingdom is needed to *execute justice*. “Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon **his kingdom**, to establish it, and to **uphold it with justice** and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:7). “That there is *present* injustice does not mean that there will be *ultimate* injustice. The biblical theist notes that the story is not over yet; a day of ultimate justice is coming (Rev 20). If God is all-powerful, then He can overcome all injustice, and if He is all-just, He *will* overcome it. If He is all-perfect, God has the desire to overcome all evil, and if He is all-powerful, He can do it. One day He will” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:351).

The Kingdom is also needed to *defeat evil* (and its manifestation, sin). “**Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth** as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but **deliver us from evil**. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen” (Matt. 6:10-13). “**having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross**” (Col. 2:14). “Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested **to put away sin** by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26). “...evil is temporary ...God will ultimately remove and destroy it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:84). “The manifestation of a visible Theocratic ordering is alone capable of crushing sin and removing it from the world” (*ibid.*, p. 107). “the transient nature of evil... sin, so far as the race is concerned, is only temporary, and that its dominion under the Theocratic rule will be forever crushed... sin itself will finally be put down by a terrible exhibition of supernatural power and vengeance” (*ibid.*, 3:435). “This Kingdom teaches us in its astonishing Theocratic arrangements (e.g. in the gathering and association of the saints as joint rulers, etc.) that sin and its consequent evils in

the world will only be endured until a sufficiency of moral and religious power (in the persons of the elect) is gathered out to insure an overwhelming, triumphant, and perpetual ascendancy of a pure Theocratic government over all the earth, and then sin and evil are doomed to descend from their ascendancy and forever perish. Looking at the world's history, not disconnectedly (as at the separate, detached parts of a machine), but connectively, and especially at the grand end to which it is destined under a pure, powerful, beneficent Theocratic rule by 'the man ordained' through 'the Father of mercies'—then instead of having a world like that described by Carlyle (*Latter-Day Pamphlets*) sinking to ruin and satisfied with the hopeless mockeries of government and religion; or, like that represented by Fronde (*The English in Ireland*, vol. 3, p. 1-4), constantly passing through 'the long toil of reconstruction,' ever repeated, we have a world redeemed, freed from the curse, and restored to more than its former Paradisaical state" (*ibid.*). "The problem of relief from the immeasurable tragedy of sin is never solved by minimizing any aspect of sin; it is solved by discovering a Savior whose salvation is equal to every need for time and eternity" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:324). "An all-good God *will* defeat evil, and an all-powerful God *can* defeat evil" (Geisler, p. 560). "God chose not to annihilate sin but rather to defeat it. He chose to defeat it progressively instead of instantaneously. There are many possible reasons for this, but two prominent ones involve (1) the freedom God gave to humans and (2) God's desire to produce a more godlike (godly) product in the process. Defeating evil without destroying freedom, while at the same time perfecting free creatures—this appears to be at the heart of God's plan" (*ibid.*, 3:152). "God's great plan culminates in the total defeat of evil. Evil was vanquished officially at the Cross (Col. 2:14; Heb. 2:14) and will be defeated actually at Christ's return" (*ibid.*, p. 172). "We see, then, that the official defeat of sin came at the First Advent; the actual defeat will be at the Second Coming... Justification (deliverance from the *penalty* of sin)... Sanctification (deliverance from the *power* of sin)... Glorification (deliverance from the *presence* of sin)" (*ibid.*, p. 173) "We speak of the defeat, not the destruction, of sin, because sin, in the sinner, will continue forever in hell. Even so, God will defeat sin without destroying the sinner... It does not mean that God will annihilate sinners. This would be to attack His own immortal image, which all sinners, even those in hell, still bear... Further, the annihilation of all sinners would not be punishment, since those who do not exist cannot feel any pain... Finally, it is contrary to the nature of an all-loving God to snuff out people who do not love Him in return. Rather, in His infinite love, God will allow even those who hate Him to 'have it their

way” (*ibid.*). We’ll have more to say on this subject in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*.

And, the Kingdom is needed to *right all wrongs*. “Celsus, Voltaire, and a host of unbelievers, with assumed righteous indignation, insist that David having alone sinned in numbering the people, it was unjust that the innocent people should have suffered the punishment due to him. So also it is said, that taking Uriah’s wife, the innocent husband perished, and David enjoyed his spoil. But let it be noticed: The end is not yet: the future destiny of those innocent ones will, in the coming Kingdom, make ample amends for their misfortune” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:235). “This life is only a preparation for the next, where *all* inequities here will be rectified” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:593).

In Relation to Satan

In relation to *Satan*, God’s Kingdom is needed to defeat Satan and to destroy his works.

The Kingdom is needed to *defeat Satan*. Satan (temporarily) defeated man; it is only appropriate that man (the Second Adam) should defeat Satan. “And I will put enmity Between you and **the woman**, And between your seed and **her seed; He shall bruise you on the head**, And you shall bruise him on the heel” (Gen. 3:15). “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim **liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound**” (Isa. 61:1) “**Thy kingdom come**. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but **deliver us from the evil one**” (Matt. 6:10–11, ASV) “Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first **binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house**” (Matt. 12:29). “And He [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, ‘THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM **RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES**, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.’ And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him” (Luke 4:16–21). “And the **God** of peace **will**

soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you” (Rom. 16:20). “in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to **the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience**” (Eph. 2:2). “Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might **render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil**” (Heb. 2:14) “And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And **the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.** Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘**Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down,** he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because **the devil** has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that **he has only a short time**” (Rev. 12:7-12). “Then I saw **an angel** coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And **he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed;** after these things he must be released for a short time” (Rev. 20:1-3). “And **the devil** who deceived them **was thrown into the lake of fire** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; **and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**” (Rev. 20:10). “It would seem, therefore, that the basis of Satan’s dominion over humanity was largely the fact that they were not eligible to any higher relationship. On this basis, had God approached any fallen human beings, Satan would have pleaded God’s own holiness as the reason why God should not so act. Satan is committed to his infernal philosophy and to the defense of those who have embraced it. At least he will not surrender them apart from the most drastic resistance within his power. As long as man’s unholiness was not yet taken to the cross, the conflict was largely in Satan’s favor. In Isaiah 14:17 it is

written of Satan that ‘he opened not the house of his prisoners.’ This statement is illuminating. However, when referring to what Christ would do by His sacrifice, the same prophet goes on to say that Christ would come ‘to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound (Isa. 61:1; cf. Luke 4:16-21)” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:56). “These prisoners are not only bondslaves to sin, but are in bondage to the evil one. He it is who energizes all the sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2 [in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to **the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.**])” (*ibid.*, p. 57). “The ground upon which Satan has held his authority over fallen men was the fact that divine condemnation rests upon them because of sin” (*ibid.*, 6:98). “‘Deliver us from the evil one’ (Matt. 6:10, 13, ASV). At the coming of our Lord these petitions will be answered, not only in part, but fully” (McClain, *GK*, p. 482). “It is quite significant that many of Christ’s miracles were performed in the demonic realm, proving His authority over Satan” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 203). “The Savior would be the Seed of the woman, and He would ultimately—fatally—crush the serpent’s head. This Christ did officially on the Cross (Col. 2:14) and will do actually when He returns (Rom. 16:20; Rev. 20:10)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:165). “While the serpent bit the Savior’s heel, Christ crushed the devil’s head. The defeat of sin has not been swift and immediate, but it will be complete and final” (*ibid.*, p. 178). “God’s infinite wisdom is so great that the devil was trapped by it” (*ibid.*, 4:34).

And, the Kingdom is needed to *destroy Satan’s works*. “the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. **The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil**” (1 John. 3:8). “We may urge even the eminent fitness of Christ, the Second Adam, manifesting Himself personally in the very place where Satan obtained his triumphs over the first Adam, at the very time that Satan is bound and his work of deception is stayed. Where man fell, there the triumph of man, the woman’s seed, is also to be exhibited; and if so, it involves a personal Coming at the period of the Millennium” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:182). “Man and his redemption, the restoration of the world to an Edenic condition, are in a remarkable manner the object of Satanic hate” (*ibid.*, 3:188). “The work of Jesus, which is to ‘destroy the works of the devil’ (1 John 3:8), is only partially performed... the works of Satan still exist; and he is the god of this world; the saints even fall under the power of the enemy death and are not delivered from the grave” (*ibid.*, p. 454)

In Relation to Individuals

In relation to *individuals*, the Kingdom is needed to reconcile men to God, save them from sin and death, and meet the deepest desires of their hearts.

The Kingdom is needed to *reconcile men to God*. “For if while we were enemies, **we were reconciled to God** through the death of His Son, much more, **having been reconciled**, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom **we have now received the reconciliation**” (Rom. 5:10-11). “For if their rejection be the **reconciliation of the world**, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead” (Rom. 11:15)? “Now all these things are from **God, who reconciled us to Himself** through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that **God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself**, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18-20) “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, **be reconciled to God**” (2 Cor. 5:20). “For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might **reconcile them** both in one body **to God** through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity” (Eph. 2:14-16). “and through Him to **reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace** through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven” (Col. 1:20). “yet **He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body** through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach —” (Col. 1:22)

The Kingdom is needed to *save men from sin and death*. “And if any-one hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for **I did not come** to judge the world, but **to save the world**” (John 12:47). “**The last enemy that will be abolished is death**” (1 Cor. 15:26). “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, among whom I am foremost of all” (1 Tim. 1:15). “and might **deliver** those who through fear of **death** were subject to slavery all their lives” (Heb. 2:15). “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; I [Jesus] am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and **I have the keys of death and of Hades**’” (Rev. 1:17-18).

And the Kingdom is needed to *meet the deepest desires of men's hearts*. Peters observes, "There is an undercurrent of sadness, of utter hopelessness, that appeals to our hearts in the writings of some unbelievers... Even such, however, endeavor (as e.g. Hennell in *An inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity*) to comfort themselves by 'indulging the thought that a time is appointed when the cravings of the heart and of the intellect will be satisfied, and the enigma of our own and the world's existence be solved'... philosophy teaches the sad fact that existence is a curse; that man is deluded by false hopes to cling to that existence; that such hopes prompted by instincts are a blessing in that they finally, through progress, reveal the utter misery of his state; that the highest desire is to wish for the annihilation of self and others... the creation of the world and its races, its evils and antagonisms, its fearful experiences from nature and man, its repeated stages and changes involving terrible suffering, etc., would form an inexplicable mystery if it were not for the light of the Bible, presenting a connected and sustained redemptive scheme, holding forth a definite and magnificent end worthy of such a Creator and creation. Contemplating not merely the preparatory stages in their ascending scale, but the great End which brings praise, honor, and glory to God and His Christ, we find the key—which philosophy and reason outside of this can never obtain—to the world's sad history" (*TTK*, 3:441). "No man can read the descriptions pertaining to this Kingdom without, if honest, frankly admitting that there is no phase of imperfection, suffering, and evil which it does not propose to remove, and that there is no blessing which the heart of man has longed for both for himself and society which it does not intend to bestow" (*ibid.*, p. 475).

In Relation to Mankind

In relation to *mankind*, the Kingdom is needed to judge, redeem, save, repair, restore, govern and bless mankind, in short, to accomplish God's original purpose in creating man.

The Kingdom is needed to *judge the world*. "because **He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world** in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). We'll have more to say regarding the various judgments of humanity in our chapters *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*, *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *The Lake of Fire*.

The Kingdom is needed to *save mankind*. God's purpose is to *save* this fallen world, not to abandon it. "And **unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect**

those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:22). “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a **salvation ready to be revealed in the last time**. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor **at the revelation of Jesus Christ**; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith **the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you** made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and **the glories to follow**. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look. Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”** (1 Pet. 1:3–13). “Let us remind the reader how this doctrine of ours most effectively meets the objection urged against Christianity, that it has nothing to do with man as a race, but with man as an individual” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:536). “The Kingdom of the Messiah and salvation were in the Jewish mind convertible terms; and it needs no reflection to show how appropriate the term is, seeing that it was employed by the prophets to designate the deliverance from all evil and the bestowment of all blessings in this Kingdom. The term ‘salvation,’ correctly apprehended by the primitive Church, was from Origen’s time applied too much to the present life and to the intermediate state... this salvation the apostles declared—whatever the earnest might be in the present or intermediate—to be still future” (*ibid.*, 3:449). “It is saddening to see the modern conceptions of ‘salvation,’ and to observe how intelligent men, in order to exalt them, decry the ancient views—although sustained by the plain grammatical sense—as ‘carnal.’ What a contrast exists between the present prevailing spiritualistic, indefinite belief and the one based on the oath-bound covenants! If we even venture to call attention to this antagonism, and to question the modern faith, multitudes

are ready to designate our course as 'heretical,' if not something worse. Alas! What an astonishing change, when 'the Christ,' 'the Kingdom,' and even 'salvation' itself are transformed from their covenanted and predicted meaning. The most selfish and mystical conceptions are adopted in preference to the simple truth" (*ibid.*, p. 450). "Whatever we now receive from 'the Gospel of salvation,' it is only 'the earnest' of the distinguishing salvation—the specific salvation—held forth by the covenant and promises... in this life, subject still to trial, suffering, death, etc., the saint is not delivered, and surely in the intermediate state, whatever it may be, with the body in the grave, the nonfulfillment of covenant promises, the postponement of the reign on earth, etc., the saint is not enjoying the predicted inheritance, crown, reward, etc., only to be given at the Sec. Advent... 'heirs of salvation.' The great, the emphatic salvation is then still future, and hence, the work of Christ, is not yet completed. The solid foundation is indeed laid, the preparatory work is progressing, but the time for the perfect realization of salvation has not yet arrived" (*ibid.*). "This most effectually sets aside those extravagant eulogies of the present and of the intermediate state, so loudly proclaimed by numerous writers. Whatever these may bestow upon us, they are only the earnest of the great salvation, and it is a disparagement of the Sec. Advent and its results to disconnect and transpose that which the Spirit has joined together. To elevate the preparatory to completion, to exalt the initiatory to consummation, to substitute human hopes and expectations for the express promises of the Scriptures is unwise and derogatory to the Word. Salvation includes far more than moral and bodily regeneration, for it embraces the covenanted Kingdom of God, the inheritance of David's Son, the joint-heirship and reign with the Christ, the restoration of the Jewish nation and its Theocratic exaltation, the willing subjection of the nations, the renewal of creation, the blessings, honor, and glory of the ages to come. This is a salvation indeed, far-reaching and wide-sweeping, commensurate with the necessities and happiness of the individual, the elect nation, the Gentile nations, the race and the world" (*ibid.*, p. 451). "Peter (1 Pet. 1:3-13) declaring, that those who are saved 'are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,' and after asserting that this salvation still future is identical with that prophesied by the prophets, in the most positive manner (vs. 7 and 13) teaches that it will only be realized 'at the appearing of Jesus Christ,' and 'at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' Surely this ought to be decisive of the matter" (*ibid.*, p. 452). "Surely such plain and emphatic Scripture [1 Pet. 1:3-13] as has been thus presented ought to sweep out of existence that abundance of religious literature—so darkening to the truth and so deadly to a proper appreciation of

‘the blessed hope’—which makes ‘the salvation’ so complete in this life and after death that it practically reduces such passages to no special value and preciousness. To make the earnest equivalent to the glory, and to elevate death into the place of ‘the Christ’ coming unto salvation, renders its believer incapable of a correct apprehension of the Divine Purpose in ‘salvation,’ or to appreciate even what the Scriptures mean by ‘salvation’” (*ibid.*). “Taking even such a brief survey of the prophets, seeing how the apostles united their fulfillment with the future Advent of King Jesus, surely the early Church was consistent and logical when it thus received and understood ‘salvation,’ and looked for Jesus to come and finish the work so happily begun” (*ibid.*, p. 453). “The Kingdom of the Son of Man is alone the hope of the world” (*ibid.*, p. 549). We’ll have more to say on the eschatological aspects of salvation in our chapters *The Rapture of the Church* and *The Second Coming of the King*.

The Kingdom is needed to *repair the damage done by Adam’s fall*. “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of **Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come**” (Rom. 5:14). “For **as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive**” (1 Cor. 15:22). “So also it is written, ‘**The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.**’ The **last Adam became a life-giving spirit**” (1 Cor. 15:45). “And **there shall no longer be any curse**; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him” (Rev. 22:3) “...become co-heirs with Jesus in the restoration of the forfeited dominion of Adam” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:368) “...the period when humanity... is fully restored to the blessings forfeited by the fall” (*ibid.*, p. 572). “... ‘the renovated earth’ is ‘the ultimate inheritance of the heirs of salvation’” (*ibid.*, p. 573) “This dominion, here on earth, will be exerted by Jesus, the Man, through the re-establishment of the Theocratic ordering... The saints, made like unto Christ and associated with Him in His power, largely participate in it, all nature being brought into subjection to them. Thus the Scriptures will be amply fulfilled” (*ibid.*, p. 574). “...if the Millennial predictions lacked this materialistic feature, a very important and essential one would be missing in Redemption. Is it not true, that the materialistic Eden was forfeited by sin, that man, composed of soul, spirit, and body, is fallen under the curse, that a material creation groans under the same; and is it not also true that if there is no deliverance of this material portion, Redemption in so far is incomplete” (*ibid.*, 2:145)? “Let us keep in view that there is a ‘restitution of all things’ promised, and that this embraces a restoration to all forfeited blessings” (*ibid.*, p. 146). “The Bible... beginning with the fall of man and revealing the manner of

man's recovery from the results of such a fall, it ends appropriately with a restoration of the forfeited blessings" (*ibid.*, p. 150). "Brookes (*Maranatha*, p. 214) exhibits a cardinal doctrine of Millenarianism as follows: 'All the departments of nature, involved in the consequences of the first man's shameful defeat, must exhibit the fruits of the second man's magnificent victory'" (*ibid.*, p. 488).

The Kingdom is also needed to *repair the damage done by sin*. "The entire removal of sin, of which an 'earnest' is given, may, and indeed does, include the destruction of the sad results of sin, but the latter is affected only at the Sec. Advent and not previously" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:459).

The Kingdom is needed to *elevate man to his originally-intended dignity*. "This dominion, promised, predicted and restored, is corroborative of the Biblical account of man's noble origin and high destiny, forming quite a contrast to the ignoble theories of recent scientists... efforts that are so persistently made by able men to degrade the origin of man to the lowest scale" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:575) "it is the design of Redemption to ennoble whatsoever it touches" (*ibid.*, 2:470).

The Kingdom is needed to *enable man to represent God, as originally intended*. "This Second Adam thus stands forth in our system a revealed representative of God, such as the first Adam was designed to become had he not fallen" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:349).

The Kingdom is needed to *restore man's dominion over the earth*. "And God said, Let us make **man** in our image, after our likeness: and **let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth**. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:26-27). "What is **man**, that thou art mindful of him? And **the son of man**, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than God, And crownest him with glory and honor. **Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, Yea, and the beasts of the field, The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea**, Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas" (Ps. 8:4-8). "For **He did not subject to angels the world to come**, concerning which we are speaking. **But** one has testified somewhere, saying, 'WHAT IS **MAN**, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR **THE SON OF MAN**, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR,

AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.’ For in **subjecting all things to him**, He left nothing that is not subject to him. **But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him**” (Heb. 2:5–8). “...an actual, real restoration of the dominion forfeited, through the Messiah, and not some other dominion in the third heaven or universe substituted in its place. The forfeiture and the restoration must, logically and Scripturally, refer to the same” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:573). “...a reign in the third heaven... religious literature is full of such erroneous conclusions” (*ibid.*). “Man, during the past ages, has sought to recover this dominion unaided and through his own power, and the Word represents it as a struggling of ‘beasts’ [i.e. in Daniel and Revelation—*ed.*] for sovereignty, resulting in a mutual rending and destruction” (*ibid.*, p. 574). “Writers abundantly admit that this dominion would have been witnessed here on earth if Adam had not fallen, but somehow they overlook the fact, that as the Redeemer is given to recover us from all the effects of the fall, it must, under the auspices of the restoring Second Adam, again be witnessed on earth when Redemption is completed” (*ibid.*, p. 575). “...when the Theocracy is restored under a people and power capable of sustaining it” (*ibid.*, 2:453). “It was God’s intent from the beginning of the creation of man that the earth should be ruled over by man. Adam sacrificed his right to rule when sin entered the human race. God’s purpose, however, is fulfilled in Jesus Christ” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 301). “‘You made him ruler over the works of Your hands.’ [Ps. 8:4–8, Heb. 2:5–8]... But this same writer knew he must also make the observation, ‘Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.’ The earth and everything in it is not in subjection to man, nor by implication, in subjection to God Himself. This means God’s purpose for Creation has not yet been realized, and that the kingdom of the God of heaven has not yet been established on this earth as God intended it should be. However, even though that kingdom has not yet been realized, God’s purpose for the earth *must* come to its designated fulfillment. Otherwise Satan will have gained a permanent victory by dispossessing God of His authority, of His right to rule, and of His right to be worshiped” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 34). “God’s purpose for this earth is to subject all things to man (Gen. 1:26–27) and to bring all things into subjection to Himself through man. This ultimately will be realized as the Son of Man subjects all things to Himself and through Him to the authority of His Father” (*ibid.*, p. 316).

The Kingdom is needed to *govern the world perfectly*. **“When the righteous are increased, the people rejoice; But when a wicked**

man beareth rule, the people sigh” (Prov. 29:2). “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and **the government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of **his government** and of peace there shall be no end, upon **the throne of David**, and upon **his kingdom**, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6–7). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever’**” (Rev. 11:15). “...the kingdom... its very design, which is the salvation of the race in bringing to it the government, etc., that it needs” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:535). “If the Kingdom of the Son of Man, as covenanted, is not established, then the earth will lack in its history the exhibition of a perfect government” (*ibid.*, 3:548). “The reign of this Son of Man strictly in accordance with the covenant, and the union of the saints with Him in such a rule, will alone satisfy the cravings of humanity for a strong and most blessed government, which shall break down forever the opposing, clashing interests of nations, dispel their jealousies, and unite them, freed from evils, under one common, visible, and accessible Head. Then humanity, both in Christ and His saints, exalted and placed beyond the evils inherent in the present life, still sympathetic and desirous to bless, will proceed to the work of elevating man, not merely in his individual, but likewise in his social, national, and universal life” (*ibid.*, p. 549). “How unreasonable it is to suppose, that he who made the world, should leave things in such confusion, and never take any care of the governing of his creatures, and that he should never judge his reasonable creatures” [quoting Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 2.884] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:356). We’ll have more to say on the governmental aspects of the Kingdom in our chapters *The Second Coming of the King* and *The Millennial Kingdom*.

The Kingdom is needed to *bless and elevate mankind to an unprecedented extent*. “While the view of restitution, embracing the restoration of the Theocracy and the return to the condition of things before the fall of Adam; is consoling and grand, yet even this would limit its meaning, for a more sublime and scriptural aspect of it is, that, while including those mentioned, it is a restoration to that very condition which Adam and his descendants would have attained to had they not fallen... blessings previously enjoyed, but that of others superadded to qualify those participating in it for the exercise of that government which the number, state, etc., of Adam’s

descendants and God's purpose in creation makes important or even necessary. Hence in some of its aspects, transcending all experience and knowledge, it may be beyond our comprehension; at least, the Bible intimates in a number of places that it is scarcely possible for us now, situated as we are, to form adequate conceptions of its extent and glory" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:467). "When this Theocracy is realized we shall receive far higher blessings than we even forfeited at the fall" (*ibid.*, 3:600).

The Kingdom is needed to *accomplish God's original purpose in creating man*. "Now let the reader consider: 1. What would this earth have become if Adam had not fallen? The answer, as given by Scripture and repeated in various theological systems, is this: it would have had no curse entailed, bringing in its train unfruitfulness, evils, sorrow, and death. It would have had the world under a Theocratic ordering, by which man would have been elevated and blessed, having direct nearness to his beneficent Ruler, etc. 2. Now look at the Millennial blessings enumerated, to be realized here on earth during the Messianic reign in the restored Theocratic Kingdom, and is there a single blessing that we can conceive of as intended for man unfallen, and which was forfeited by sin, that is not mentioned to be then realized? If the Millennium embraces 'Redemption,' 'Salvation,' and the Messiah is One that can perform His work perfectly, this is precisely the condition that we ought reasonably to anticipate. The very fact that the Millennium itself contains such inestimable blessings, honor, and glory, such a revelation of Divine majesty and goodness, such an ample deliverance from all evil and even death, such a restoration to God's favor and nearness in Theocratic ordering, is sufficient evidence that our doctrinal position is impregnable. The unity of the Word, running from the fall to the Sec. Advent, demands, prompted by covenants and promise, impelled by the plain grammatical and God-given sense, this belief, so dear to the hearts of the martyrs of the early Church" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:150). "...if the earth is destroyed, as many hold, soon after that Advent, there is no place for the fulfillment of covenant or covenant promises. More than this: it gives, so far as this earth is concerned, the victory to Satan; for, if the curse is not repealed; if evil is not extirpated; if the forfeited blessings are not restored; if man's long lost home is not given back to him in its Edenic loveliness; if the race is not brought back to its original condition and dwelling in a purified earth, then Satan triumphs in the ruin accomplished, just as he would triumph if the grave should evermore hold our bodies in confinement; just as he would gain the victory if our hearts would never more exultantly swell with love supreme to God" (*ibid.*, p. 433). "The command of God given to Adam and Eve before the fall to fill the earth with a holy progeny, but sadly marred by

the corruption entailed by sin, will yet be fulfilled in their descendants, since His Divine pleasure respecting the real status of the race is evidenced in the injunction, and his Divine purpose, thus indicated, cannot be frustrated by man's fall. The interrupted design of making the race itself holy God will yet carry out, and not leave Satan glory in a defeat" (*ibid.*, p. 535). "One of the forfeited blessings, viz., the perpetuation of the race in a state of innocence, cannot possibly be carried out without such a restoration embracing also blessings to Gentile nations, to creation, etc." (*ibid.*, 3:369). "we have man and the earth restored to the goal originally intended" (*ibid.*, p. 555). "In spite of man's failure, God *will* accomplish His purpose in creating man" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 48).

In Relation to Creation

In relation to *creation*, the Kingdom is needed to restore creation and to make the world worth having been created.

The Kingdom is needed to *restore harmony between God and creation*. "Now the kingdom being designed to restore and manifest the original concord once existing between the natural and supernatural, the Bible closes with that kingdom *in such accordance*" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:80).

The Kingdom is needed to *restore God's blessing on creation*, this blessing entailing the *removal of the curse*. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground** for thy sake; **in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life**" (Gen. 3:17) "For **the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God**" (Rom. 8:20–21). "And **there shall no longer be any curse**; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him" (Rev. 22:3) "The kingdom—the end—is designed to remove the curse from man and nature, and to impart the most extraordinary blessings to renewed man and nature" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:90) "Briefly, this world is under a curse—evil abounds with the good—it forms one vast cemetery with its crushed hopes, blasted life, dust-returned bodies, etc., and all this goes on under natural law instituted by God. The world needs restoration, and the Bible starts with this idea, a fallen world needing Redemption, and it ends with a fallen world Redeemed. The kingdom of God is designed to secure this deliverance, but to do this it must necessarily embrace a Supernatural interference, as predicted. It was God that entailed the curse, set its limits, en-

forced it by natural law, and it must be God again who removes the same; but when He does this we are told that He breaks down the barriers set up by Himself through natural law” (*ibid.*, p. 95). “The natural man feels the sad pressure of the curse and looks around for redemption, and as he cannot have hope in nature, he grasps after the supernatural... The truth is, that there are times when all men feel the necessity of Divine interposition in behalf of the race” (*ibid.*, 2:156). “Through Him [Christ], and subordinately through His associates (deriving their power from Him), this most blessed removal of the curse will at last be experienced” (*ibid.*, p. 157). “The ‘no more curse,’ as all inspired men unitedly agree, refers to this earth, and to man upon it; and hence the singular beauty and consistency of the Bible beginning with the curse and forfeited blessings and ending with happy restitution” (*ibid.*). “...a curse, a bondage which man, with all the resources of nature, religion, etc., is utterly unable to remove... even the most pious and devoted servants of God experience, with tears and sorrow, its continued and prevailing force” (*ibid.*, p. 493). “...the gradual removal of the curse from the earth” (*ibid.*, 3:600) We’ll have more to say on the restoration of God’s blessing on creation in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.

The Kingdom is needed to *restore the earth and nature*. “For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that **the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption** into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:20–21). “No system of Theology is completed, without, in one form or another, advocating a final restoration of nature” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:480). “If for man’s sake alone the earth was cursed, it cannot surprise us that it should share in his recovery” (*ibid.*). “...whether Paul’s declaration and the Mill. prophecies, etc., include the deliverance of the animal kingdom. This, as is well known, was the position of the early Church, as is evidenced by their writings, especially Tertullian, Lactantius, and the earlier Fathers Papias, Barnabas, and Justin” (*ibid.*, p. 483). “If the Ark is to be taken as a type of Christ (which many theologians allow and assert), then as the animals were taken in it and preserved (as well as man), so likewise, in reference to perpetuity, will animals find deliverance through Christ, for otherwise the typical nature is not carried to its related extent in the anti-type” (*ibid.*, p. 487). “A substitution of something else is not Paradise restored. Hence the Bible begins with an earthly Paradise lost, and ends with the same restored with added blessings” (*ibid.*, 3:61). “In this reign we have the earthly brought up to the level of the heavenly, so that God’s will is done on earth as in heaven, and the world, redeemed from the torturing power of the curse, exults in more than Paradisaical blessings” (*ibid.*, p.

555). We'll have more to say regarding the restoration of earth and nature in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.

The Kingdom is needed to *restore all that Adam forfeited*. “It is eminently proper and requisite that in the person of Christ, through whom the race is to be redeemed, should be shown, as that Second Adam, the complete restoration of all that the first Adam forfeited; among others, including the restoration and retention of the forfeited inheritance (which led to those covenant promises that Christ should inherit the land, etc.), the restoration and retention of the dominion or kingly power, which was forfeited as well as moral rectitude, the immortality of man, and the perpetuation of the race in a state of innocency and purity” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:348). “We are sinners, the Plan makes us holy; we lose our bodies by death, the Plan recovers them again; we lost Eden, the Plan restores it again; we lost the personal Presence of God, this Plan recovers that soul-satisfying Presence when God again dwells with man; we lost the contemplated visible Theocratic rule of God, this Plan makes, in the sacred Person of Jesus Christ, the most ample amends in filling the earth with His sovereignty, etc. Thus, in brief, every blessing with the removal of every evil, is linked with the culmination of this Divine Plan” (*ibid.*, p. 434). “In this dispensation, whatever the love and grace of God in the hearts of believers, etc., it cannot remove the curse, renovate the earth, or restore a single forfeited blessing; it cannot save from pain, sickness, or death, from trial, sorrow, or bereavements; it cannot deliver self or our neighbor from the troubles incident and allotted to the present life” (*ibid.*, p. 468).

The Kingdom is needed to *make the world worth having been created*. “That evil existed in the foreknowledge of God is proved by those Scriptures which indicate that redemption was eternally in the mind and purpose of God, and none more forcibly than Revelation 13:8 wherein it is published that Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the cosmos. Whenever the cosmos had its inception—even in the form of a divine anticipation—a redeeming Lamb was a major feature of the divine intention. May it not be better said that, apart from the achievements of the redeeming Lamb, no cosmos would have been permitted? Is it not true that this universe, so vast indeed, is redempto-centric” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:237)?

In Relation to All Created Beings

In relation to *all created beings*, the Kingdom is needed to *demonstrate to everyone that sin is always wrong*, (In our chapter *A Final Rebellion*, we'll review all seven dispensations and demonstrate from human history that at all times and in every conceivable way, sin is always wrong and

that at all times man apart from God is a failure.) that *man, apart from God, even in a perfect environment is a failure*, “The complete immobilization of Satan for a thousand years, therefore, will lay the basis for God’s final argument against the popular doctrine of the inherent goodness of man when placed in the right kind of environment” (McClain, *GK*, p. 483). that *God is always right*, “By the establishment of the theocracy on earth for a thousand years, under the Messianic theocratic King, God has accomplished His purpose of demonstrating His rule in the sphere in which that authority was first challenged. By merging this earthly theocracy with the eternal kingdom God’s eternal sovereignty is established. Such was the purpose of God in planning the theocratic kingdom and developing it through successive stages throughout history until it reaches the climax of the program in the theocracy under the enthroned Christ in the millennium. That authority, which Satan first challenged, Christ has now demonstrated belongs solely to God. God’s right to rule is eternally vindicated” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 494). and that *God is the rightful ruler of the world*. “...a few thousand years’ experience showing that without God’s personal government, the race cannot be happy” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 106)

In Relation to God

In relation to *God*, the Kingdom will serve to *glorify God*. “Surely **the wrath of man shall praise thee**: The residue of wrath shalt thou gird upon thee” (Ps. 76:10). “Even His permission of evil will, like the wrath of man, be made to praise Him (Ps 76:10)” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:229). “**God** is spirit, and those who **worship Him** must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). “**For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen**” (Rom. 11:36). “Whether, then, you eat or drink or **whatever you do, do all to the glory of God**” (1 Cor. 10:31). “**to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen**” (Eph. 3:21). “**The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen**” (2 Tim. 4:18). “Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so **that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen**” (1 Pet. 4:11). “and **He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen**” (Rev. 1:6). “And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down be-

fore **the Lamb**, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, **‘Worthy art Thou** to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And **Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.’** And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, **‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’** And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, **‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’** And the four living creatures kept saying, **‘Amen.’** And the elders fell down and worshiped” (Rev. 5:8–14). “God has chosen his great end, the manifestation of his own glory, but in order to that end he has chosen innumerable subordinate ends” [quoting Dr. A. A. Hodge, *Outlines of Theology*, p. 262] (Chafer, *ST*, 1:255). “No redemption is in view which merely rescues for their own sake unfortunate beings fallen in sin. If that were all, the reason for their fall would be difficult to conceive. Their redemption is for His sake” (*ibid.*, 2:237). “The chief end of man, we are told, is to glorify God. This every created being will do, for God has created no being who will not contribute to His eternal glory. Each and every one will either demonstrate His grace in all its perfections (Eph 2:7 [**in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**’]), or display His wrath (Rom 9:22 [**‘What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?’**]) in all the ages to come” (*ibid.*, p. 278). “To satisfy the love of God is a greater achievement than to bring measureless blessing to men. Thus the supreme objective in the death of Christ is discovered. Because of infinite love for lost men, the gratification of that holy desire to redeem—which is common to all three Persons of the blessed Trinity—constitutes the supreme reason for the divine sacrifice” (*ibid.*, p. 319). “The highest divine motive in the salvation of men is that in the ages to come the grace of God may be demonstrated before all created beings. Were that salvation to incorporate any fraction of human merit, it would by so much be imperfect as

a demonstration of God's grace" (*ibid.*, p. 321). "The glory of God is [the kingdom of God's] chief and sole object. Christ's work in which He seeks only to glorify His Father is complete when God is glorified. This is the aim and purpose of the kingdom of God" [quoting Charles Feinberg, *Premillennialism and Amillennialism*, pp. 163-64] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 434). "In answer to the question 'What do you give to the person who has everything?' the most appropriate response is 'Admiration!' What can we give to the God who has everything? Worship! This is all we can give Him, and this is all He wants (John 4:24)" (Geisler, *ST*, 2:114). "The purpose of all creation is to bring glory to God" (*ibid.*, 4:52). "*Everything, including the church, is ordained for the glory of God*" (*ibid.*, p. 53). "Ultimately, everything is for God's glory (1 Cor. 10:31; cf. Ps. 76:10), and, as with New Testament believers, God's plan for Israel was to bring glory to Himself" (*ibid.*, p. 537).

Chapter 9: Conscience, Government and Promise

In chapter six, *God and Creation*, we saw that the very first age or dispensation in mankind's history, the age of Innocence, began with a covenant or agreement between God and man, the Edenic Covenant. In this chapter we'll see that the next three clearly delineated ages or dispensations in human history, the ages of Conscience, [the institution of human] Government, and Promise were also introduced with dispensation-delineating covenants between God and men: the Adamic, Noahic and Abrahamic Covenants, respectively. These three covenants and their subsequent dispensations are the subject of this chapter.

The Age of Conscience

Upon Adam's breaking the Edenic Covenant, God inaugurated a new era in human history, the age of Conscience, via the Adamic Covenant.

Covenant #2: The Adamic Covenant

The Adamic Covenant is the second of the eight covenants that God made with mankind. It articulated God's immediate curses on Satan, man and the earth, but also promised eventual deliverance from these curses via "the seed of the woman." It is recorded in Genesis 3:14-19: "**And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou** above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and **I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.** Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return**" (Gen. 3:14-19).

Regarding the Adamic Covenant's provisions concerning *Satan*, there would be hatred between Satan and the woman culminating in the hatred between Satan's seed (Antichrist) and the woman's seed (Christ), the ser-

pent would bruise the woman's seed's heel, and the woman's seed would crush Satan's head. Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, "Four provisions are given in relationship to Satan. First: there would be perpetual hatred between Satan and the woman. Second: this hatred was to culminate between Satan's seed, the Antichrist, and the woman's Seed, the Messiah. Third: the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's Seed; this happened at the Crucifixion. Fourth: this first prophecy of the Lord's victory over Satan goes on to say that the woman's Seed will crush Satan's head; this occurred initially with the Resurrection (Heb. 2:14-15 [Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that **through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.**]). But the final crushing of Satan was still future when Paul wrote Romans 16:20 [And **the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.** The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.]; it will come when Satan is cast into the Lake of fire (Rev. 20:10 [And **the devil** who deceived them **was thrown into the lake of fire** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.**])" (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 10).

Regarding the Adamic Covenant's provisions concerning *man*, Adam's sin affected the entire human race, the earth was cursed, human diet was to remain vegetarian, work was to be toilsome, and man would die physically. Dr. Fruchtenbaum continues, "Adam and all men and the entire human race were subjected to five provisions in Genesis 3:17-19. First: since Adam stands as the representative head of the human race, the judgment on Adam is the judgment on the whole human race. It is Adam, not Eve, who is held responsible for the human condition. Second: the earth was cursed. Working was not something new with the Adamic Covenant, it had already been provided for in the Edenic Covenant. The difference was in the earth's response. Under the Edenic Covenant, the earth was to respond readily to man's working and tilling. But now the earth would not respond so easily; there would be thorns, thistles, and weeds. Third: human diet continues to be vegetarian as it was under the Edenic Covenant; it is not clear if the same was true for the animal kingdom. Animals were used for dairy products, wool for clothing, and sacrifices, but not for eating. Fourth: man's work was to be characterized by hard labor. Working conditions under the Edenic Covenant were easy, simple, and enjoyable. Now, sweat was to characterize the work of man and labor was hard and toilsome. Fifth: physical death was introduced. Whereas under the Edenic Covenant man died spiri-

tually, under the Adamic Covenant man would ultimately die physically (Rom. 5:12-21). Thus far there have only been two exceptions to this rule: Enoch and Elijah. There will be others in the future at the time of the Rapture” (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 11).

So, in Genesis 3:15, the very first prophecy in the Bible, the future Mediatorial Kingdom is promised. In the meantime, two kingdoms would now develop side by side on earth: the [Spiritual] Kingdom of God and the rebel kingdom of Satan. The synoptic gospels illustrate the conflict between these two kingdoms: “He presented another parable to them, saying, **‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ And he said to them, ‘An enemy has done this!’ And the slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn’”**” (Matt. 13:24–30). “And **He was casting out a demon**, and it was dumb; and it came about that when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.’ And others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven. But He knew their thoughts, and said to them, ‘Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls. And if **Satan** also is divided against himself, how shall **his kingdom** stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But **if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.** When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed; but when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied, and distributes his plunder. **He who is not with Me is against Me**; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters” (Luke 11:14–23). Dr. Pentecost concurs, “As a result of this [Adam’s] sin, two kingdoms would develop side by side in this earthly realm. A recurring theme in the Scriptures, then, shows God developing His kingdom of heaven on earth, and Satan propa-

gating his kingdom of lawlessness and darkness in the same realm” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 37).

Mankind’s History From Eden to the Flood

A few select passages will summarize mankind’s history from Eden to the Flood: “And **Jehovah God said unto the serpent**, Because thou hast done this, **cursed art thou** above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and **I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel**. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground** for thy sake; **in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee**; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; **in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground**; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the man called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. And **Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them**. And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore **Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden**, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So **he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life**” (Gen. 3:14-24). “And Jehovah said unto **Cain**, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, **sin coucheth at the door: and unto thee shall be its desire, but do thou rule over it**” (Gen. 4:6-7). “and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh because of **the ground which Jehovah hath cursed**” (Gen. 5:29). “And Jehovah said, **My spirit shall not strive with man for ever**, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years” (Gen. 6:3). “And Jehovah saw that **the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**”

(Gen. 6:5). “And **the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence**” (Gen. 6:11).

Dr. McClain recounts this period of history, “The sin of Adam and the loss of his proper dominion not only set the stage for the brutal murder of Abel but also left the race without any external divinely mediated controls. And God, for a time, determined to leave the situation so. Only twice in the long period from Eden to the Flood is there any record of divine intervention in human affairs. In the one, Enoch was translated from the earth to be forever in the presence of God (Gen. 5:24 [and **Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.**]). In the other, Cain was shut out of the ‘presence of the LORD’ as manifested upon the earth (Gen. 4:14, 16 [Behold, **thou hast driven me out this day** from the face of the ground; and **from thy face shall I be hid**; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth... And Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.]”) (McClain, *GK*, p. 44). “The rather brief record of this era seems to indicate a condition of individual and irresponsible lawlessness so far as any external restraints were concerned. For example, in the case of Cain, strangely enough, instead of leaving this fratricidal killer to the ancient *lex talionis* of a life for a life, God actually protected him from being brought before the bar of any possible human judgment or punishment. And although the Cainite civilization, with its building of a city and development of the arts and crafts, must have led to some degree of voluntary social organization, nevertheless the arrogant and boastful poem of Lamech, probably composed to celebrate the successful outcome of a personal vendetta, suggests a period in history when men largely followed their own violent impulses without any fear of immediate judicial retribution (Gen. 4:19-24 [And Lamech took unto him two wives... And Lamech said unto his wives: Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: For **I have slain a man for wounding me, And a young man for bruising me: If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.**]). The period ends, as we might expect, with almost total moral corruption and the earth ‘filled with violence’ (Gen. 6:11 [And **the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.**])” (*ibid.*). “The words of Genesis 6:3 imply that whatever the restraint upon human conduct may have been during this period, it was *inward* rather than external in nature. ‘My spirit shall not always strive with man,’ God says, in pronouncing His verdict upon the entire age. The verb here means to ‘rule’ or ‘sit in judgment,’ and this judgment must have been spiritual and moral. Certainly, considering the utter wickedness of that antediluvian world, we cannot

think of God's Spirit dwelling within or upon men in any New Testament sense. Some have suggested that the Spirit was striving with these ungodly men through the faithful preaching of Noah; and this may have been true in a limited degree. It would be more in accord with the historical context, however, to regard this work of the Spirit as something wrought through man's *moral nature* or *conscience*, that inward voice which had been implanted within him by original creation (Rom. 2:14, 15 [For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their **conscience** bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them]). This is the sole avenue of sinful man's immediate contact with his Creator. The conscience may indeed be disobeyed, quenched, wrongly educated, or even seared as with a hot iron; but it remains the voice of God in the soul, telling men that they *ought* to do right and not do wrong" (*ibid.*, p. 45). "It is not without some justification, therefore, that by some the period before the Flood has been named the 'Age of Conscience.' Not that the rule of conscience began and ended with this particular era of human history; but that throughout the period, conscience stood alone as the method of the divine Spirit in judging and restraining the actions of wicked men. The ultimatum of God, 'My spirit shall not always strive with man,' did not forecast any end of the judging function of conscience, but rather an end of man's probation under its rule as an *exclusive* method of divine restraint. The divine warning is certainly clear: yet 'an hundred and twenty years' and judgment will fall; this time not merely the inner judgment of the Spirit's voice in the conscience of man, but a judgment which would be external, visible and supernatural, putting an end to that generation of men which had rejected the moral sovereignty of God (Gen. 6:3-13 [And **Jehovah said, My spirit shall not strive with man for ever**, for that he also is flesh: yet **shall his days be a hundred and twenty years**. The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown. And **Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**. And it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. **And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground**; both man, and beast, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah. These are the

generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations: Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And **the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.].** The complete failure of mankind under this test should be a sufficient answer to the notion that sinful man needs on earth a kingdom of God which is only spiritual and moral in nature” (*ibid.*).

Dr. Pentecost summarizes, “After the Fall, God placed man under the law of conscience. In submitting themselves to the law men were submitting themselves to God and showing themselves to be in the kingdom of the God of heaven. The false kingdom of Satan soon manifested itself in the activities of Cain, who became the progenitor of many who were in Satan’s kingdom. God demonstrated His right to rule by bringing about a catastrophic judgment on all who were in the kingdom of Satan, and began a new form of theocratic administration through Noah” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 45). “God’s kingdom through conscience... men were total failures under this form of theocratic administration” (*ibid.*, p. 46) “...as men subjected themselves to the rule of conscience, they were in subjection to the authority of God” (*ibid.*, p. 292).

The Age (Institution) of Human Government

After the age of Conscience was brought to an end by the Flood, God authorized, via the Noahic Covenant, the State to punish sin, thereby inaugurating the age of Human Government. Dr. Pentecost summarizes, “God entrusted theocratic administration to appointed administrators in the political realm, who were responsible to enforce law and punish lawless men and so curb the development of the kingdom of darkness. However, men rebelled against this form of administration, the administrators failed to discharge their responsibilities, and lawlessness reigned. God responded to this rebellion by scattering men abroad so they were no longer united in their rebellion against Him. He then instituted a new form of theocratic administration” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 50). “Obviously a governmental authority is not a minister of the Gospel; he is, however, an administrator of the theocracy in that portion of the kingdom to which he has been assigned” (*ibid.*, p. 294).

Covenant #3: The Noahic Covenant

The Noahic Covenant is the third of the eight covenants that God made with mankind. Among other provisions, it gave human government authority to punish serious sin. The Noahic Covenant is recorded in Genesis 9:1-17: “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.** And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens. With all wherewith the ground teemeth, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered. **Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you.** As the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require. At the hand of every beast will I require it. And at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man’s brother, will I require the life of man. **Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.** For in the image of God made he man. And **you, be ye fruitful, and multiply. Bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.** And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And **I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you.** And with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you. Of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. And **I will establish my covenant with you. Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood. Neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.** And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, And **I will remember my covenant,** which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud. And I will look upon it, **that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.** And God said unto Noah, **This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth**” (Gen. 9:1-17). Dr. Fruchtenbaum explains, “The provisions of the covenant: First: man was to repopulate the earth (vv. 1, 7). With the exception of eight people, the entire human race was destroyed by the Flood. Man had vastly increased in numbers, but the wickedness of man was great in the earth (Gen.

6:5).. Thus God brought universal judgment upon the earth. After the Flood, the earth was essentially empty again. Only eight people remained to re-populate the the entire earth. Just as with the Edenic Covenant, man was again commissioned to repopulate the earth, but the command to subdue the earth is not repeated. With man's fall, he lost his authority and Satan usurped it. Thus Satan is the prince of this world (Jh. 12:31) and the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). Satan has authority over all the kingdoms of this world and can offer them to whomsoever he will (Lk. 4:6). He made that offer to the Seed of the woman, Yeshua (Jesus), who turned it down. He will offer it some day to the seed of Satan, the Antichrist, who will accept it (Rev. 13:1-3)" (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 12). "God's promise that humanity will not be destroyed by a flood again should come to remembrance every time a rainbow is seen" (*ibid.*, p. 13). "The unconditional Noahic Covenant is still very much in effect" (*ibid.*). That the State still has authority to punish wrongdoing is stated in Romans 13:1-6: "Let every person be in subjection to **the governing authorities**. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are **established by God**. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed **the ordinance of God**; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; for **it is a minister of God to you for good**. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not **bear the sword** for nothing; for **it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil**. Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for **rulers are servants of God**, devoting themselves to this very thing" (Rom. 13:1-6).

Mankind's History From the Flood to Babel

Dr. McClain explains the Noahic Covenant and summarizes mankind's history from the Flood to Babel: "Following the judgment of the Flood, two events took place which were of great importance in the divine government in relation to the human race. The first of these was a promise on the part of God to the effect that, although recognizing the continuance of man's evil nature and propensities, He never again would smite 'every living thing' (Gen. 9:11). And as a solemn pledge that the covenant thus made would be kept, the 'bow in the cloud' was made a token between God and man (Gen. 9:12-17)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 46). "The second important event was the divine authorization for the institution of *human government*. Such au-

thorization was a logical sequence of the covenant which God had made with Noah and his family. Since in this covenant God had promised not again to destroy the sinful race by a watery judgment, thereby taking away man's fear of a repetition of such judgment, it became necessary to set up some other form of control upon the lawless impulses of men. It was for this purpose that human government was instituted by divine decree" (*ibid.*). "Here again the Genesis record is very brief, but the decree laid down very simply and clearly the basic principle of all human law and government: 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man' (Gen. 9:6). In this historic text several things should be noted: First, the decree recognizes that fallen man at his best, here exemplified by righteous Noah and his family, still has within his heart unmeasured potentialities for evil which must be curbed. Second, these evil inclinations are now to be restrained by the fear of governmental punishment; and in the case of murder the punishment would be capital. Third, the penalty upon evildoers would be inflicted by 'man' in the collective or governmental sense; not according to the principle of personal vengeance, as some have supposed. Fourth, the moral justification for the institution of human government, and also its power of capital punishment, is based squarely upon the very argument often used against the latter, namely, the sacredness of human life in God's sight— 'for in the image of God made he man'" (*ibid.*). "What we call civil or organized government, whether simple or highly complex, exists for only one reason—the protection, conservation, fostering, and improvement of human life. Genesis 9:6, therefore, becomes one of the most important landmarks in all of human history, for here God not only decrees the beginning of human government in a sinful world but also lays down the moral and social foundation of all such government. As Luther has well said of the text, 'This was the first command having reference to the temporal sword. By these words temporal government was established, and the sword placed in its hand by God'" (*ibid.*). "What we have here, then, is something wholly new upon earth; an institution by which God will now mediate His government over the nations through human rulers who, whether they acknowledge Him or not, are nevertheless 'ordained of God' as 'ministers' of His; and therefore will be held responsible before God for the manner in which they discharge their duties 'for good' to mankind in general and to 'execute wrath' upon those who do evil (Rom. 13:1-6)" (*ibid.*, p. 47). Dr. Pentecost adds, "Since God's kingdom is to be characterized by righteousness and peace, it must be seen that human government was given authority by God to provide an atmosphere in which righteous men may live in peace without fear" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p.

47). “Men failed under the administration of human government as they failed under the administration of conscience” (*ibid.*, p. 49).

The Confusion of Languages at Babel

At Babel, God confused the languages of the people, in order to scatter them throughout the earth. “Therefore was the name of it called **Babel**. Because **Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth. And from thence did Jehovah scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth**” (Gen. 11:9). Dr. McClain explains, “Following the institution of human government, therefore, it should not be surprising to find next in the order of the Genesis account what has been called ‘The Table of Nations’ in chapter 10. In this remarkable document from the past we are given a glimpse of the birth of nations, the building of cities, and the founding of empires—all of which implies the existence and development of social and governmental organization. The story of the Tower of Babel with its confusion of tongues, which follows in chapter 11, seems to have been introduced at this particular point in the record for the purpose of explaining the existence and wide dispersal of the nations named in the previous chapter” (McClain, *GK*, p. 47). “The implications of the Babel story point to the plurality of nations, in opposition to any central world government, as something definitely in harmony with the purpose of God. The intentions of the builders at Babel are stated in Genesis 11:4 as follows: ‘Let us build us a city and a tower... and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.’ Apparently the city was to provide a world center for the human race, and the monumental tower was to serve as a physical and spectacular symbol of world unification. Having lost in the Fall that *inward* and spiritual unity of the race which was centered in God, men now resort to the establishment of an *external* unity. We have here the first recorded urge of sinful men toward the ‘one world’ idea of social and governmental organization” (*ibid.*). “In this connection a question naturally arises: Why would not such a world organization have been a good thing? Would this not, as it is still being argued today, preserve the unity of mankind and thus avoid the confusion and strife which has been historically associated with a multiplicity of nations and governments? Ideally, of course, one world government would seem to furnish the answer to many difficult problems, provided the world was made up of only the right kind of people. But the trouble has been that, ever since the fall of Adam, the world has had the *wrong* kind of people—‘For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God’ (Rom. 3:23). And in such a world there is mortal danger in a single and total world government. As someone has acutely observed, political power always corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely”

(*ibid.*, p. 48). “The judgment of God upon this first attempt at one world government was not only a clear warning against all such schemes but also an endorsement of what is called ‘nationalism.’ Although not the ideal form of human organization, nationalism has proven the *safest* for the preservation of personal liberty in a sinful world. In the world market of political ideas and forms, there will be competition and experiment just as long as there are many nations. And, in the end, such competition and experiment always work out for individual liberty and the development of distinctive cultural values which then may be mutually shared between nations. In a sinful race left to its own devices, one monolithic world state might conceivably put an end to all further political experiment and result in an irreversible totalitarianism” (*ibid.*). “The nature of the divine judgment upon this first try at a World State is deeply interesting. It is generally conceded that the cement which holds men together in groups and nations is what we call a common culture, and the very core of such a culture is found in language, man’s marvelous ability to communicate ideas. It was exactly at this point that the judgment of God struck: the common bond of ‘one language’ was supernaturally destroyed, and the multiplication of tongues led to the formation of different groups and, ultimately, nations. For the chief obstacle to the achievement of the one world state of ‘Internationalism,’ it has often been recognized, is the barrier of language. The very headphones worn by the delegates of the various member nations at meetings of the United Nations’ organization are a witness to the divinely imposed safeguard against the menace of one total world government established by sinful men” (*ibid.*). “It is true that the kingdom of Babylon became the golden head of an empire which held authority ‘wheresoever the children of men dwell’ (Dan. 2:38). However, it must not be overlooked that this was an empire established by *divine* sanction, as indicated clearly by the address of Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar: ‘Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all’ (Dan. 2:37-38). Furthermore, it is open to serious question whether this universal authority, although conferred by God Himself, was ever actually exercised by Nebuchadnezzar over all peoples in all places. Certainly, the three so-called world empires which followed never completely succeeded in subduing all the different nations on earth; nor were they able to perpetuate their comparatively brief existence without unceasing struggles; and in the end they fell before attacks by peoples of other language areas. In the long history of sinful humanity there will be only one truly universal world empire (called ‘the kingdom of the

world' in Rev. 11:15, ASV), and that will be achieved by superhuman means at the hand of Satan's own ruler, the antichrist, whose brief span of world dominion will be definitely limited by God to exactly 1260 days. Even here, however, this final empire will not be achieved without divine sanction; for his universal authority will be 'given unto him' from above (Rev. 13:7)" (*ibid.*, p. 49).

The Age of Patriarchs and Promises

After the nations were scattered at Babel, God chose one man named Abram, from the land of Ur, and made a covenant with him for the blessing of all mankind. This covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, ushered in the age of Promise or Patriarchs. It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Abrahamic Covenant in the outworking of God's Kingdom program.

Covenant #4: The Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant is the fourth of the eight covenants that God made with mankind, and is the first of five covenants that He made with Israel. It is a foundational covenant in God's Kingdom program. It promised to Abram (later named Abraham) a great name, and to him and to his descendants the land of Palestine forever, national identity, great blessing, and blessing or cursing on other peoples, depending on whether they chose to bless or curse Abram and his descendants. Dr. Fruchtenbaum summarizes, "Chafer discusses the Abrahamic Covenant in his section on Eschatology [*Systematic Theology*, 4:313-315]. Concerning the Abrahamic Covenant, Chafer points out that it is an unconditional covenant 'being that alone which Jehovah declares He will do for and through Abraham.' It was not sustained through all of Abraham's descendants, but only through Isaac and Jacob and Jacob's descendants. Furthermore, it is an everlasting covenant which contains seven features, found in Genesis 12:1-3. First, *I will make of thee a great nation* which was fulfilled 'in the posterity of Ishmael, of Isaac, and in Abraham's spiritual seed.' Second, *I will bless thee*; and Abraham received 'both earthly and heavenly riches.' Third, *and make thy name great* and 'no name is more honored, outside of Christ's, than Abraham's.' Fourth, *and be thou a blessing* and this blessing 'extends to Abraham's physical seed through Isaac and Jacob and to the Gentiles.' Fifth, *I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse*, which is 'the divine principle in connection with Israel upon which God deals with the Gentile nations.' Sixth, *in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed*, which is a reference to Gentile blessings through 'the Seed, Christ.' Seventh, *unto thy seed will I give this land*, which includes

territory that ‘far exceeds that occupied by Israel when they came up out of Egypt (Gen. 15:18)’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 334). “Reducing the Abrahamic Covenant to its very basics, it contains three aspects: the land, the seed, and the blessing. The land aspect is developed in the Palestinian Covenant; the seed aspect is covered in the Davidic Covenant; and the blessing aspect is presented in the New Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 575). Pentecost adds, “The Abrahamic Covenant becomes the foundation of the message of the Old Testament writers and prophets delivered to the nation Israel. It gave hope to the persecuted and the dispersed. Reference to it in the New Testament reveals that it continues as the basis for the development of God’s plan to establish on earth the kingdom of the God of heaven” (*TKC*, p. 81). And Geisler, “The first of Israel’s covenants (Abrahamic) is an unconditional agreement God made with Abraham and his descendants that has never been fulfilled at any time in history, either prior to or after the Advent. Because Israel rejected their Messiah-King who is to rule in Jerusalem (Matt. 19:28) over the whole land God gave Abraham, and since this reign is to be forever, the event is yet future; it will not be fulfilled until Christ returns (24:30; 25:31-34). At this time Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and all other Old Testament saints will be raised and literally will reign over the whole earth in physical, resurrected bodies” (*ST*, 4:511).

Statement of the Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant was first made with Abraham, then confirmed with his son Isaac, then with Isaac’s son Jacob (Israel). “The original covenant is given in Genesis 12:1-3, and there are three confirmations and amplifications as recorded in Genesis 13:14-17; 15:1-7; and 17:1-18. Some of the promises are given to Abraham personally, some to Abraham’s seed, and some to Gentiles, or ‘all families of the earth’ (Gen. 12:3)” [quoting John F. Walvoord, ‘Millennial Series,’ *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 108:415-17, October, 1951] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 73). “Genesis 1-11 records the history of the nations; Genesis 12 begins the history of the chosen nation, starting with the Abrahamic covenant” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:501).

The Abrahamic Covenant was first made with *Abraham*, “**Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed**” (Gen. 12:1-3). “Abram dwelt in **the land of Canaan**, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom

were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly. And **Jehovah said unto Abram**, after that Lot was separated from him, **Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward.** For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it. For **unto thee will I give it**" (Gen. 13:12-17). "After these things the word of Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram. I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, O Lord Jehovah, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and he that shall be possessor of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed. And, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, **the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying,** This man shall not be thine heir. But **he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.** And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, **So shall thy seed be.** And he believed in Jehovah. And he reckoned it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, **I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.** And he said, O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me a heifer three years old, and a she-goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each half over against the other. But the birds divided he not. And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. **And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram.** And, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge. And afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age. **And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again.** For the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. **And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces. In**

that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. The Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite” (Gen. 15:1-21). “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, **Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am God Almighty.** Walk before me, and be thou perfect. And **I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.** And Abram fell on his face. **And God talked with him, saying; As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham. For the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee, throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. And I will be their God.** And God said unto Abraham, And as for thee, thou shalt keep **my covenant,** thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations. This is **my covenant,** which ye shall keep, **between me and you and thy seed after thee. Every male among you shall be circumcised.** And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin. And **it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you.** And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner that is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised. And my covenant shall be in your flesh for **an everlasting covenant.** And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people. He hath broken **my covenant.** And God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but **Sarah** shall her name be. And I will bless her, and moreover I will give thee a son of her. Yea, I will bless her, and **she shall be a mother of nations. Kings of peoples shall be of her.** Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said,

Nay, but **Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son. And thou shalt call his name Isaac. And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him.** And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. Twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But **my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee** at this set time in the next year. And he left off **talking with him, and God** went up from **Abraham**” (Gen. 17:1-22). “And **Jehovah** said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do. Seeing that **Abraham had surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him**” (Gen. 18:17-18)? “And **the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham** a second time out of heaven, and said, **By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah,** because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that **in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.** Because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Gen. 22:15–18). it was confirmed with Abraham’s son *Isaac*, “And **God said unto Abraham,** Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy handmaid. In all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice. For **in Isaac shall thy seed be called**” (Gen. 21:12). “And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant, and his men. And **they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them**” (Gen. 24:59-60). “And **Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac**” (Gen. 25:5-6). “And it came to pass **after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac his son.** And Isaac dwelt by Beer-lahairoi” (Gen. 25:11). “And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And **Isaac** went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar. And **Jehovah appeared unto him, and said,** Go not down into Egypt. **Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee. For unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father. And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these lands. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.** Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my command-

ments, my statutes, and my laws” (Gen. 26:1-5). “And **Jehovah appeared unto him [Isaac, vs. 18] the same night, and said**, I am the God of Abraham thy father. Fear not, for **I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake**” (Gen. 26:24). and it was confirmed with Isaac’s son (Abraham’s grandson) *Jacob*. “And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren. And Jehovah was entreated of him, and **Rebekah** his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her. And she said, If it be so, wherefore do I live? And she went to inquire of Jehovah. And **Jehovah said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people. And the elder shall serve the younger.** And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name **Esau**. And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau’s heel. And his name was called **Jacob**. And Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. And the boys grew. And Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field. And Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison. And Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob boiled pottage. And Esau came in from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage. For I am faint. Therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright. And **Esau** said, Behold, I am about to die. And what profit shall the birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me first. And he sware unto him. And **he sold his birthright unto Jacob**. And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright” (Gen. 25:21-34). “**Let peoples serve thee, And nations bow down to thee. Be lord over thy brethren, And let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee.** And it came to pass, as soon as **Isaac** had made an end of **blessing Jacob**, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting” (Gen. 27:29-30). “And **Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him**, and charged him, **and said unto him**, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother’s father. And take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother’s brother. **And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples. And give thee the blessing of Abraham,**

to thee, and to thy seed with thee. That thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham” (Gen. 28:1-4). “And **Jacob** went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. And he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, **Jehovah** stood above it, and **said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of**” (Gen. 28:10-15). “And **God appeared unto Jacob** again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. And **God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land**” (Gen. 35:9-12).

The Abrahamic Covenant was promised to have fulfillment in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob *personally*, not just in their descendants. “And Jehovah said unto **Abram**, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward. For all the land which thou seest, **to thee** will I give it, **and to thy seed** for ever” (Gen. 13:14-15). “And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And **Isaac** went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar. And Jehovah appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and **I will be with thee, and will bless thee. For unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father**” (Gen. 26:1-3). “And **Jacob** went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried

there all night, because the sun was set. And he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, **to thee** will I give it, **and to thy seed**" (Gen. 28:10-13). "Both settlement and ownership of the land was not limited to the descendants of the Patriarchs only but promised to them personally. God promised ownership of the land to Abraham (Gen. 13:15), to Isaac (Gen. 26:3) and to Jacob (Gen. 28:13)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 208). "Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, p. 73] points out that the Abrahamic Covenant 'entitled certain basic promises,' and these included 'individual promises' for Abraham, 'national promises' for Israel and 'universal blessings' that were to extend to the Gentiles. Pentecost states that 'it is of utmost importance to keep the different areas in which promise was made' distinct because 'if the things covenanted in one area are transferred to another area only confusion will result in the subsequent interpretation.' Personal promises made to Abraham should not be transferred to the nation of Israel as a whole, nor should the national promises made to Israel be transferred to the Gentiles" (*ibid.*, p. 341).

Features of the Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant promised to Abraham and to his descendants the land of Palestine, national identity, blessing, a great name, and potential blessing and cursing on other peoples. George Peters summarizes, "The covenant... made with Abraham... The things promised by God are the following: 1. That Abraham's name shall be great. 2. That a great nation should come from him. 3. He should be a blessing so great that in him shall all families of the earth be blessed. 4. To him personally ("to thee") and to his seed should be given Palestine forever to inherit. 5. The multitude of his seed should be as the dust of the earth. 6. That whoever blessed him should be blessed, and whosoever cursed him should be cursed. 7. He should be the father of many nations. 8. Kings should proceed from him. 9. The covenant shall be perpetual, 'an everlasting covenant.' 10. The land of Canaan shall be 'an everlasting possession.' 11. God will be a God to him and to his seed. 12. His seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. 13. In his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (*TTK*, 1:293).

The Abrahamic Covenant promised *the land* of Palestine to Abraham and his descendants forever. "Abram dwelt in **the land of Canaan**, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceed-

ingly. And **Jehovah said unto Abram**, after that Lot was separated from him, **Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.** And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered. Arise, **walk through the land** in the length of it and in the breadth of it. For **unto thee will I give it**” (Gen. 13:12-17). “In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, **Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates**” (Gen. 15:18). “**And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.** And I will be their God” (Gen. 17:8-9). “And ye shall not wrong one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for **I am Jehovah your God...** And **the land** shall not be sold **in perpetuity; for the land is mine:** for ye are strangers and sojourners with me” (Lev. 25:17-24) “Jehovah will command the blessing upon thee... in **the land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers to give thee.** Jehovah will open unto thee his good treasure the heavens, to give the rain of thy land in its season, and to bless all the work of thy hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And Jehovah will make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if thou shalt hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them” (Deut. 28:8-13) “Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto **the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.** Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses. **From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates,** all the land of the Hittites, and **unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun,** shall be your border. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit **the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them**” (Josh. 1:2-6). “Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, like the peoples; for thou hast played the harlot, departing from thy God; thou hast loved hire upon every grain-floor. The threshing-floor and the winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail her. They shall not dwell in **Jehovah’s land;** but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria” (Hos. 9:1-3). “Has God failed in His foreknowledge,

wisdom, and power? To evade this, by making the land typical of heaven, is sheer faithlessness, seeing that the very land ‘laid waste’ and ‘made desolate’ (which the third heaven never was), is the land spoken of—the same land whereon Jacob reclined and which Abraham was requested to survey” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:307). “‘I will give unto thee the land...’ which territory far exceeds that occupied by Israel when they came out of Egypt. The extent of the land is ‘from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates’ (Gen 15:18)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). “As for the Abrahamic Covenant, the ‘promise of the land was integral in the original covenant with Abraham’ and if not understood literally, then the covenant becomes totally meaningless” [quoting Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, pp. 61-62] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 525). “Just as ‘the prophecy concerning Israel has always had its fulfillment in the past, so it will also in the future.’ Just as the believer today is sure of the promise of heaven, ‘Israel’s promise of the land is just as sure’” [quoting Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, pp. 78-79] (*ibid.*). “Though renamed ‘Palestine’ by Hadrian, there never was a Palestinian state with a Palestinian government or a Palestinian flag. The first time an independent government was set up in the land since A.D. 70 was in 1948 with the State of Israel. The history of the land also shows that the Abrahamic Covenant continues to be fulfilled with the people of Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 630). “Israel’s title to the Land is based on the Abrahamic Covenant” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 125). “In the final restoration of the Land, Israel will possess all the way south to the River of Egypt and will control down to the area of the modern Suez Canal. But as far as where the Jews will be living, the actual boundary of this settlement will only extend as far south as the Brook of Egypt or the modern Wadi-el-Arish” (*ibid.*, p. 423). “Genesis 13:14-17... ‘All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever’... There are three important elements in the emphasized section: (1) God gave the land to Abraham (2) for his natural descendants (3) forever” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:502) “The dimensions of the land given to Abraham were spelled out, and they include all of modern Israel, the territory of the Palestinians, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and all the way to Northern Iraq. Even under Joshua’s conquests they did not occupy all this land, and at no time in Israel’s history did they ever occupy it all for any prolonged period of time, let alone ‘forever.’ So to date, the Abrahamic covenant remains yet to be fulfilled” (*ibid.*). “Deuteronomy 28:8-13... ‘the land he swore to your forefathers to give you.’... Even amid the conditional Mosaic blessings, God reminds them, through Moses, of the unconditional promise made to the patriarchs, that He had given them the Holy Land. In accordance with the Mosaic covenant, *their blessings in this land*, as described in this passage,

would depend on their obedience to God” (*ibid.*, p. 505). “Joshua 21:43-45... ‘The LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers... *Not one of all the LORD’s good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.*’... the extent of the land as outlined in the Mosaic covenant (Num. 34), which was *not the full extent God had promised to Abraham* (cf. Gen. 15:18-21; Josh. 1:2-6)” (*ibid.*).

The Abrahamic Covenant promised *Abraham to be a great nation*. “Now **Jehovah said unto Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And **I will make of thee a great nation**, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3). “...the selection of a nation was made to be the nucleus of the Messianic Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:393) “It is extremely satisfactory to find that nowhere in the Scriptures does the now prevailing view, that the Gentile nations, as nations, are called, find the least support. This is precisely what the covenanted Word requires” (*ibid.*, p. 394). “For the previous two thousand years ‘there was but one division of the human family on the earth,’ which were the Gentiles. With the call of Abraham came a second period of human history extending from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. At this point ‘there are two divisions of humanity on the earth,’ which are Jews and Gentiles. Israel was ‘set apart as an elect nation’ with ‘specific divine favors’” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 7:206] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 333). “The Abrahamic Covenant promised a seed, land, and blessings among its many provisions. The seed was to develop into a nation, and so it did at the foot of Mount Sinai. Today, Israel is a scattered nation but still a nation. Just as Israel remained distinct in Egypt, the Jewish people have remained distinct throughout the Church Age. No other nation that lost its national homeland and was dispersed for centuries survived as a distinct entity” (*ibid.*, p. 629).

The Abrahamic Covenant promised *blessing to Abraham*. “Now **Jehovah said unto Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and **I will bless thee**, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3). “‘I will bless thee,’ which is fulfilled in both earthly and heavenly riches” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:313). “The Abrahamic Covenant—not the Mosaic Covenant—was the source of blessings” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 86).

The Abrahamic Covenant promised *Abraham a great name*. “Now **Jehovah said unto Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And **I will** make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and **make thy name great**. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3). “I will make thy name great,’ and no name is more honored, outside that of Christ’s, than Abraham’s” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:313). “Abraham... his name was to become great—and so it is among Jews, Moslems, and Christians” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 575).

The Abrahamic Covenant promised *Abraham to be a blessing*. “Now **Jehovah said unto Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And **be thou a blessing**. And **I will bless them that bless thee**, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And **in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed**” (Gen. 12:1-3). “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE’ — in order that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles**, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:13–14). This blessing would be *through Isaac and Jacob*. (See the Scripture quotations in the section *Statement of the Abrahamic Covenant* above.) “‘Thou shalt be a blessing.’ This blessing extends to Abraham’s physical seed through Isaac and Jacob and to the Gentiles (Gal 3:13-14)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:324) Ultimately, this blessing would be *through Abraham’s ‘seed,’ Christ*. “And **the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham** a second time out of heaven, and said, **By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah**, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that **in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed**. Because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Gen. 22:15–18). “Now the promises were spoken to **Abraham** and to **his seed**. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to **your seed**,’ **that is, Christ**” (Gal. 3:16). “In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,’ which promise looks on to the Seed, Christ, and contemplates all that Christ is or ever will be to the whole earth” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). “As Ryrie states, the Hebrew word ‘seed’ is singular, but it could be ‘both collec-

tive and individual.’ As a collective word, it refers to Israel; and as an individual word, it refers to the Messiah. It is through the latter ‘seed’ that the Gentiles were to receive their blessings” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 336). *The blessing extends to Gentiles*. “And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed**” (Gen. 12:3). “And **Jehovah said**, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do. Seeing that Abraham had surely become a great and mighty nation, and **all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him**” (Gen. 18:17-18)? “And **the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham** a second time out of heaven, and said, **By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah**, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And **in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed**. Because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Gen. 22:15–18). “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’ — in order that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles**, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:13-14). “Though the Davidic sonship is restricted to David’s house and David’s people, the Abrahamic sonship extends to ‘all families of the earth,’ in whose redemption they are blessed (Gen 12:3)” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:33). “The physical promises were limited to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The spiritual promises were to extend to all believers, both Jews and Gentiles alike” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 144). “The Abrahamic Covenant included both physical and spiritual promises. The physical promises were limited to the Jewish people, but the spiritual promises were predicted to extend to the Gentiles (Gen 12:3). In the New Testament, those Gentiles who believe in Jesus become the recipients of these spiritual promises” (*ibid.*, p. 158).

The Abrahamic Covenant promised *blessing to those who bless Abraham and cursing to those who curse him*. “Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And **I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse**. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1–3). “Let peoples serve thee, And nations bow down to thee. Be lord over thy brethren, And let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee.

Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee. And it came to pass, as soon as **Isaac** had made an end of **blessing Jacob**, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting” (Gen. 27:29-30). “**And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee**” (Deut. 30:7). “For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and **the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors**” (Isa. 14:1-2). “Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when **thy spoil shall be divided** in the midst of thee. For **I will gather all nations against Jerusalem** to battle; and **the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity,** and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations,** as when he fought in the day of battle” (Zech. 14:1-3). “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;** and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?” And the King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**” Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did

not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.” Then they themselves also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?” Then He will answer them, saying, “Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matt. 25:31-46). “I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee,” which, as before observed, is the abiding divine principle in connection with Israel upon which God deals with Gentile nations as such (Deut 30:7; Isa. 14:1-2; Zech. 14:1-3; Matt. 25:31-46)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314) “Walvoord [in *The Millennial Kingdom*, p. 142] observes that throughout history right ‘to modern times, the nation that has persecuted the Jew has paid dearly for it’ (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 340). “Promises made to the Gentiles included: (1) Blessings for blessing Israel; (2) cursings for cursing Israel...” (*ibid.*, p. 575) “Whoever blessed Abram or his seed would be blessed and whoever cursed them would be cursed” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 52).

Characteristics of the Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant *continued through Isaac, Jacob and the 12 tribes of Israel*. “And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And **Isaac** went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar. And **Jehovah appeared unto him, and said**, Go not down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee. For **unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father. And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these lands. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.** Because that **Abraham** obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” (Gen. 26:1–5). “And Jehovah appeared unto him [**Isaac**, vs. 19] the same night, and said, **I am the God of Abraham thy father. Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake**” (Gen. 26:24). “And **Jacob** went near unto Isaac his father... he blessed him. And he said... Let peoples serve thee, And nations bow down to thee. Be lord over thy brethren, And let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee. **Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee**” (Gen. 27:22–30) “And **Jacob** went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. And he took

one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, **I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.** And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen. 28:10-15). “**And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**” (Gen. 50:24). “And it came to pass in the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and **God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.** And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge of them” (Ex. 2:23-25). “And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. But Jehovah was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, **because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them,** neither cast he them from his presence as yet” (2 Kings. 13:22-23). “While God used the Syrians to punish Israel, Syrian damage could only go so far because of this covenant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 579). “I have loved you, saith Jehovah. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? **Was not Esau Jacob’s brother, saith Jehovah: yet I loved Jacob**” (Mal. 1:2) “By faith **Abraham**, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith **he lived as an alien in the land of promise**, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with **Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise**; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb. 11:8-10). “By faith **Abraham**, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, ‘**In Isaac your descendants shall be called**’” (Heb. 11:17-18). “The reason why the covenant was repeated to Isaac and Jacob was owing to the fact that they formed the chosen posterity to the exclusion of others in the

Abrahamic line, and with Jacob that exclusion ceased, for as Dr. Kurtz (*His. Old Cov.*, vol. 2, p. 33) aptly expresses it: ‘Now at length the way of grace entirely coincided with that of nature.’ In other words, all the seed of Jacob were called, and the blessing offered to each one of them” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:294). “Some of the children of Abraham were not identified with the covenanted relationship, viz.: Esau and his descendants; these are the children of the flesh purely, but some of the children were thus under covenant, viz.: Jacob and his descendants, and these of the flesh were not of the flesh only, but the children of promise” (*ibid.*, p. 358). “The Abrahamic Covenant was not made with all of Abraham’s seed, but only with the seed that was to come through only one of Abraham’s eight sons: Isaac. Furthermore, the covenant was sustained through only one of Isaac’s sons: Jacob” (Fruchtbaum, *I*, p. 146). “Jews are Jews ‘because of the fact that they were born into covenant relations with God by a physical birth’” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 7:206] (*ibid.*, p. 333). “Thus the Abrahamic Covenant provides the biblical definition of Jewishness: a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (*ibid.*, p. 577).

The Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed by Moses, Joshua, David and Asaph. It was *confirmed to Moses* just prior to Israel’s entering the land of Canaan. “then will **I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land**” (Lev. 26:42). “to love Jehovah thy God, to obey his voice, and to cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in **the land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them**” (Deut. 30:20). It was also *confirmed to Joshua* just prior to Israel’s entering the land of Canaan. “Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses. **From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.** There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit **the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them**” (Josh. 1:2-6). It was also *confirmed by David and Asaph*. “Then on that day did **David** first ordain to give thanks unto Jehovah, by the hand of **Asaph** and his brethren... **O ye seed of Israel his servant, Ye children of Ja-**

cob, his chosen ones. He is Jehovah our God; His judgments are in all the earth. **Remember his covenant for ever, The word which he commanded to a thousand generations, The covenant which he made with Abraham, And his oath unto Isaac, And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, The lot of your inheritance**" (1 Chron. 16:7-18)

The Abrahamic Covenant was *developed in the three later unconditional covenants*. "The land promises of the Abrahamic covenant are developed in the Palestinian covenant, the seed promises are developed in the Davidic covenant, and the blessing promises are developed in the new covenant" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 72). We'll have more to say regarding the Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants in our chapters *The Theocratic Kingdom* and *Covenants of the Kingdom*.

The Abrahamic Covenant was *confirmed by the Hebrew prophets*. "**He hath remembered his covenant for ever, The word which he commanded to a thousand generations, The covenant which he made with Abraham, And his oath unto Isaac, And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant**" (Ps. 105:8-10) "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. **Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt**, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and **I will bring you into the bond of the [Abrahamic, Palestinian and New—ed.] covenant**; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me; but my holy name shall ye no more profane with your gifts, and with your idols. For **in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land**: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy

things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. And **ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I swear to give unto your fathers.** And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed” (Ezek. 20:33-43). “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, **Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name,** which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, saith the Lord Jehovah, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For **I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.** And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them. And **ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers;** and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the grain, and will multiply it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye may receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations. Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. **Nor for your sake do I this,** saith the Lord Jehovah, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel” (Ezek. 36:21–32). “And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And **they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children’s children, for ever:** and David my servant shall be their prince for ever. Moreover **I will make a [New, developed from the Abrahamic—ed.] covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them;** and I will place

them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore” (Ezek. 37:24–28). **“As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt** will I show unto them marvellous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; like crawling things of the earth they shall come trembling out of their close places; they shall come with fear unto Jehovah our God, and shall be afraid because of thee. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in lovingkindness. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. **Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the lovingkindness to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old**” (Mic. 7:15-20). “I have loved you, saith Jehovah. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? **Was not Esau Jacob’s brother, saith Jehovah: yet I loved Jacob**” (Mal. 1:2) “Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning **the covenant of our fathers**” (Mal. 2:10)? “Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts. But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, **as in the days of old**, and as in ancient years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts. For *I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed*” (Mal. 3:1-6). “Hundreds of years after Solomon’s time the Scriptures still abound in promises concerning future possession of the land. This must prove that God and His prophets realized, whether the amillennialist does nor not, that Solomon had not fulfilled the Abra-

hamic covenant” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, pp. 60-61] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 113). We’ll have more to say regarding the prophecies of the Hebrew prophets in our chapter *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*.

The Abrahamic Covenant is *confirmed in the New Testament*. “The book of the genealogy of **Jesus Christ**, the son of David, **the son of Abraham**” (Matt. 1:1). “**And Mary said:** ‘My soul exalts the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed. For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And holy is His name. AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM. He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; And sent away the rich empty-handed. **He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his offspring forever**” (Luke 1:46–55). “Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’ for I say to you that **God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham**” (Luke 3:8). “the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, **the son of Abraham**, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor” (Luke 3:34) “And his father **Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:** ‘**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant — As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old — Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.** And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; To give to His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us, TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:67–79). “And **this**

woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, **should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day**” (Luke 13:16)? **“There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast out”** (Luke 13:28). **“And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham’**” (Luke 19:9). **“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.’** The Jews therefore said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, **‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am’** (John 8:56–58). **“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus**, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him” (Acts 3:13). **“It is you [Men of Israel, vs. 12] who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways”** (Acts 3:25-26). **“And now I [Paul] am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews. Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead”** (Acts 26:6-8)? **“and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith”** (Rom. 4:12–13). **“For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all”** (Rom. 4:16) **“I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin”** (Rom. 11:1). **“For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers”** (Rom. 15:8) **“Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I”** (2 Cor. 11:22). **“Now the promises were spoken to**

Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ. What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.** For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but **God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise**” (Gal. 3:16-18). “For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but **He gives help to the descendant of Abraham**” (Heb. 2:16). “For when **God made the promise to Abraham**, since He could swear by no one greater, **He swore by Himself**” (Heb. 6:13) “By faith **Abraham**, when he was called, **obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance**; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith **he lived as an alien in the land of promise**, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with **Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise**; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb. 11:8-10). “If Jesus confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant, not by a spiritual coming and a spiritual shedding of blood, but by a literal coming and shedding of blood, so to realize the promises of the same Covenant, He again comes, not spiritually, but literally, in order e.g. that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may inherit” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:171).

The Abrahamic Covenant is *unconditional*. “After these things the word of Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram. I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, O Lord Jehovah, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and he that shall be possessor of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? And **Abram** said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed. And, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, **the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying**, This man shall not be thine heir. But he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in Jehovah. And he reckoned it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, **I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.** And he said, O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me a heifer three years old, and a she-goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each half over against the other. But the birds divided he not. And the birds of

prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. **And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram.** And, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge. And afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again. For the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. **And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces. In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.** The Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite” (Gen. 15:1-21). “The promise to the Patriarchs is unconditional, and confirmed by oath and abundant reiterated promises” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:298) “In its entirety, the Abrahamic covenant includes various features and is unconditional in every part of it, being that alone which Jehovah declares He will do for and through Abraham. Being unconditional, it cannot be broken by man” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:313). “That everlasting love will yet prevail and this unworthy people will inherit all that Jehovah has determined” (*ibid.*, p. 317). “Whether there would be a covenant program with Abraham depended upon Abraham’s act of obedience. When once he obeyed, the covenant that was instituted depended, not upon Abraham’s continued obedience, but upon the promise of the One who instituted it. The *fact* of the covenant depended upon obedience; the *kind* of covenant inaugurated was totally unrelated to the continuing obedience of either Abraham or his seed” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 75). “The covenant was not based on obedience, nor was the perpetuity of the covenant based on obedience—but rather the reception of covenant blessings was conditioned on obedience. Remember, an unconditional covenant may have conditional blessings” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 66). “Though a lack of faith resulting in disobedience would not nullify the Abrahamic Covenant, the covenanted blessings would not be extended to those who lacked faith in the unconditional covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 86). “This Abrahamic covenant was *unconditional* in character” (McClain, *GK*, p. 155). “Amillenarians believe that the Abrahamic covenant is based on certain conditions, and its fulfillment hinges on these conditions being met. Premillenarians hold that the Abrahamic

covenant is a declaration of God's intention which is not conditional upon the obedience of individuals or nations for its fulfillment—an unconditional plan of God" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 149). "Except for the original condition of leaving his homeland and going to the promised land, the covenant is made with no conditions whatever. It is rather a prophetic declaration of God of what will certainly come to pass, and is no more conditional than any other announced plan of God which depends upon God's sovereignty for its fulfillment" (*ibid.*, p. 150). "The latter discussion of the Davidic covenant and the New covenant constitutes a further indication of the unconditional character of God's promises to Abraham's seed" (*ibid.*, p. 152). "Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, p. 78] next presents some 'arguments to support the unconditional character of the covenant.' In the interactions between Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology, this issue is 'the crux of the whole discussion of the problem relating to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.' Pentecost proceeds to quote the evidences given by Walvoord, discussed previously. Pentecost's own contribution centers on the sealing of the covenant as recorded in Genesis 15. What God affirms in this chapter is that Abraham would have a son and reaffirms to Abraham what He said earlier 'concerning the seed and the land.' In keeping with the way covenants were made in that day, animal blood was shed and the bodies cut in half and lined up in two rows. The normal 'custom demanded that the two who entered into a blood covenant should walk together between the parts of the sacrifice.' This would make the covenant binding on both parties. However, if one party became guilty of violating any single term of the covenant, it would free the other party from the necessity of fulfilling his own promises contained in the covenant. In the case of Genesis 15, Abraham and God did not walk together between the pieces of the animals. God put Abraham to sleep and God alone walked between the pieces of the animals. This made the covenant binding on God alone. As for Abraham, this means that 'he could not be a participant in the covenant, but could only be a recipient of a covenant to which he brought nothing in the way of obligations.' What God did on that day was to bind Himself 'by a most solemn blood covenant to fulfill to Abraham, unconditionally, the promises concerning the seed and the land which were given to him.' Pentecost concludes that it was impossible 'for God to make it any clearer that what was promised to Abraham was given him without any conditions, to be fulfilled by the integrity of God alone'" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 343). "In this case, however, it was not God and Abraham who walked between the pieces of the animals, but God alone, binding only Himself to the terms of the covenant. This rendered the Covenant unconditional. Its fulfillment is

based purely on God's grace regardless of how often Abraham or his seed may fail" (*ibid.*, p. 573).

The Abrahamic Covenant is immutable, irrevocable and eternal. It is *immutable*, "**And he said, O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?** And he said unto him, Take me a heifer three years old... And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, **a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces.** In that day **Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.** The Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite" (Gen. 15:8-21). "**For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, 'I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU, AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.'** And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them **an oath given as confirmation** is an end of every dispute. In the same way **God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement,** we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:13-18). "The covenant declared immutable. The New Testament declares the Abrahamic covenant immutable (Heb. 6:13-18; cf. Gen. 15:8-21). It was not only promised but solemnly confirmed by the oath of God" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 152). *irrevocable*, "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to **Israel** until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus all **Israel** will be saved; just as it is written, **'THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.'** From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but **from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable**" (Rom. 11:25-29). "...the Abrahamic covenant... was irrevocable" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:467) and *eternal*. "**He hath remembered his covenant for ever, The word which he commanded to a thousand generations, The covenant which he made with Abraham, And his oath unto Isaac, And confirmed the same**

unto Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant” (Ps. 105:8–10) “This [Abrahamic] covenant reaches on to eternity, being everlasting in its duration” (Chafer, *ST*, p. 313). “The original covenant established with Abraham cannot be abrogated or fail” (McClain, *GK*, p. 89).

The Abrahamic Covenant is *yet to be fulfilled*. It is *still in effect*, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE’ — in order that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith**. Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man’s **covenant**, yet **when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it**. Now **the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ**. What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise**. For if **the inheritance** is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but **God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise”** (Gal. 3:13–18). “The original Abrahamic covenant, from which the others spring, in consequence alone remains in complete force. The covenant of this dispensation, called the New Testament, or the New Covenant, is none other than the Abrahamic renewed or confirmed by Jesus the Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:320). “By the death of the Seed provision is made so ‘that ([Galatians 3] v. 13, 14) the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,’—i.e. the promise contained in the Abrahamic covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 321). “We are living under the precious Abrahamic covenant, which is renewed or confirmed in Christ; and if we desire to inherit with Abraham and Christ, we must, by faith, become the seed of Abraham, and thus come into proper covenant relationship” (*ibid.*). “The very engrafting or adoption of Gentile believers into the covenanted, elect nation [place of Abrahamic blessing—*ed.*], is itself evidence that we live under the reconfirmed Abrahamic covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 324). “The Abrahamic covenant is an existing one, made sure by the death of Christ, under which we have the hope of inheritance, and which shall finally be realized” (*ibid.*, p. 325). “Under what covenant do we now live? ...the church now lived under the Abrahamic covenant and that it would ultimately reap the promises of that covenant and that the new covenant was the Abrahamic renewed or confirmed by the death of Christ, so that we had the strongest possible assur-

ance in its realization” (*ibid.*, p. 326). “Clarke (*Ten Religions*, p. 403), who regards Abraham’s life and influence alone from a historic point, remarks: ‘the most curious fact about this Jewish people is, that every one of them is a child of Abraham’ which ‘ancestral pride’ ‘has never been the case with any other nation.’ The reason is evident: the covenant relationship demanded such a descent, for it is only the children of Abraham, natural and adopted, that can obtain the promises. This was felt and acknowledged from the express terms of the covenant; and that covenant instead of being rescinded, annulled, or altered remains to-day in full force” (*ibid.*, p. 400). “...the ever-continued, because covenanted, preeminence of the Jewish nation” (*ibid.*). “Because the Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional, it is still very much in effect though it has remained largely unfulfilled. The ultimate fulfillment will come during the Kingdom Age” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 577). and has *not yet been entirely fulfilled*. “the descendants never possessed the land promised to Abraham from the Nile to the Euphrates” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:297) “The past non-fulfillment insures the future fulfillment, as God is faithful in all His promises” (*ibid.*, p. 298). “...that Christ is ‘the highest and last representative of the Abrahamic covenant.’ No! Never! For the covenant comprehends immensely more than the incarnation of the Messiah; it embraces His inheritance and future glory; it is world-embracing, for, as will be shown hereafter, in its brief but pregnant sentences, it includes the resurrection, restoration, and inheriting of the Patriarchs and of their believing descendants and of the adopted seed,—the Kingdom under the reign of that pre-eminent Seed, the ultimate salvation of the race as a race, the final removal of the curse, and the perfected Redemption of man and the creation” (*ibid.*, p. 328). “Christ Himself is the subject of covenanted promise not yet fulfilled, and therefore the covenant is not superseded in Christ, for that would destroy promises pertaining to Him” (*ibid.*, p. 329). “Let a peculiarity, attached to the fulfillment of this covenant, be deeply pondered, viz.: that in the history of a partial fulfillment in the past, it has never yet been so realized as to meet the natural wisdom of man, or to answer to the general anticipations of the period when thus fulfilled. Observe this procedure in the very beginning, when Abraham, contrary to all human expectations, raised up Seed in the covenanted line against the course of nature. And down to the miraculous birth of Abraham’s pre-eminent Seed, all things were so ordered that they did not meet the expectations of the mass of the nation. The Advent itself, a strictly literal fulfillment, did not meet the hopes entertained by the Jews. The calling of the Gentiles, to raise up a seed unto Abraham, was a thing unanticipated. Judging from the writings of the Church, its expectations have been repeatedly disappointed, so

much so that now men deliberately and unhesitatingly deny some of the most precious promises of the covenants, both relating to the Christ and His co-heirs, as e.g. the restoration of the Davidic throne and Kingdom and the inheriting of the land. Analogy teaches us what prophecy distinctly announces, that at the period when this covenant is to be most amply fulfilled by the Christ who confirmed it, the multitude including the kings and nations of the earth, will be arrayed against it, will have no faith in its realization. This, alone, should make us thoughtful and careful” (*ibid.*, p. 335). Regarding *the timing of the fulfillment of the provisions of the covenant*, “...the Epistle of Barnabas, who (Sec. 14 and 15) positively argues that God has not yet fulfilled the Abrahamic covenant, excepting in sending the Seed, Christ, who is the covenanted pledge that the remainder will be realized at the Sec. Advent, at ‘the day of restitution,’ at ‘the renewal of all things’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:324). “As stated earlier, while a covenant may be signed and sealed at a specific point of time, this does not mean that every provision goes immediately into effect. Three things happen. Some go into effect immediately, such as the changing of Abram’s and Sarai’s names and circumcision. Some go into effect in the near future, such as the birth of Isaac (25 years) and the Egyptian sojourn, enslavement, and the Exodus (400 years). Some go into effect in the distant future, such as the possession of all of the Promised Land by the patriarchs and their descendants” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 581). It is *not to be fulfilled entirely by the Church*. “...the exalting of means to accomplish the covenant into the covenant itself; the elevation of this dispensation, which is only preparatory, into the covenant; the making the Gospel, which gives the glad tidings how the covenant is to be realized and that we are invited to participate in its realization, the covenant, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:330). “No land is promised to the Church” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:310-311] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 519). It is to be fulfilled *literally*. “Was not Christ Abraham’s natural seed, and if so, did ‘seed’ stand for a type? Certainly not, for there is a literal fulfillment of promise” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:291). “How the Patriarchs understood this is evident by referring to what Isaac said to Jacob when he sent him away to Laban (Gen. 28:1-4): ‘God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land, wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.’ Can language be more definite? Does God so carefully reiterate the personal inheriting (and as carefully discriminate from such inheriting a present temporary sojourn in the land), of the land by the Patriarchs, and yet mean something very different from what the words properly denote? Many, alas, tell

us yes! But we respond, No! Never” (*ibid.*, p. 294)! “Evidently that which misleads the multitude in this matter is the statement of the apostle (Heb. 11:16 [‘But as it is, **they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for **He has prepared a city for them.**’]), that ‘they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly.’ Commentators, as Barnes, Bloomfield, etc., overlooking entirely the Theocratic relationship that this country (i.e. Palestine) is to occupy in the Kingdom of God, at once conclude that this ‘heavenly’ country is the third heaven. They forget that this phraseology would not mislead a Hebrew, who was accustomed to designate the restored Davidic Kingdom a heavenly Kingdom, and the country enjoying its restoration and Theocratic blessings, a heavenly country. The expression does not mean ‘the third heaven,’ but something that pertains to, or partakes of, the heavenly, as heavenly vision, body, calling, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 295). “The express language, as e.g. ‘the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed,’ precludes the typical theory” (*ibid.*, p. 299). “Multitudes allow themselves to be influenced in spiritualizing these promises because ‘a city’ is promised to Abraham, which is taken for granted to be the third heaven, etc. But the churches established by the apostles had no such idea... the future city of God is represented (Rev. 21:2, 10) as coming out of heaven upon this earth and *remaining here*” (*ibid.*, p. 300). “How often is the heart pained at the exceeding rashness of many, who either reject the language as ‘grossly carnal,’ or make it typical of something else, or spiritualize it into another meaning to suit a theory” (*ibid.*, p. 303). “The very coming of the Seed covenanted to Abraham, insures the fulfillment of the covenant as written... Literally He came, vindicating the truthfulness of the covenant given many centuries before, and teaching us, if we will but receive it, that *every promise* will be literally verified” (*ibid.*, p. 331). “[The] Abrahamic Covenant... The partial fulfillment recorded to the present has confirmed the intent of God to give literal fulfillment to the promises” (Walvoord, *MK*, 2:192). “‘Much of the covenant has already been fulfilled and fulfilled literally; therefore, what remains to be fulfilled will also be fulfilled literally’” [quoting Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, p. 457] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 336). It is to be fulfilled *by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob personally* (as well as by Israel nationally). “God gives us His ‘Memorial,’ which was to be ‘unto all generations’ (Ex. 3:15), ‘Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you; this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.’... Jesus, well knowing how the Jews held that the Patriarchs would be raised from the dead to inherit the land, told

them that Moses taught a resurrection when ‘he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ This Memorial was then given as proof (Luke 20:37) ‘that the dead are raised,’ and not, as many would teach us, of the immortality of the Patriarchs and their condition in the intermediate state. Neither immortality, nor the intermediate state, was the subject of dispute; the resurrection of the dead was denied, and the resurrection of the dead was defended... the covenant necessitates a resurrection... they themselves, personally, shall inherit the land” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:296). “Mede (*Works*, B. 4, Ep. 43), Brooks (*El. Proph. Interp.*, p. 33), and others tell us how Rabbi Gamaliel, the Preceptor of Paul, silenced the Sadducees by bringing against them Deut. 11:21, ‘which land the Lord swore that He would give to your fathers,’ arguing ‘that as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had it not, and God cannot lie, therefore they must be raised from the dead to inherit it’” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “Owing to the intervention of death, the temporary sojourn in the land is not recognized as the one that the covenant contemplates, for the latter presents it as ‘an everlasting possession.’ Hence... the [Mosaic/Davidic/Solomonic–*ed.*] Theocracy even was only an earnest of the Theocracy reestablished in power and glory, with its promised perpetuity, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 301). “It is simply folly to say that God promises certain things to the Patriarchs personally, and then tells them that they must experience death before they are realized, and leave the matter in this condition” (*ibid.*). “Since God had revealed Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:15), with whom He had entered into covenant relationships; since these men had died without receiving the fulfillment of the promises (Heb. 11:13); and since the covenants could not be broken, it was necessary for God to raise these men from the dead in order to fulfill His word” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 81). “In order for God to fulfill His promise to Abram, two things have to occur. Abram must be resurrected, and the Land must be restored to Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 421). It is to be fulfilled *by Christ*. “And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for **the land is mine [Jehovah’s, vs. 1]**: for ye are strangers and sojourners with me” (Lev. 25:23). “and it shall sweep onward into Judah; it shall overflow and pass through; it shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of **thy land, O Immanuel**” (Isa. 8:8). “Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord **Jehovah**: In that day when my people Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army; and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass

in the latter days, that I will bring thee against **my land**, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes” (Ezek. 38:14-16). “Then was **Jehovah** jealous for **his land**, and had pity on **his people**” (Joel 2:18). “Now **the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ.** What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise**” (Gal. 3:16-17). “and to **Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant**, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel” (Heb. 12:24). “Now (Gal. 3:16) to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, “And to seeds” as of many, but as of one, “And to thy seed,” which is Christ.’... the Seed, which is Christ, is to inherit the land... proprietorship in the land of Canaan is expressly reserved to God Himself (Lev. 25:23): “The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is mine”... This land is called ‘His land’ (Joel 2:18, ‘My land’ (Ezek. 38:16), ‘Immanuel’s land’ (Isa. 8:8); and being a covenanted inheritance of Abraham’s and David’s Seed, it is called ‘Thine inheritance’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:302). “The promise specifically is to the one Seed, and through Him to others” (*ibid.*, p. 303). “Jesus becomes, by virtue of His being the Seed of Abraham and because of His death (which provides the way of ultimate fulfillment through resurrection power, etc.), ‘the surety’ of its final realization” (*ibid.*, p. 322). “Now, instead of having the eye of faith solely directed to the future for the Seed as it once was, it is directed to the Seed as He came at the First Advent, and, hopeful at what it sees thus far, it looks onward to the Seed, glorified, as He shall come again” (*ibid.*, p. 334).

The Abrahamic Covenant is *to be received by us by faith*. “This Abrahamic covenant was always received by faith, simple faith. Thus the Patriarchs, the ancient worthies, the Apostolic Fathers, and many others, have received it. It demands to-day the same simple, confiding faith exercised by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, only that, in view of what God has done to verify it through Christ, we are less excusable if we do not entertain such faith” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:334).

The Patriarchs’ History From Abraham to the Exodus

In the Bible, the entire history of the world up until Abraham is covered in just eleven chapters, in Genesis chapters one through eleven. Then the pace of the narrative slows dramatically. The story of Abraham alone takes up the next fourteen chapters of Genesis, through chapter twenty-

five, then the stories of Isaac and Jacob fill the remaining twenty-five chapters of the book. This God-ordained allocation of textual real estate should give us a hint as to the relative importance of Abraham and his immediate descendants Isaac and Jacob (Israel) to the overall Kingdom program. “The more particular, detailed history of the world rightly begins with the history of Abraham (which alone occupies far more space than the whole antediluvian period) owing to its important covenanted relationship” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:492).

Summarizing the history of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Genesis, particularly as it relates to the Kingdom, “Now **Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.** So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him. And Lot went with him. And **Abram** was seventy and five years old when **he departed out of Haran.** And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran. And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan. And **into the land of Canaan they came.** And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And **Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.** And there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him” (Gen. 12:1-7). “And **the king of Sodom** went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, at the vale of Shaveh the same is the King’s Vale. And **Melchizedek king of Salem** brought forth bread and wine. And **he was priest of God Most High.** And **he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth.** And blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all. And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand unto Jehovah, God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread nor a shoe-latchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich. Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. Let them taken their portion” (Gen. 14:17–24). “And **Jehovah visited Sarah as he had said,**

and Jehovah did unto Sarah as he had spoken. And Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac” (Gen. 21:1-3). “**And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy handmaid. In all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice. For in Isaac shall thy seed be called**” (Gen. 21:12). “**and said, By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Because thou hast obeyed my voice**” (Gen. 22:16-18). “**And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac**” (Gen. 25:5-6). “**And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac dwelt by Beer-lahairoi**” (Gen. 25:11). “**And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren. And Jehovah was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her. And she said, If it be so, wherefore do I live? And she went to inquire of Jehovah. And Jehovah said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people. And the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau. And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau’s heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. And the boys grew. And Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field. And Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison. And Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob boiled pottage. And Esau came in from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage. For I am faint. Therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die. And what profit shall the birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me first. And he sware unto him. And he sold his birthright unto Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright**” (Gen. 25:21-34). “**And Jehovah appeared unto him**

[Isaac, vs. 18] the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father. Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake” (Gen. 26:24). **“And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father. And take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples. And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee. That thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham”** (Gen. 28:1-4). **“And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land”** (Gen. 35:9-12). **“Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise: Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, thou art gone up: He stooped down, he couched as a lion, And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh come: And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.** Binding his foal unto the vine, And his ass's colt unto the choice vine; **He hath washed his garments in wine, And his vesture in the blood of grapes:** His eyes shall be red with wine, And his teeth white with milk” (Gen. 49:8-12). “The word ‘sceptre’ indicates Kingly power, and the word ‘Shiloh’ is a name for the Messiah” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 82). “and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah,** the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals” (Rev. 5:5). **“And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob”** (Gen. 50:24). (See also Genesis 13:12-17, 15:1-21, 17:1-22, 18:11-14, 24:59-60, 26:1-5, 27:18-30 and 28:10-15.)

Dr. McClain reviews Abraham's history: “Following the frustration of man's first attempt to establish a world state, and the resultant rise of na-

tionalism through the confusion of language, God turned away from ‘man’ in the collective sense and called out one particular man through whom the divine regal will is to be accomplished on earth (Gen. 12:1-4)” (GK, p. 49). “The covenant with Abraham, of course, is essentially prophetic in nature and therefore will be discussed later... But this covenant is also a matter of history, and its fulfillment began incipiently at once to run its course. In Abraham, and later in both Isaac and Jacob, the mediatorial idea began to take concrete form historically in miniature. For Jehovah spoke immediately to these patriarchs, and they in turn mediated the divine will, although often very imperfectly” (*ibid.*, p. 50). “The Genesis record indicates that, within the scope of their own families, these great Hebrew men were genuine mediators through whom God ruled in the chosen line of humanity. They were almost absolute rulers in their own household, or clan, which included not only their own progeny but also servants, retainers, and even fighting men (Gen. 14:14). In their hands rested the power of life and death, as may be seen in the seeming callous exposure of Hagar and her child (Gen. 21:9-21), and in the freedom with which Abraham moved to offer up his son (Gen. 22). Furthermore, in his successful military expedition against the allied kings who had ravaged the Jordan Valley and carried away Lot, Abraham unquestionably regarded his slaughter of the kings as an act in harmony with the will of God (Gen. 14). It must not be overlooked, however, that in the exercise of their regal authority, the patriarchs are always held immediately responsible to God for their acts” (*ibid.*). “It is significantly in connection with Abraham that the strange and interesting figure of Melchizedek appears with tantalizing brevity in the inspired historical record (Gen. 14:17-24). The important point to be noticed is that he is named in Scripture ‘king of Salem’ and ‘priest of the most high God,’ and also that Abraham recognized him as a true regal representative of the true God by giving to him a tithe of all the booty taken in the battle. Whether or not Melchizedek stood alone in this capacity outside the Abrahamic line, the record does not state. It is possible that in the era before Abraham there were other kings who held a similar mediatorial authority between their subjects and the true God. At any rate, this one historical example is ample proof that the mediatorial idea was not totally unknown in the period before the call of Abraham. And the citation of this case in the inspired record may be intended to remind us that the God of the Bible is the God of both Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 3:29), and also to point typically to the future Mediatorial Kingdom when ‘the one mediator between God and men’ (1 Tim. 2:5) will reign over all nations, both Jew and Gentile” (*ibid.*). “The appearance of Melchizedek at this precise point in Biblical history has significance

dispensationally. The meeting of these two great figures, Abraham and Melchizedek, marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new order of things. As Westcott has said of the latter, ‘The lessons of his appearance lie in the appearance itself. Abraham marks a new departure... But before the fresh order is established we have a vision of the old in its superior majesty; and this, on the eve of disappearance, gives its blessing to the new.’ The ‘superior majesty’ of which Westcott speaks is, of course, a *typical* superiority” (*ibid.*, p. 51). Pentecost adds, “Abram had been brought up in a pagan household (Josh. 24:2 [And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, **Your fathers** dwelt of old time beyond the River, **even Terah, the father of Abraham**, and the father of Nahor: and **they served other gods.**]), in a pagan culture, and was dedicated to the worship of pagan gods. Indeed, at the time God appeared to him Abram lived in spiritual darkness” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 51). “The experience of the fullness of God’s blessings depended on the fullness of Abram’s obedience” (*ibid.*, p. 54).

The Sojourn in Egypt

In Exodus we have the story of the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt, in which it is made evident that Israel as a nation was to play a unique and important role in Jehovah’s Kingdom program. “But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that **Jehovah doth make a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel**” (Exodus 11:7). “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be **mine own possession from among all peoples**: for all the earth is mine: and **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of **Israel**” (Exodus 19:5-6). “But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured to Abraham, **the people increased and multiplied in Egypt**” (Acts 7:17)

Dr. McClain summarizes, “The departure of Israel from the promised land to go down into Egypt, apparently with divine approval (Gen. 46:1-4 [And **Israel** took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto **the God of his father Isaac**. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And **he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again**: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.]), raises the ancient theological problem of the relation between human freedom and divine sovereignty. It will help us here to remember that divine *precept*

and *prophecy* are two wholly different matters. The former tells man what he *ought* to do (Gen. 12:1 [Now **Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee.**]), while the latter foretells what man actually *will* do (Gen. 15:13 [And **he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years.**]). In the case of Jacob, once the fateful decision had been made, with all its complicated background of wrongdoing, *then* God graciously came to the patriarch with a reassurance that the promises will hold good in spite of human failure. Israel was responsible for his choices and would certainly suffer for his waywardness, but through all the tangled web of circumstances the providential purpose of God would be carried out” (GK, p. 51). “Thus the sojourn in Egypt, under God, became a providential means of disciplinary training. There the chosen people were brought in contact with a high and well-organized civilization; a great leader was raised up who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt; yet a sufficient measure of oppression was permitted to weld the tribes into a nation in preparation for the theocratic kingdom soon to be established” (*ibid.*). Pentecost adds, “God brought the people into bondage in order that they might experience the redemption that He would provide” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 70).

Chapter 10: The Theocratic Kingdom

Upon the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, Jehovah God established the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the world's first, and one and only theocratic, or God-ruled nation. The legal bases of the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel were the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Palestinian Covenants. Following its establishment at Mt. Sinai, the Kingdom developed via the Israelites' occupation of Palestine and its subsequent theocratic governance by Israel's judges, eventually reaching its heights in the Davidic and Solomonic monarchies.

Basis of the Jewish Theocracy

The bases or legal foundations of the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel were the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Palestinian Covenants. We covered the Abrahamic Covenant in our previous chapter; we'll cover the Mosaic and Palestinian Covenants in this chapter.

Covenant #5: The Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant was the second covenant that Jehovah made with Israel, the first one being the Abrahamic Covenant. It was made and ratified with the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, immediately after their exodus from Egypt and before their forty-year wilderness wandering.

Purposes of the Mosaic Covenant

The primary purposes of the Mosaic Covenant were to sanctify or set Israel apart from all other nations as Jehovah's one and only theocratic nation, and to provide the people of Israel with a rule of life that would be befitting their unique identity. "Now therefore, **if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples:** for all the earth is mine: and **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.** These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel" (Ex. 19:5-6). "The law covenant came by Moses (John 1:17; Ex 20:1-31:18), and was given by Jehovah as a conditional blessing to those who kept the Mosaic Law. It was made at Sinai where Jehovah said, 'Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation' (Ex. 19:5-6). Both the blessings and curses related to this covenant are stated in detail in Deuteronomy 28:1-68. This covenant is a rule of life addressed to a people who are in covenant relation to God by physical birth" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). "The Mosa-

ic covenant... According to the terms of this covenant, the nation of Israel would be established in the promised land, and her regal rights under the Abrahamic covenant would be *exercised there as long as the nation obeyed* the voice of God as expressed in the Mosaic Code of laws (Exod. 19:5-6 ff.)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 156). “The Mosaic covenant dealt not with the blessings of being *given* the land, but with the conditions of *living* in the land” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:513). “Israel became the people of God through its Mosaic Covenant relationship with Him” (Showers, *M*, p. 230) “The unsaved members of Israel were as much the Mosaic Covenant people of God as were the saved members” (*ibid.*, p. 231)

Statement of the Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant is stated in Exodus 20:1-31:18, filling twelve chapters of the Bible, so we won't be quoting it all here. It begins with the Ten Commandments, and consists of a total of six hundred thirteen laws, designed to govern the religious, moral and civil aspects of Jewish life. It also includes seven national feasts or festivals that are described in Leviticus 23:1-44. “...three definite elements: religious, moral, and civil... All the various aspects of the Mosaic Code fall within these three general realms” (McClain, *GK*, p. 65)

Characteristics of the Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant was *given to Israel only*. “**Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day**” (Deut. 5:3). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with **the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah**: not according to **the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake**, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). “The command to observe the Sabbath was given to Israel EXCLUSIVELY... The Sabbath Day then belongs to the Jews alone and is not binding on the Gentiles (the world), or on the Church (Christians)” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 31). “It is a noteworthy fact that the whole of the ‘Ten Commandments’ (Ex. 20:1-17) are reaffirmed in the New Testament, except

the ‘Fourth Commandment’ regarding the Sabbath” (*ibid.*). However, *provision was made within it for individual Gentiles*. “The Mosaic Law was never addressed to Gentiles ‘except for those Gentiles who become proselytes to Mosaic Judaism’” [quoting Chafer, *ST*, 4:159-162] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 376). “The conditional Mosaic Covenant... This was the middle wall of partition. Essentially, it kept the Gentiles from enjoying the spiritual blessings of the four unconditional covenants. For a Gentile to receive the blessings of the unconditional covenants, he had to totally submit to the Mosaic Law, take upon himself the obligations of the law and, for all practical purposes, live as a son of Abraham” (*ibid.*, p. 635).

The Mosaic Law was *not salvific*, but rather was merely *a rule of life for the Jewish People, who were already in covenant relationship with God*. “It is extremely important to remember that the Law of Moses was given to a *redeemed people*, not to *redeem a people*” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 87). “Because of immaturity Israel needed the Law, and because God is gracious, He provided it” (*ibid.*, p. 88). “The Law was designed to be a schoolmaster for Israel to control every area of the people’s lives. They as God’s children were not responsible to make decisions—their decisions were made for them by the Law. Their only responsibility then was to put themselves under its authority as a schoolmaster and to obey” (*ibid.*, p. 94). “Now, had it been designed as a means of salvation, the Law would have been a total failure and never could have been called good” (*ibid.*). “Paul did not give up what he considered to be bad for what was good, but he gave up what was good for that which was better; namely the superior worth there is in knowing Christ Jesus as Lord (Phil. 3:8 [More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of **the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ**])” (*ibid.*). “The Mosaic law under the dispensational approach, while a way of life, is not considered a way of salvation. Heaven was not among its rewards nor was hell among its punishments” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 80). “That the law was not a means of redemption is evident in that it was given to Israel only after the redemption from Egypt” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 379). “As with the Law of Moses, instructions and commandments of the New Testament are not the means of salvation but they are a ‘heavenly rule of life’ for those who are heavenly citizens through the power of God.” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:159-162] (*ibid.*). “Covenant Theologians need to stop ignoring such clear statements by Dispensationalists who have always rejected the teaching that the Law of Moses was a means of salvation” (*ibid.*, p. 437).

The Mosaic Covenant was a *conditional* covenant. “An he cried unto Jehovah; And Jehovah showed him a tree, and he cast it into the waters, and the waters were made sweet. There he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them; and he said, **If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his eyes, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will** put none of the diseases upon thee, which I have put upon the Egyptians: for I am Jehovah that healeth thee” (Ex. 15:25-26). “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, **if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then** ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine” (Ex. 19:4-5) “The Sinaitic Covenant... its conditional nature” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:311) “This life-governing covenant, being conditional, has been broken by men and will be superseded by the new covenant” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). “A sixth, and very crucial, feature of the kingdom-covenant with Israel was its *conditional* nature. The introductory clause lays down the divine condition: ‘If ye will obey my voice indeed’ (Exod. 19:5). And the central thing thus qualified is stated in the words which follow: ‘Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests’ (vs. 6). In this conditional feature we have one great difference between the initial covenant with Abraham and the kingdom-covenant at Sinai, for they are not the same (Deut. 5:3 [**Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.**]). The latter was made dependent on obedience; and on this ground its continuity could be interrupted, and was historically, by the failure of the people. But the terms of the Abrahamic covenant, being wholly sovereign and unconditioned, hold good in every age. As to the conditionality of the kingdom-covenant at Sinai, it is important to remember that this had to do only with the regal and mediatorial activity of Israel in her own land in relation to Jehovah and the nations. There is no question here of the position of Israel as the elect nation of God. Neither is there here any proposal of an individual salvation based on legal obedience. Although the Law was given to Israel upon this occasion, the covenant does not set forth a way of salvation by means of law-keeping. The conditional clause qualifies the continuance of the nation of Israel in her favored position in the mediatorial kingdom of Old Testament history, functioning as God’s ‘kingdom of priests’ among the nations on earth” (McClain, *GK*, p. 62). “Thus it is clear that we have here a covenant which is *conditional*, that is, dependent for its fulfillment upon the actions of the people. In this respect, the Mosaic covenant is radically different from both the Abrahamic

covenant which preceded it and the Davidic covenant which followed it. The terrible curses of divine judgment attached to the Mosaic covenant are wholly absent from the other two” (*ibid.*, p. 156). “It was precisely this conditional nature of the Mosaic covenant that led to its failure. Since its fulfillment depended on man’s complete obedience (Deut. 27:26), it could not succeed... For this reason there had to be a ‘new covenant’ to replace it” (*ibid.*, p. 157). “In contrast to the Abrahamic Covenant, which was *unconditional*, the Mosaic Covenant was *conditional* ([Ex.] 15:25-26; 19:4-5; 26:3-46[?—*ed.*])” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 85). “A conditional covenant... the Mosaic Covenant is such a covenant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 335). “Of the five Jewish covenants, the Mosaic was the only conditional one” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 404). “Unlike the unconditional Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant was conditional” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:511).

The Mosaic Covenant was *temporary*. “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake**, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). “Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband... But now **we have been released from the Law**, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter” (Rom. 7:1-6). “You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on **tablets of stone**, but on tablets of human hearts. And such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, in

letters **engraved on stones**, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, **fading as it was**, how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses it. For if **that which fades away** was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory” (2 Cor. 3:2-11). “For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom. 10:4). “Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for **another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron**” (Heb. 7:11)? “For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. For finding fault with them, He says, ‘Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, **When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers On the day when I took them by the hand To lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they did not continue in My covenant**, And I did not care for them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, And I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, And they shall be My people. And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, And everyone his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ For all shall know Me, From the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more.’ **When He said, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear**” (Heb. 8:7-13). “This life-governing covenant, being conditional, has been broken by men and will be superseded by the new covenant” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). “All of Israel’s covenants are called eternal except the Mosaic covenant which is declared to be temporal, i.e., it was to continue only until the coming of the promised Seed” [quoting Charles Fred Lincoln, *The Covenants*, p. 26] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 69). “...there was in the Law that which is revelatory of the holiness of God... This revelatory aspect of the Law is permanent” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 93). “It is this regulatory aspect of the Law that was temporary and that has since been done away with” (*ibid.*). “The writer to the Hebrews does make specific reference to the New Covenant in [chapter 8] verses 7-13... quoting Jeremiah 31:31-34, to show that when God served notice that He would take

away the Mosaic Covenant and institute a New Covenant with the house of Israel and of Judah, He was serving notice that the Mosaic Covenant was a temporary and transitory covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 288). “As a rule of life, the Law of Moses was temporary, ‘which ran its course for 1500 years,’ but came to an end with the death of the Messiah.” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:18] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 374). “Jews continue to keep the law because of unbelief” (*ibid.*, p. 477). “The law has come to an end in Christ and cannot function in justification or sanctification. For the believer especially it has been rendered inoperative” (*ibid.*, p. 644). “The Law of Moses provided the basis for the Levitical priesthood and there was an inseparable connection between the Law of Moses and the Levitical priesthood... If the Mosaic Law was still in effect, Jesus could not function as a priest. Because the Mosaic Law is no longer in effect, Jesus can be a priest after the Order of Melchizedek” (*ibid.*, p. 645). “II Corinthians 3:2-11... In verses three and seven the spotlight is on the Ten Commandments since it is these which were engraven on stones. The main point then is that the Law of Moses, especially as represented by the Ten Commandments, is a ‘ministration of death’ and a ‘ministration of condemnation.’ If the Ten Commandments were still in force today, this would still be true. However, they are no longer in force, for it states in verses seven and eleven that the law has ‘passed away.’ The Greek word used is *katargeo*, which means ‘to render inoperative.’ Since the emphasis in this passage is on the Ten Commandments, this means that the Ten Commandments have passed away. The thrust is very clear. The Law of Moses, and especially the Ten Commandments, is no longer in effect. In fact, the superiority of the Law of Christ is seen by the fact that it will never be rendered inoperative. Unlike Covenant Theology, Dispensationalism does not insist that the Ten Commandments are still in force and do exegetical gymnastics to avoid observing the Sabbath, the very way the Ten Commandments actually require” (*ibid.*, p. 646). “True, Jesus did come to fulfill the law; but the Law of Moses did not end with the coming of the Messiah, or by His life, but by His death” (*ibid.*, p. 648). “Whereas the Abrahamic covenant is everlasting (Gen. 17:19), the Mosaic covenant was temporal and would be replaced” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:511). “While the basic moral principles, reflective of God’s moral nature, embedded in the theocratic construct of old Testament Israel, are the same immutable principles expressed in the context of grace for the New Testament church, nevertheless, church-age believers are not under Mosaic Law, which has been fulfilled and passed away” (*ibid.*, p. 517).

The Mosaic Law was *fulfilled by Christ*, Who was the individual “Israel.” “Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye peoples, from far: Jeho-

vah hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name: and he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me: and he hath made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he kept me close: and he said unto me, **Thou art my servant; Israel**, in whom I will be glorified” (Isa. 49:1-3). “Do not think that I came to abolish **the Law** or the Prophets; **I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill**” (Matt. 5:17). “For not knowing about God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom. 10:3-4). “The law was done away with not by destruction but by fulfillment: Jesus said, ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them’ (Matt. 5:17)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:516).

The Mosaic Law was *superseded by the Law of Christ*. “to those who are without law, as without law, though **not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ**, that I might win those who are without law” (1 Cor. 9:21). “Bear one another’s burdens, and thus fulfill **the law of Christ**” (Gal. 6:2). “For **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus** has set you free from the law of sin and of death” (Rom. 8:2). “The Law of Moses has been disannulled and we are now under a new law. This new law is called the Law of Christ in Galatians 6:2 and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Romans 8:2. This is a brand new law, totally separate from the Law of Moses. The Law of Christ contains all the individual commandments from Christ and the Apostles applicable to a New Testament believer” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 650). “Many commandments are the same as those of the Law of Moses. For example, nine of the Ten Commandments are also in the Law of Christ. But... there is no Sabbath law now (Rom. 14:5; Col. 2:16) and no dietary code (Mark 7:19; Rom. 14:20)” (*ibid.*). “One man regards one day above another, another **regards every day alike**. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind” (Rom. 14:5). “Therefore **let no one act as your judge in regard to** food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or **a Sabbath day** — things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ” (Col. 2:16-17). “‘because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?’ (Thus **He declared all foods clean.**)” (Mark 7:19) “Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of **food. All things indeed are clean**, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense” (Rom. 14:20). “The reason there is so much confusion over the relationship of the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ is that many commandments are similar to those found in the Mosaic Law, and many have concluded that certain sections of the law have,

therefore, been retained” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 651). “Jewish believers have the freedom to observe the law, but this is far from saying that they are required to keep the law. It allows for voluntary Sabbath-keeping, but not for mandatory Sabbath-keeping” (*ibid.*, p. 668).

Regarding the relationship of the Mosaic Covenant to the Abrahamic Covenant, “The relationship between the unconditional Abrahamic and conditional Mosaic covenants can be summarized thus: (1) The Abrahamic covenant takes precedence over the Mosaic covenant... The Mosaic covenant was (1) initiated after the Abrahamic covenant and (2) had an ending point (2) The Mosaic covenant did not void the Abrahamic covenant (cf. Gal. 3:17 [What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.**]) (3) The Abrahamic covenant is unconditional, while the Mosaic covenant was conditional (v. 12) (4) The Mosaic covenant was instituted because of human sinfulness (v. 19), whereas the Abrahamic covenant was given because of God’s graciousness (5) The Mosaic covenant was temporary (v. 19); the Abrahamic covenant is forever” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:517)

The Mosaic Covenant *did not supersede the Abrahamic Covenant*. “What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.** For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but **God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.** Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. **Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be!** For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” (Gal. 3:17-25). “Galatians 3:17-25... *The law [the time-bound Mosaic Covenant], introduced 430 years later [than the timeless Abrahamic Covenant], does not set aside the [Abrahamic] covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:515).

Covenant #6: The Palestinian Covenant

The Palestinian Covenant was the third covenant that Jehovah made with Israel, after the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants. It was made by God with the generation of Israelites that was about to enter and possess the Promised Land.

Purpose of the Palestinian Covenant

The purpose of the Palestinian Covenant was to answer the question of Israel's ongoing relation to the land promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, in light of the (recently inaugurated) Mosaic Covenant. "Pentecost's [*Things to Come*, p. 95] introduction spells out the questions that this covenant was intended to answer: Is the land of Palestine still their possession? Did the inauguration of the Mosaic covenant, which all agree was conditional, set aside the unconditional Abrahamic covenant? Could Israel hope to enter into permanent possession of their land in the face of such opposition? To answer these important questions God stated again His covenant promise concerning Israel's possession of and inheritance in the land in Deuteronomy 30:1-10, which statement we call the Palestinian covenant, because it answers the question of Israel's relation to the land promises of the Abrahamic covenant" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 344). "God made it very clear to the new generation about to enter the Promised Land that He would deal with the covenant nation on the basis of the principle that obedience would bring blessing and disobedience would bring discipline and possibly even disaster. If the nation did disobey, the people would not experience the covenanted blessings apart from repentance which produced obedience" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 108). "It is impossible to understand the recorded history of the covenant nation as found in the Scriptures apart from an understanding of the principle laid down in the Palestinian Covenant, nor to understand the emphasis on repentance in the message of the Old Testament prophets or in the messages of John the Baptist and Christ Himself, apart from that covenant. That covenant is a key that unlocks the mystery of God's dealing with His people" (*ibid.*, p. 123).

Name of the Palestinian Covenant

The Palestinian Covenant is named as such because the land of Palestine is its major subject. "For lack of a better name, the second covenant is known as the Palestinian Covenant for it largely concerns the land known for centuries as Palestine. This is now an unfortunate term for two reasons. First, it was a name given to the land by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the second Jewish revolt under Bar Cochba (A.D. 132-135) for the purpose of erasing any Jewish remembrance of the land as part of his policy to 'de-

judaize' the land. Second, due to the historical events in the Middle East in this century, the name is associated more with Arabs than with Jews. Perhaps a better title would have been 'the Land Covenant' since 'Palestine' is not a biblical designation anyway. However, since most are familiar with the above title, it will be so used in this work, but with reservation" (Frucht-enbaum, *I*, p. 581).

Statement of the Palestinian Covenant

The Palestinian Covenant is found in Deuteronomy 30:1-10: "And it shall come to pass, **when** all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou** shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and **shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey** his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that **then Jehovah** thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and **will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul**, that thou mayest live. And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And Jehovah thy God will make thee plenteous in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul" (Deut. 30:1-10).

Features of the Palestinian Covenant

The two main features of the Palestinian Covenant concern Israel's ownership of the land and her world-wide dispersion and regathering.

Regarding Israel's *ownership of the land*, "And it shall come to pass, **when** all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou** shalt call them to mind among all

the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and **shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice... Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it**; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deut. 30:1-5). “The Palestinian Covenant ‘made possession and occupancy of the land, the right of ownership to which was included in the Abrahamic Covenant, contingent upon obedience to God while in the land.’ This means that Israel can ‘still have right of title to Palestine and yet not occupy it’” [quoting Feinberg, *Israel*, pp. 117-126] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 506). “The general dispensational view is that the Palestinian Covenant is unconditional and guaranteed Israel’s ownership of the land in spite of disobedience. While the enjoyment of the land is conditioned on obedience, as brought out by the Mosaic Covenant, ownership of the land is not, as brought out by the Abrahamic Covenant” (*ibid.*). “The special importance of the Palestinian Covenant is that it reaffirmed Israel’s title deed to the land. Although she would prove unfaithful and disobedient, the right to the land would never be taken from her. While her enjoyment of the land is conditioned on obedience, ownership of the land is unconditional. Furthermore, it shows that the conditional Mosaic Covenant did not lay aside the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 583). “The failure of all other occupiers of the land to set up an independent government again shows that this covenant continues to operate” (*ibid.*, p. 631). “Never in Old Testament history did Israel possess, dwell, and settle in all of the Promised Land. Nor did it ever happen in Jewish history since. However, the Palestinian Covenant guarantees that some day it will” (*ibid.*, p. 632). “The land promises of the Abrahamic Covenant were further enlarged and confirmed through the Palestinian Covenant” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 140). We’ll discuss Israel’s possession of the land further in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.

Regarding Israel’s *world-wide dispersion and regathering*, “And it shall come to pass, **when** all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou** shalt call them to mind **among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy**

God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deut. 30:1-5). “The Palestinian Covenant promised a final world-wide regathering following a world-wide dispersion” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 631).

Characteristics of the Palestinian Covenant

The Palestinian Covenant was *given to* and was *to be fulfilled literally by Israel*. “At least one provision of the covenant has already been fulfilled: the world-wide scattering of the Jewish people. This ‘partial fulfillment’ was literally fulfilled and this ‘indicates a future literal fulfillment of the unfulfilled portions” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 98] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 345).

The Palestinian Covenant is *unconditional*. “And it shall come to pass, **when all these things are come upon thee**, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou shalt** call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and **shalt return** unto Jehovah thy God, and **shalt obey** his voice... **Jehovah thy God will** bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and **thou shalt** possess it; and **he will** do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deut. 30:1-5). “While the enjoyment of the land may be conditioned by obedience, the ownership of the land is not” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 344). “Because the covenant is unconditional, the ‘program is certain’; but ‘the time when this program will be fulfilled depends upon the conversion of Israel.’ Although the time element is conditional, this does ‘not make the whole program conditional” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 98] (*ibid.*, p. 345).

The Palestinian Covenant is *still in effect*. “The Palestinian Covenant, being an unconditional covenant, is still very much in effect” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 583).

The Palestinian Covenant is *eternal*. “The Ezekiel reconfirmation (16:60) called it ‘an eternal covenant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 345). “Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an **everlasting covenant**” (Ezek. 16:60).

Development of the Jewish Theocracy

The Theocratic Kingdom of Israel was established for a number of clearly-defined purposes and with a God-ordained structure. It was established miraculously by God, and it passed through several developmental

stages before reaching its zenith of glory in the Davidic/Solomonic monarchy.

Definition of Theocracy

A theocracy is *a nation ruled by God*. “For **Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king**; he will save us” (Isa. 33:22). “The theocracy is not to be mistaken for a hierarchy, nor can it be strictly identified with any existent form of political organization” (McClain, *GK*, p. 66).

Purposes of the Theocracy

The *purposes* of the Theocratic Kingdom were to commence God’s earthly rule, to reveal God to all of humanity, to judge Israel, to bless all of humanity and to glorify God.

The theocracy was purposed *to commence God’s earthly rule*. “The Theocracy did not adumbrate something else, but was itself the Kingdom of God in its initiatory form—a commencement of that rule of God’s as earthly King, which, if the Jews had rendered the obedience required, would have extended and widened itself until all nations had been brought under its influence and subjection” [quoting Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:218] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 440). “If God is not again to be manifested in union with an earthly Ruler—yea, as Kurtz and others, is not to stoop to become an earthly Ruler Himself—what avails, and how are we to understand, the interest that God has once taken in earthly government” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:549).

The theocracy was to *reveal God to all of humanity*. “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then **ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples**: for all the earth is mine: and **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of **Israel**” (Ex. 19:5-6). “**Ye [Israel, vs. 1] are my witnesses, saith Jehovah**, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: **before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me**. *I*, even *I*, am Jehovah; and **besides me there is no saviour**. I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed; and there was no strange god among you: therefore **ye are my witnesses**, saith Jehovah, and I am God” (Isa. 43:10-12). “The Tribe of Levi represented Israel before God; and Israel was to represent the Gentile nations before God. This was perhaps the primary purpose of Israel’s national election and all other reasons are subservient to this one” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 570). “In this passage [Isaiah 43:10-12], Israel was chosen to

proclaim to the Gentile nations two things: first, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the only God; and, second, He is the only Savior and all who seek salvation must find it in Him” (*ibid.*). “Israel was sanctified or set apart, according to Exodus 19:5-6, to become a kingdom of priests, that is, a nation that mediated the truth of God to the other nations of the earth” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 91). “In the Old Testament, Israel was designed to be God’s light to the Gentile world” (*ibid.*, p. 258).

The theocracy was to *judge Israel*. “...judgment is a chief function of God ruling as King” (McClain, *GK*, p. 53)

The theocracy was to *bless all of humanity*. “Now Jehovah said unto **Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And **I will make of thee a great nation**, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And **in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed**” (Gen. 12:1–3). “since **Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed**” (Gen. 18:18)? “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then **ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples**: for all the earth is mine: and **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of **Israel**” (Ex. 19:5-6). “yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou [specifically, the Messiah, vss. 1-7—*ed.*] shouldest be my servant to **raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth**” (Isa. 49:6). “Those who are inclined to find fault with the concept of a ‘chosen nation’ in the Kingdom of God sometimes forget that this concept was never intended as an end in itself, but rather a means to a vastly greater end which envisioned the good of all nations of men” (McClain, *GK*, p. 72). “Isaiah 49:6... Israel was not designed to be a mere receptacle of God’s blessing—Israel would channel it to the whole world (cf. Isa. 55:3-4)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:506). “Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for **a witness to the peoples**, a leader and commander to the peoples” (Isa. 55:3–4).

The theocracy was to *glorify God*. “**Thou hast increased the nation, O Jehovah, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land**” (Isa. 26:15). “I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall

not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for **Israel my glory**" (Isa. 46:13). "Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye peoples, from far: **Jehovah hath called me from the womb**; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name: and he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me: and he hath made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he kept me close: **and he said unto me, Thou art my servant; Israel, in whom I will be glorified**" (Isa. 49:1-3). "Thy people also shall be all righteous; **they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified**" (Isa. 60:21).

Structure of the Theocracy

As to its *structure*, the Theocratic Kingdom had Jehovah as its invisible King, was a Jewish nation, was mediated by Moses, was the Kingdom of God, and had the civil and priestly functions separated.

The theocracy had *Jehovah as its invisible King*. "The Theocracy was a monarchy, but God was the monarch" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:227). "...sovereignty... This is the essential attribute of God in His regal activity" (McClain, *GK*, p. 53). "...the children of Israel as they stood victoriously on the shore of the Red Sea and shouted, 'The LORD shall reign for ever and ever' (Exod. 15:18)" (*ibid.*, p. 56). "Moses... He was strictly limited to executive and judicial functions. As a mediatorial ruler, he had no legislative rights whatsoever (Deut. 17:18-20)" (*ibid.*, p. 68). "And it shall be, **when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom**, that he shall write him a copy of **this law** in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and **he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them**; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and **that he turn not aside from the commandment**, to the right hand, or to the left: **to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom**, he and his children, in the midst of Israel" (Deut. 17:18-20).

The theocracy was *a Jewish nation*. "For **thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth**" (Deut. 14:2). "**He showeth his word unto Jacob, His statutes and his ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation**; And as for his ordinances, they have not known them. Praise ye Jehovah" (Ps. 147:19-20). "...position of the Jewish

nation, etc., which find their true intent brought out in relationship with this Theocratic Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:504).

The theocracy was *mediated by Moses*. “This **Moses** whom they disowned, saying, “Who made you a ruler and a judge?” **is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer** with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush” (Acts 7:35). “Why **the Law** then? It was added because of transgressions, having been **ordained** through angels **by the agency of a mediator**, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. Now **a mediator** is not for one party only; whereas God is only one” (Gal. 3:19–20). “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the **mediator of a better covenant**, which has been enacted on better promises” (Heb. 8:6). “But although the ministry of Moses in mediatorial intercession for Israel continued faithfully without interruption through all their terrible lapses into such sins as idolatry and degrading lust, it is a striking fact that when open rebellion breaks out against Moses *as the divinely authorized mediatorial ruler*, there is no record of intercession on behalf of the rebels. Korah and his followers perished without mercy under the immediate judgment of God, an event pointing unmistakably to the great antitypical Prophet like unto Moses whose blessed intercession is for only those who accept Him as the one mediator between God and men. ‘I pray for them,’ He says, ‘I pray not for the world’ (John 17:9)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 58). “It is altogether fitting, therefore, that in his official capacity as the first mediatorial ruler in the theocratic kingdom of history, Moses is presented in Scripture as a type of Christ, who will be the perfect embodiment of God’s mediatorial ruler in the final phase of the mediatorial kingdom on earth. It is true that this future ruler is named a prophet, as Moses himself predicted. ‘The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me’ (Deut. 18:15). But the Coming One will be more than a prophet; like Moses He will also be a ruler over His people, and His regal authority will be absolute: ‘It shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name,’ God declares, ‘I will require it of him’ (Deut. 18:19). The Apostle Peter applies this very passage to our Lord in the New Testament, connecting its fulfillment with His Second Advent, and emphasizing the absolute nature of His rule: ‘It shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people’ (Acts 3:19-23). By no device of exegesis can the force of this great prophecy, considered in relation to its original context and sense, be watered down to fit the theory of a ‘kingdom of grace’ existing only in the hearts of men. On this point the terrible fate of Korah and

his followers, as a swift judgment upon the rebellion against Moses, stands as a clear testimony as to the meaning of the prophecy concerning the regal authority of that coming prophet who will be a greater than Moses. And the writer of Hebrews repeats the warning in unmistakable words: ‘For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven’ (Heb. 12:25). The verses following indicate: first, that it was the voice of God that shook the earth in the days of Moses; second, that the same voice will in the future shake both earth and the heavens; and third, that the coming judgment will be connected with a ‘kingdom which cannot be shaken’ (Heb. 12:28, ASV), out of which, we are assured elsewhere, all forms of rebellion shall be purged by the coming prophet who is also called ‘the Son of man’ (Matt. 13:41-43 [**‘The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.’]**)” (*ibid.*, p. 59). “...Moses, first of Israel’s mediatorial rulers” (*ibid.*, p. 167) “Moses was the first and the greatest of all the mediatorial rulers in the historical Theocratic Kingdom of Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 356). “Among all the prophets of Old Testament history, Moses occupied an absolutely unique position. He was the first mediatorial ruler in the historical Kingdom of God on earth” (*ibid.*, p. 405).

The theocracy was *the Kingdom of God*. “The Theocracy did not adumbrate something else, but was itself the Kingdom of God in its initiatory form—a commencement of that rule of God’s as earthly King, which, if the Jews had rendered the obedience required, would have extended and widened itself until all nations had been brought under its influence and subjection” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:218). “In the Theocracy, which gave outward form and prominence to the Kingdom, the religious and political commonwealth, the church and the state were, by Divine constitution, identical, one... just so soon as the separation was effected by the overthrow of the Jewish state, the distinctive idea of a Kingdom then existing, also, as the nature of the case demanded in consistency, vanished. This arrangement, this fundamental union we have already proven was God’s own expressed definition of a Kingdom, and when this was lacking all the holy men deplored the overthrow of the Kingdom and predicted its restoration” (*ibid.*, p. 663). “...the only kingdom ever established by God Himself on earth over a single nation in human history” (McClain, *GK*, p. 53). “Since a kingdom of God was about to be established in history, it was essential that sinful men

should be given historic evidence that Jehovah is the true God and sovereign over the nations" (*ibid.*, p. 55).

In the theocracy, *the civil and priestly functions were separated*. "The union of civil and priestly functions in one person, as in the case of Melchizedek, seems to have been unauthorized by the legal constitution of Israel. It evidently was regarded as a dangerous system as long as the rule of God is mediated through sinful men. It will become the ideal system, however, in the future millennial reign of the sinless Son of God who is both God and Man" (McClain, *GK*, p. 74).

Establishment of the Theocracy

The Theocratic Kingdom of Israel was *established* by God's choice, miraculously.

The theocracy was established *by God's choice*. "And **I will establish my covenant between me and thee [Abraham] and thy seed after thee, throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee**" (Gen. 17:7). "And **I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their sojournings, wherein they sojourned**" (Ex. 6:4). "Only **Jehovah had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as at this day**" (Deut. 10:15). "For **thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth**" (Deut. 14:2). "Israel's original election was according to the purest grace, and so will be the climactic salvation of national Israel unto holiness as God's people" (Horner, *FI*, p. 321).

The theocracy was established *miraculously*. The miraculous nature of Israel's establishment can be seen in *Israel's very existence*, "And God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and moreover **I will give thee a son** of her. Yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations. Kings of peoples shall be of her. Then **Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?** And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before thee! **And God said, Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son. And thou shalt call his name Isaac. And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him**" (Gen. 17:15–19). "And **Jehovah visited Sarah as he**

had said, and Jehovah did unto Sarah as he had spoken. And Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, **Isaac**. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. And **Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born** unto him. **And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh.** Every one that heareth will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should give children suck? For **I have borne him a son in his old age**" (Gen. 21:1–7). "Kurtz (*Sac. His.*, p. 71) has aptly said, in view of children being raised up to Abraham against the course of nature: 'He, therefore, chose in Abraham a people which was called into existence only by his almighty creative power'" (Peters, *TTK*, p. 207). in Israel's *deliverance from Egypt*, "For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath **God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes**" (Deut. 4:32-34)? "Hear this word that Jehovah hath spoken against you, O children of **Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth:** therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos 3:1-2). "The miracles at the deliverance of the Jewish nation are also thus found to be only indicative of a still greater exertion of Supernatural power at the deliverance of that nation still future" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:472). "There is a definite parallel between the supernatural preparation for the kingdom in history under Moses and the supernatural judgments which shall be poured out upon a rebellious world in preparation for the future millennial kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ at His second advent. There is the same insolent challenge to the true God on the part of the Gentile powers (Ps. 2:1-3 [**Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us.**]). There will be a similar gracious but infinitely greater prelimi-

nary miracle—the Rapture of the Church—warning men of the supremacy of Jehovah and the ultimate defeat of all who rebel against Him. There will be the same swift progression in the severity of the divine judgments which follow, and even a striking parallel in the nature of the judgments (cf. Rev. 6 through 18). There will be the same victorious outcome, the destruction of the antichrist and his armies in the judgment of Armageddon, and the deliverance of the people of Israel (Rev. 19). There will be another song of victory, significantly referred to as ‘the song of Moses... and the song of the Lamb’ (Rev. 15:1-3 [And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and **them that come off victorious from the beast**, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. And **they sing the song of Moses** the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages.]”) (McClain, *GK*, p. 56). “The historical theocratic kingdom is replete with similar intrusions of supernatural power. The ancient kings of Egypt and Assyria could bear no uncertain testimony as to the reality and effectiveness of the heavy hand of God in the ‘power politics’ of their day. Let the reader recall what happened to Pharaoh and his armies in the Red Sea—‘there remained not so much as one of them... and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day’ (Exod. 14:28-30). Or consider the fate of the arrogant Assyrians at a later date—‘The angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: ...behold, they were all dead corpses’ (2 Kings 19:35). In the clear light of history, why should it seem incredible and unworthy for God to do once more—this time universally and permanently—what He has so often done in the past” (*ibid.*, p. 153)? and in Israel’s *initiation at Sinai*. “For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? **Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?** Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes” (Deut. 4:32-34)? “The manifestation of God at Sinai was something uniquely different from all previous appearances. There had

been other theophanies: when God had come down to commune with Adam in the Garden; to visit Abraham in his pilgrim tent; to confirm later the divine covenant with the patriarch; and to call Moses to lead the tribes out of the land of Egypt. In these appearances there was a note of gracious and personal intimacy. But at Sinai we have a theophany of unprecedented majesty and grandeur; its attendant phenomena visible to an entire nation; and evidently designed to reveal unforgettably the sovereign character of Jehovah, who is superlatively holy and the King Eternal, now ready to establish a kingdom of His own on earth among men. According to the divine instructions given to Moses, the people must be sanctified for two days and thus be prepared for the third day when the LORD would 'come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai' (Exod. 19:10-11). There were thunderings and lightnings, a thick cloud, the smoke of a furnace, a mighty shaking of the mountain, and the increasing tempo of a great trumpet sound. 'And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel' (Exod. 24:17). Out of this impressive setting came the voice of Jehovah to Moses who in turn mediated the divine revelation to the people" (McClain, *GK*, p. 60). "The revelation began with the proffer of a covenant which is recorded as follows: 'Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel' (Exod. 19:4-6). With reference to this covenant several points should be noted" (*ibid.*, p. 61). "First, we have here the first occurrence of the word 'kingdom' in the Bible, where the idea is directly associated with the rule of God. This is to be no ordinary kingdom where men will rule upon earth in their own right, but rather a kingdom 'unto me,' that is, unto Jehovah. In other words, whatever else its characteristics may be, it is to be, first of all, *God's* kingdom" (*ibid.*). "Second, in this proposed covenant the kingdom is to be given to one nation, which is to be lifted up above all other nations in this relationship; and this nation is named 'the children of Israel' (vs. 6). There can be no esoteric interpretation of the words used upon this historic occasion. The people here were the descendants of Abraham by natural generation, a literal people standing at that very moment before the literal mountain of Sinai. These facts point to something altogether different from that general rule of God over all the nations which is exercised providentially without interruption" (*ibid.*). "Third, in the setting up of this new kingdom, which has a definite

beginning in the process of history, the other nations of the earth are not ignored. Although Israel is indeed to be set above all other peoples as the LORD's 'peculiar treasure' or 'possession' (ASV), they are not to forget that the other nations are claimed by Jehovah; for, as He declares, 'All the earth is mine' (vs. 5). These words shut out of court the notion advanced by some critical scholars that Jehovah in early Biblical records is conceived of merely as a national or tribal God; and the same words should have guarded the Israelites from the unwarranted and selfish exclusiveness which developed in later history. The Apostle Paul saw this truth clearly as he wrote in the book of Romans that the God of the Scriptures is not the God of the Jews only, but the God 'of the Gentiles also' (3:29)" (*ibid.*). "Fourth, it is only in the light of this universal relation of Jehovah to all nations that a unique feature of the historical kingdom can be properly understood, namely, that the nation of Israel is to be a 'kingdom of priests' (vs. 6). Now it is the main function of priests to mediate between God and men. Therefore, since all nations on earth are within the purview of the covenant, in the sense that they are to share somehow as beneficiaries of the act, the divine call of Israel must have had as one of its purposes the idea of one nation acting mediatorially in religious matters between the true God and the nations of the earth. Thus the mediatorial nature of the historical kingdom is broadened: it is not only that God will reign over one nation through a mediatorial ruler, but that through the nation thus ruled there will be mediated the blessings of God to all other nations" (*ibid.*, p. 62). "Fifth, because of Israel's favored relation to God, and also because of her exalted regal position as the accredited representative of God to all other nations, Israel must be an 'holy nation' (vs. 6). The basic idea of Biblical holiness is *separation*; first, unto God as His own possession; and second, from all that is morally impure. The latter arises out of the first. Thus high privileges and responsibilities carry with them high moral and spiritual requirements. To all in every age who are made the objects of a special divine favor, the same word of God must come, 'Ye shall be holy; for I am holy' (Lev. 11:44)" (*ibid.*). Israel's miraculous establishment is *proof of Israel's theocratic nature*. "Unless the Supernatural shine forth in some way before the nation, it could not fairly be evidenced that a Theocracy existed... if the Supernatural in direct aid, etc., were lacking, infidelity would appeal to this as positive proof that a pure Theocracy never existed" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:474)

Development of the Theocracy

The Theocratic Kingdom *developed* through Moses' administration and through Israel's occupation of Palestine, and it continued to develop through the period of the Judges and the Davidic Monarchy.

Moses' Administration

The theocracy developed through *Moses' administration*. "Throughout the length of Moses' theocratic administration two kingdoms were developing side by side. There was on the one hand a small remnant who believed God and demonstrated their faith through their obedience, thus revealing that they were subjects of the kingdom of the God of heaven on earth. Over against that is an almost unbroken line of unbelief, lawlessness, and rebellion. Those who rebelled lost the covenanted blessings. They came into judgment because of their rebellion, though God always provided a way of escape from judgment. That way of escape always involved faith that would demonstrate itself in obedience. Thus throughout Moses' long reign as a theocratic administrator it is seen that God dealt with Israel as His covenant people. Blessings would come on the obedient and discipline would fall on the disobedient. The standard for obedience or disobedience would be the Law that [God] gave to Israel through Moses. A kingdom program was being developed which included in it those who believed and validated their faith by obedience. But this kingdom was constantly being attacked by rebels whose real citizenship was in the kingdom of darkness" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 99).

Israel's Occupation of Palestine

The theocracy developed through *Israel's occupation of Palestine*. "Now it came to pass **after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses.** From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border. **There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee... possess the land, which Jehovah your God giveth you to possess it.** And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,

Remember the word which Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded you, saying, **Jehovah your God** giveth you rest, and **will give you this land**. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall abide in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan; but ye shall pass over before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor, and shall help them; until Jehovah have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed **the land which Jehovah your God giveth them**: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and possess it, which Moses the servant of Jehovah gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sun-rising” (Josh. 1:1–15). “Canaanitic nations... These nations were to be utterly destroyed (Deut. 20:16-18 [But **of the cities of these peoples, that Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them: the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; as Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee; that they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so would ye sin against Jehovah your God.**]). If this course of action seems unduly harsh, its justification may be found in the unspeakably degraded practices which are described in horrible detail in the 18th chapter of Leviticus, a chapter to be read and pondered by those who are troubled with the alleged ‘moral’ problem in relation to the character of God. There was indeed a moral problem in the land of Palestine, and it seemed to require what might be called a ‘surgical operation’ on the human race for the sake of its own preservation. And if the nation of Israel was made the divinely chosen instrument in the operation, it should not be forgotten that the same nation was thus preserved from fatal contamination in order to fulfill her destiny as the channel of divine salvation on behalf of all nations” (McClain, *GK*, p. 70). “And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am Jehovah your God. **After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do...** None of you shall **approach to any that are near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness...** And thou shalt not **give any of thy seed to make them pass through the fire to Molech**; neither shalt thou **profane the name of thy God: I am Jehovah**. Thou shalt not **lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination**. And thou shalt not **lie with any beast** to defile thyself therewith; neither shall any woman stand before a beast, to lie down thereto: it is confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for **in all these the nations are defiled**

which I cast out from before you... For whosoever shall do any of these abominations, even the souls that do them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep my charge, that ye **practise not any of these abominable customs, which were practised before you**, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am Jehovah your God” (Lev. 18:1–30). “Thus the general rule seems to have been that the non-Palestinian nations were to be left alone unless they initiated hostile action; in which case Israel was to begin with an offer of peace; and open warfare could not be pressed until the peace offer had been rejected” (McClain, *GK*, p. 70). “The conquest of Canaan is too often treated as an enterprise of the Israelites, carried out with great cruelties, for which they claimed divine sanction. The Old Testament presents the matter in an entirely different light. The war is a Divine enterprise, in which human instruments are employed, but so as to be entirely subordinate to the Divine will” (*ibid.*).

The Period of the Judges

Development of the theocracy continued through *the period of the Judges*. During this period the judges ruled the theocracy much like a king would have. “...judicial, legislative, and executive action, a supreme power, Kingly rule? If we take the Bible idea of Judge, instead of the restricted, more modern sense engrafted upon it, there is no difficulty in replying that the latter is intended... the Judges that God raised up to ‘judge Israel’ (such as Gideon, Samson, Jephthah, Eli, Samuel, etc.)... their office consisted in enforcing the Theocratic rule, in executing the laws, subduing enemies, punishing evildoers, and promoting the prosperity of the nation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:353). “When Moses judged the people he acted as a Ruler, making known and executing the laws of God; and when he followed Jethro’s advice to make other Judges, it is expressly said that he ‘made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens, and they judged the people,’ etc. (Ex. 18:14-26)... Horne (*Introd.*, vol. 2, p. 42) says: ‘The authority of the Judges was not inferior to that which was afterward exercised by the Kings...’ when the Jews requested a King, they called his ruling a judging. In 1 Sam. 8:5, 6, 20, ‘all the elders of Israel’ said ‘make us a King to judge us.’... In other words, the Judgeship is identical with the predicted reign of Christ, commencing with the Millennial era—an age inaugurated and carried on by the most astonishing manifestations of Sovereign power, judicial, legislative, and executive” (*ibid.*, p. 354). “...the Jewish idea of a Judge (i.e. a Ruler)” (*ibid.*, p. 583) “The authority of the Judges was not inferior to that which was afterward exercised by the Kings; it extended to peace and war. They decided cases without ap-

peal, but they had no power to enact new laws or to impose new burdens upon the people. They were the protectors of the laws, defenders of religion, and avengers of crimes” [quoting T. H. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. II, p. 42] (McClain, *GK*, p. 91). “Because of the literary divisions in the Old Testament, it has been customary to think of the period of the twelve ‘Judges’ separately from the respective periods of Joshua and Samuel. However, although the latter two men were incomparably greater than the other twelve, all alike served in the capacity of leader-judges of Israel between Moses and the establishment of the monarchial form of the historical kingdom (Judg. 2:16 [And **Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them.**]). Therefore, it will be helpful to regard the entire time as one period exhibiting certain general characteristics throughout. The chronology is admittedly difficult, but its exact duration is not essential to this discussion” (*ibid.*). “It was His purpose to bring the nation into subjection to Himself so that He could bless them” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 127). “A survey of the entire Book of Judges leads us to the conclusion that God is presented as Israel’s King, and that He ruled indirectly through judges. The judges had a twofold responsibility. First, they were to administer the Law and keep the people in subjection to God. Secondly, they were to deliver a repentant people from the discipline that their unbelief had incurred” (*ibid.*, p. 131). “Samuel played an important part in the development of the theocracy. As God’s prophet he was the instrument God used to set Saul apart as king. Later Samuel would pronounce judgment on Saul because of his failure to fulfill the functions of the delegated administrator in God’s kingdom, and anoint David, through whom God’s covenanted program would come to its fulfillment” (*ibid.*, p. 136).

Characteristics of the Judges

The judges were directly chosen by God. “And **Jehovah raised up judges**, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them” (Judges 2:16). “With reference to Joshua, as the life of Moses drew to its close, God said, ‘Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge’ (Deut. 31:14). And the divine charge follows: ‘Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them: and I will be with thee’ (vs. 23). Later, after the death of Moses, the charge was renewed and prefaced with divine reassurance: ‘As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee’ (Josh. 1:5)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 91). “Of the leaders who came after Joshua the Word of God declares, ‘The LORD raised up judges’ (Judg.

2:16). The Hebrew term is *Shophetim* which, according to Cassell, is here used for the first time in the special sense which it bears in this period of Israel's history. The ordinary *Shophetim* were nothing new; they existed everywhere in the nation. But these special *Shophetim* of the Book of Judges were different because of 'the source, purpose, and extent of their power... They were not regular but extraordinary authorities. Hence, they were not, like the (Punic) suffetes, chosen by the people. God Himself appointed them'" [quoting Paulus Cassell, Lange's *Commentary on Judges*, pp. 61-62] (*ibid.*). "In the case of Samuel, last of the special judges and also the connecting link between them and the period of the kings, both his birth and his commission appear as miracles of divine power. Geden speaks of him as the 'greatest of the judges' and 'the first of the prophets... occupying the position of a second Moses in relation to the people... like Moses, he closes the old order, and establishes the people with brighter prospects upon more assured foundations of national prosperity and greatness'" [quoting "Samuel," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, p. 2678] (*ibid.*, p. 92).

The judges were invested with regal functions. "And when Jehovah raised them up judges, then **Jehovah was with the judge**, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented Jehovah because of their groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them" (Judges 2:18). "On this point, the cases of Joshua and Samuel are beyond dispute. To Joshua the divine promise was, 'As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee' (Joshua 1:5). Of Samuel it is written, 'The LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground... And the word of Samuel came to all Israel' (1 Sam. 3:19-4:1)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 92). "But the *Shophetim* of the Book of Judges are not always regarded as belonging in the same general category. Therefore, the fine words of Cassell as to their regal authority are of interest: 'Judicial authority is the chief attribute of the royal dignity. Hence God, the highest King, is also "the Judge of all the earth" (Gen. 18:25). He judges concerning right and wrong, and makes His awards accordingly. When law and sin ceased to be distinguished in Israel, compassion induced Him to appoint judges again. If these are gifted with heroic qualities, to vanquish the oppressors of Israel, it is nevertheless not this heroism that forms their principal characteristic. That consists in "judging." They restore... the authority of law... For this reason, God raises up *Shophetim*, judges, not princes. The title sets forth both their work and the occasion of their appointment. Israel is free and powerful when its law is observed throughout the land. Henceforth, (as appears from Deut. 17:14) except *Shophetim*, only kings, *Melakim*, can rule in Israel. The

difference between them lies chiefly in the hereditariness of the royal office” [quoting Paulus Cassell, Lange’s *Commentary on Judges*, pp. 61-62] (*ibid.*). “Throughout the record in the Book of Judges, this divinely bestowed judicial authority of the *Shophetim* is underscored by the inexorable catastrophes which always overtook the nation when the people ‘would not hearken unto their judges’ (Judg. 2:16-20)” (*ibid.*, p. 93).

The judges were given a special enduement of the Spirit. “And when the children of Israel cried unto Jehovah, Jehovah raised up a saviour to the children of Israel, who saved them, even **Othniel** the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother. And **the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, and he judged Israel**; and he went out to war, and Jehovah delivered Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand: and his hand prevailed against Cushan-rishathaim” (Judges 3:9-10). “We are told that Joshua was ‘full of the spirit of wisdom’ (Deut. 34:9), an expression used by Isaiah as a title for the Spirit of God (11:2 [And the **Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding**, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah.])” (McClain, *GK*, p. 93). “Of Othniel, first of the twelve ‘judges,’ we read that ‘The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel’ (Judg. 3:10). Later we find the same general assertion concerning Gideon, ‘But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon’ (6:34). Although the character of Jephthah has been questioned, he apparently enjoyed the same enduement, ‘Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah’ (11:29). Of Samson, apparently the last of the twelve ‘judges,’ the Word of God four times speaks concerning his spiritual enduement, ranging in force from 13:25, ‘The Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times,’ to 15:14, ‘the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him.’ This special enduement of the Spirit of God continued into the initial period of the kings of Israel (cf. 1 Sam. 10:1, 6; 16:13)” (*ibid.*). “Then Samuel took the vial of oil, and poured it upon his [**Saul’s**] head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not that **Jehovah hath anointed thee to be prince over his inheritance**” (1 Sam. 10:1)? “and **the Spirit of Jehovah will come mightily upon thee [Saul], and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man**” (1 Sam. 10:6). “Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and **the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward**. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah” (1 Sam. 16:13). “Three things should be noted about this coming of the Spirit upon the great leaders of the historical kingdom: first, it was not always related to high moral character; second, in certain cases its outstanding effects were seen chiefly in the realm of the purely physical; third, and most

important of all, it had to do primarily with the regal functions of those who stood as mediators of the divine government of Israel” (McClain, *GK*, p. 93). “Bright speaks of this spiritual enduement as a ‘*charisma*,’ and rightly asserts that it ‘well represented the primitive theocracy of Israel; it was the direct rule of God over his people through his designated representative” [quoting John Bright, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 32] (*ibid.*).

The judges possessed no dynastic rights. “Thus **God requited the wickedness of Abimelech**, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren” (Judges 9:56) “The only attempt to establish a dynastic succession during this period came at the hand of one of the many sons of Gideon, Abimelech by name, whose bloody usurpation, lasting only three years, was brought to an ignominious end by the judgment of God through a woman who dropped a millstone upon his head (Judg. 9:1-57)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 94). “Commenting on this absence of dynastic succession among the Judges, Cassel says, ‘The Judge has only a personal commission. His work is to reinspire Israel with divine enthusiasm, and thus make it victorious. He restores things to the condition in which they were on the death of Joshua. No successors were necessary; if without a judge, the nation itself maintained the law, and resisted temptation. Israel has enough in its divinely given law. Rallying about this and the priesthood, it could be free; for God is its King. But it is weak. The Judge is scarcely dead, before the authority of law is shaken. Unity is lost, and the enemy takes advantage of the masterless disorder. Therefore, Judges, raised up by God, and girded with fresh strength succeed each other...’” [quoting Paulus Cassell, *Lange’s Commentary on Judges*, p. 62] (*ibid.*)

The judges were genuine mediators of the divine rule. “And **Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: Jehovah shall rule over you**” (Judges 8:23). “And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay, but a king shall reign over us; when **Jehovah your God was your king**” (1 Sam. 12:12). “Here again it must be emphasized that throughout this period there was an established Kingdom of God on earth. Crude as were some of his ideas, Gideon was right in his estimate of the historical situation: ‘I will not rule over you,’ he protests to the nation of Israel, ‘The LORD shall rule over you’ (Judg. 8:23). And Samuel, speaking to Israel of that long and remarkable period extending from Moses to Saul, characterizes it as an era ‘When the LORD your God was your king’ (1 Sam. 12:12). Therefore, the primary function of the judges was that of mediatorial rulers” (McClain, *GK*, p. 94).

Conditions under the judges were not ideal. “In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25). “It is surely true that conditions under the judges were far from ideal. Yet certain things would not be forgotten. In spite of six major military invasions of the land, long oppressions at the hand of victorious enemies, struggles between the individual tribes, and serious civil war, the nation of Israel came through all these terrible dangers with a vigor and a consciousness of divinely ordained destiny unparalleled in recorded history. To those familiar with the international situation of those years, the wonder is that no one of the great world powers reduced the land of Canaan to total subjection, with a consequent destruction of the tiny nation which had as yet no strong centrally organized government. These facts alone point to something above and beyond the ordinary providential control of God; namely, to the existence of a supernaturally ordained and sustained Kingdom of God on earth, in which Israel was the favored nation” (McClain, *GK*, p. 94). “The rather lamentable summary which closes the Book of Judges—‘In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes’—does not necessarily indicate a condition of complete civil and moral anarchy. Such an interpretation would conflict with much contained in the inspired record of those days. The thought connection between the two clauses of this final verse, for one thing, may point to the large measure of individual and local self-government which was exercised in the absence of any strongly centralized government such as would come later under the kings. Furthermore, careful Bible students will always remember that the very beautiful and idyllic story of Ruth and Boaz is located historically ‘in the days when the judges ruled’ (Ruth 1:1). The political situation was not ideal, but it could not have been totally bad” (*ibid.*, p. 95).

The Davidic Monarchy

Development of the theocracy continued *through the Davidic Monarchy*. “According to Samuel’s statement, God pardons the nation on the conditions that it still, with the king included, acknowledges him as the continuous Supreme Monarch, and that the king chosen shall enforce the laws given by his superior in authority. In this entire transaction God’s theocratic rule is preserved intact. The earthly king was under certain imposed restrictions, and was threatened, in case of disobedience, with the displeasure of, and punishment from, the still recognized Civil Head of the nation. This was felt and freely confessed by Saul (1 Sam. 13:12, and 28:15), David (1 Sam. 6:20 [?—*ed.*], and [2 Sam.] 7:23-26, etc.), Solomon (1 Kings 3:8, 9, and 6:12-14, also ch. 8, etc.), and others” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:228). “therefore

said *I*, Now will the Philistines come down upon me to Gilgal, and I [**Saul**] have not **entreated the favor of Jehovah**: I forced myself therefore, and offered the burnt-offering” (1 Sam. 13:12). “And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And **Saul answered, I am sore distressed**; for the Philistines make war against me, and **God is departed from me, and answereth me no more**, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do” (1 Sam. 28:15). “And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel... And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, Jehovah of hosts is God over Israel; and the house of **thy servant David** shall be established before thee” (2 Sam. 7:23–26). “And David built there an altar unto Jehovah, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So **Jehovah was entreated** for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel” (2 Sam. 24:25). “And thy servant [**Solomon**] is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. **Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people**, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people” (1 Kings. 3:8–9)? “Concerning this house which thou art building, **if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute mine ordinances, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I establish my word with thee**, which I spake unto David thy father. **And I will dwell among the children of Israel**, and will not forsake my people Israel. So **Solomon** built the house, and finished it” (1 Kings. 6:12–14). “This submission is indicated, e.g. by building ‘a house unto the Lord,’ in and through which the Will of the great Ruler might be obtained and confirmed” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:228). “The King, however, was only empowered to administer the Theocratic government as a Viceroy of Jehovah, the heavenly Sovereign, and was bound to this law as the highest authority, so as to exclude the idea of an independent and absolute monarch” (*ibid.*). “The nation was not to appoint any one as king who was not chosen of God; and the law, and not the king’s own will and pleasure, was to be the rule of his administration” (*ibid.*). “It follows, therefore, that Josephus (*Ant.* 6:3 §§ 2, 3), and those who receive his view, are mistaken when they end the Theocracy with the Judges” (*ibid.*). “The King over this people must not be an autocrat, but rather a theocrat, par excellence, a viceroy and minister of God. We may add, as a hint, that this very Theocratic feeling and submission, so characteristic of David, is what pre-eminently constituted him a man after God’s heart, notwithstanding his lapses” (*ibid.*). “...a prophetic dispensation, which ran parallel with the monarchy from the first to the last King...

the prophet was the purest revealer of the King's will and pleasure" (*ibid.*, p. 229). "The Theocracy and Davidic kingdom, in virtue of a special and peculiar covenant relationship between the two, were regarded as one, and in the future so identical in destiny that they are inseparably linked together" (*ibid.*, p. 234). "The numbering of the people (2 Sam. 24 and 1 Chron. 21) by David without divine permission, being an infringement of Theocratic order, an act of insubordination to his Superior, was correspondingly severely punished" (*ibid.*, p. 235). "The earthly kingdom was not opposed to the theocracy, i.e., to the rule of Jehovah as King over the people of His possession, provided no one was made king but the person whom Jehovah should choose" [quoting Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, Vol. III, p. 384] (McClain, *GK*, p. 96). "It has been suggested that the setting up of 'kings' over the nation of Israel meant not only a popular rejection of the theocratic idea but also its end in Old Testament history. This view has been based on a superficial interpretation of God's words to Samuel when the people asked for a king. 'They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them' (1 Sam. 8:7). Such a view cannot be fairly maintained by any careful study of the Biblical records" (*ibid.*). "After the failure of Saul to fulfill the responsibilities of theocratic administrator, God appointed David from the tribe of Judah to that significant role. God later entered into an eternal, unconditional covenant with David, establishing the Davidic dynasty as the sole rightful occupant of His earthly throne. Through David a kingdom of peace and righteousness would be established over the covenant people in the land that God had previously promised to them. This covenant will have its eventual literal fulfillment here on earth at the second advent of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. This covenant was made through David with the nation Israel, and must be fulfilled by Israel. Thus the present session of Christ at the right hand of His Father in heaven and His rule over the church cannot be a fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 155). We'll discuss the Davidic Covenant in detail in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.

This monarchial form of the Kingdom was foreseen in the plan of God. "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and **kings shall come out of thee [Abraham]**" (Gen. 17:6). "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee [**Jacob**], and **kings shall come out of thy loins**" (Gen. 35:11) "**When thou art come unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like all the na-**

tions that are round about me; thou shalt surely set him king over thee, whom Jehovah thy God shall choose... when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom... to the end that he may prolong his days in **his kingdom**, he and his children, in the midst of Israel” (Deut. 17:14–20). “but I will settle him [David’s seed] in my house and in **my kingdom** for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever” (1 Chron. 17:14). “In the earliest records of the Abrahamic covenant Jehovah had promised to Abraham that ‘a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins’ (Gen. 35:11). And in Deuteronomy there is the clearest kind of a prediction that when Israel has come into the land of promise, the nation would be ruled by kings (17:14-20). This passage even lays down the guiding rules in the selection of such kings, and also the principles which should characterize their regal conduct, politically, socially, morally, and spiritually” (McClain, *GK*, p. 96). “There are three rules for the selection of any future king: First, he must be an Israelite who is a ‘brother.’ Second, the king must not be a ‘stranger,’ that is, neither an outsider nor merely a proselyte member of the nation. Third, he must be selected according to God’s choosing: ‘Thou shalt... set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose’ (Deut. 17:15). The historical application of this third rule is seen in the cases of Saul and David, who were chosen of God, and the choice was then ratified by the people” (*ibid.*). “The fourth command regarding the conduct of future kings reads as follows: ‘And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel’ (Deut. 17:18-20). Thus, the king must be God’s chosen man, sitting on the earthly throne of God’s Kingdom, with God’s book constantly before his eyes and in his heart, and ever mindful that as regards the written Word of God he is not above the humblest subject of the realm. It was a government of law, rather than of men” (*ibid.*, p. 97). “That the establishment of kings over Israel did not in any sense mean the end of the theocratic rule, is made perfectly clear by the prophet Nathan. Speaking to David concerning Solomon’s succession, the word of Jehovah declares, ‘I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever’ (1 Chron. 17:14). Thus the existing

kingdom under David and Solomon was not theirs, but *God's* just as previously" (*ibid.*, p. 98).

The errancy of Samuel's sons encouraged the request by the elders of Israel for a king. "And it came to pass, **when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.** Now the name of his first-born was Joel; and the name of his second, Abijah: they were judges in Beer-sheba. And **his sons walked not in his ways,** but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice. **Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah; and they said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations**" (1 Sam. 8:1-5). "In the background of this historical change, some of the conditions may be listed as follows: lack of political unity and stability; recurring defeats by surrounding foes; the moral corruption of the sons of the priest Eli (1 Sam. 2:22-25); disappointment in the sons of Samuel because of their perversion of justice (8:1-3); and a strong feeling that only in a powerful monarch could the hopes of the nation be realized. This feeling was not altogether new, for earlier the people had been ready to make Gideon a king with dynastic rights (Judg. 8:22-23). But now the official 'elders of Israel' come together to ask Samuel to give them a king: 'Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us' (1 Sam. 8:4-5)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 98). "That this demand was regarded with displeasure by Samuel is not too surprising. Even apart from the elders' blunt condemnation of the prophet's own sons, he probably understood that the motives behind the elders' demand were political rather than moral. Instead of recognizing that they themselves were responsible for past failures, they supposed that a change in the external form of government would cure all their troubles. This is the manner of sinful men in all ages, who must learn by bitter experience that 'political action' cannot solve problems which are basically moral and spiritual" (*ibid.*). "In the face of the elders' demand, Samuel resorted to prayer for guidance and the answer of God was, 'Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee' (1 Sam. 8:6-7). But at the same time Samuel was told to 'protest solemnly' as to what this demand would bring upon the nation (vs. 9). Furthermore, in harmony with the directions already laid down in the Mosaic Law (Deut. 17), God Himself would choose the king, which He proceeded to do: first, by having Samuel anoint Saul with oil (1 Sam. 10:1); second, by a public confirmation of the divine choice through the ancient casting of the lot (vss. 17-21); and third, by the presentation of Saul to the people for popular ratification (vs. 24)" (*ibid.*). "Later, in an address to all Israel (1 Sam.

12), Samuel puts his finger unerringly upon the moral and spiritual root of all their troubles. From Moses to the present moment they had suffered when they forsook Jehovah, and had prospered when they repented and acknowledged their sin (vss. 6-11). Now they have a king, according to their own request, but a man nevertheless chosen of the Lord (vs. 13). They must realize, however, that the mere political change from 'judges' to a 'king' cannot change the moral conditions of divine blessing. Both the nation and its king must obey the LORD; if not, 'ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king' (vs. 25)" (*ibid.*, p. 99).

The main defect with the monarchial idea was that Israel wanted to be "*like all the nations.*" "and they said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now **make us a king** to judge us **like all the nations**" (1 Sam. 8:5). "Some readers have been disturbed by the apparent problem connected with the inspired record of the change from 'judges' to 'kings' in the historical kingdom. The elders and the people had asked for a king. Samuel the prophet was greatly displeased with their attitude, speaking of it as 'wickedness... which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king' (1 Sam. 12:17). And Jehovah Himself had characterized their demand as something highly reprehensible, saying, 'They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them' (1 Sam. 8:7). Moreover, He had warned the nation of the troubles which would come upon them because of the king they wanted (1 Sam. 8:10-18). Yet when the people refused to heed His warning, God said to Samuel, 'Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king' (1 Sam. 8:22). Furthermore, the establishment of kings was quite evidently within the plan of God for the nation of Israel (Gen. 17:6; Deut. 17). Now the problem posed is simply this: If the request for a king was right, why was it called 'wickedness'? On the other hand, if the request was wicked, why did God grant it? The answer to this question is twofold" (McClain, *GK*, p. 99). "First, God did not give to the people of Israel exactly what they had asked. For one thing, they were not given the right to set up a king of their own choosing, as in the case of other nations. And this brings us, in the second place, to the real key to the problem, which is found in the terms of the original request for a king: 'Make us a king to judge us *like all the nations*' (1 Sam. 8:5). The repugnant thing about this demand lies in the qualifying clause, 'like all the nations.' As a matter of fact, the setting up of kings 'like all the nations' was wholly unnecessary from the divine standpoint. The rule of God up until this time had been mediated through leaders, judges, and prophets. Even David, the king after God's own heart, could thus have served as head of the state without having all the worldly trappings and material splendor of an Oriental court. Up to this time Israel had

had a very simple and unique government, uncomplicated in organization and function. Problems were dealt with as they arose. In wanting a king 'like all the nations,' Israel would be exchanging the simple theocratic form of government, based on moral principles and dedicated to the general welfare, for something which could become an unwieldy and monstrous governmental structure dedicated mainly to its own perpetuation. Such an arrangement was not only unnecessary but could only add to the burdens of the people and increase the restrictions upon their personal liberties. Therefore, although God assented in part to the nation's request, He rebuked them for making it, and at the same time solemnly warned of the perils they were getting into (1 Sam. 8:4-18)" (*ibid.*). "The words of Keil are very much to the point here: "The appointment of a king is not *commanded*, like the institution of judges (Deut. 16:18), because Israel could exist under the government of Jehovah, even without an earthly king; it is simply *permitted*, in case the need should arise for a regal government" [quoting Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, Vol. III, p. 384] (*ibid.*, p. 100).

The period of greatest monarchial glory was under the kingships of David and his son Solomon. "**Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle**" (Ex. 40:34). "**Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house**" (2 Chron. 7:1). "**So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom**" (2 Chron. 9:22). "The mediatorial kingdom of Old Testament history reached the pinnacle of its power and glory under its first three kings, each of whom held his throne by the decree and direct appointment of Jehovah. The entire monarchial career of *Saul* is summarized by the prophet Samuel in two brief statements: first, 'the LORD anointed thee king over Israel'; and second, 'the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel' (1 Sam. 15:17, 26). After the failure and rejection of Saul, it is Jehovah again who exercises His right of sovereign choice in the case of David (1 Sam. 16:1, 13). And as his life on earth drew to its close, speaking as a prophet to whom the Word of the LORD had come, David thus indicates the divine choice of succession: 'Of all my sons (for the LORD hath given me many sons), he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel' (1 Chron. 28:5). It is not without significance that *Solomon*, last of the kings directly chosen of God, is also the last king of the united kingdom of Israel" (McClain, *GK*, p. 100). "From Saul to Solomon there was an almost incredible expansion and

transformation of the nation of Israel. In the words of Bright, ‘In one brief generation she had been transformed from a loose, disjointed tribal league, fighting for its life, into a united, self-conscious nation of some importance in the world... Most of the land thought of as “promised” was now... In Israelite hands—a fact she never forgot. Literature and culture flourished as never before, and there was unexampled material prosperity. It was a proud thing to be an Israelite in the tenth century B.C.’” [quoting Dr. John Bright, *Kingdom of God*, pp. 35-49] (*ibid.*, p. 101) “With military security now assured, Solomon proceeded to expand the scope and activities of his kingdom. Certain strategic points were strongly fortified; the cost being defrayed by means of special levies (1 Kings 9:15-19). The nation’s military forces were increased and a ‘navy’ established (1 Kings 9:22, 26). Alliances with foreign nations were made, sometimes apparently sealed by diplomatic marriages (1 Kings 9:16; 11:1). A special alliance with the king of Tyre brought skillful artisans into the land (1 Kings 5:1-18); and also led to a wide expansion of foreign trade (1 Kings 9:26-28; 10:22). Recent archaeological discoveries of great and ingeniously constructed copper smelters at Ezion-geber, although not specifically mentioned in the Bible, account for the profusion of this metal and its alloys (1 Kings 7:47). The wealth of the nation increased beyond comprehension—‘The king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones’ (1 Kings 10:27). Gold flowed into the kingdom in great quantity (1 Kings 9:27-28; 10:2, 14)” (*ibid.*). “The inspired record of these glories of the historical kingdom is couched in the language of superlatives: ‘So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart’ (1 Kings 10:23-24). Giving all due consideration to the purely natural factors, no one can successfully explain this glorious era apart from the providential and also supernatural workings of God, as some modern critics have sought to do. The testimony of the contemporary queen of Sheba reveals a keener discernment: ‘The half was not told me... Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice’ (1 Kings 10:7-9)” (*ibid.*, p. 102). “In concluding on this point, it must be noted that under Solomon we have only a continuation of the same divine kingdom which had been established historically at Sinai with Moses as the mediatorial ruler. There was no change in its original constitution and laws. This is clearly affirmed in David’s final charge to his son Solomon: ‘I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judg-

ments, and his testimonies, *as it is written in the law of Moses*, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself' (1 Kings 2:2-3, italics added). The kingdom under Solomon must continue to operate in conformity with this original constitution and laws, as laid down in the Mosaic code. Furthermore, the identification of Solomon's kingdom as God's own kingdom was confirmed in no uncertain fashion when, at the dedication of Solomon's temple, 'the fire came down from heaven... and the glory of the LORD filled the house' (2 Chron. 7:1); a striking reminder of what had taken place when this kingdom had originally been established at Sinai (Exod. 40:34). The conventional division between the period of the 'judges' and the period of the 'kingdom,' if not carefully explained, can only be the source of confusion. Viewed from the Biblical standpoint, the one *divine* kingdom of Old Testament history began with Moses, not with Saul" (*ibid.*).

Looking forward now eschatologically, it is important to realize that the ancient Davidic monarchy was not merely *typical* of the future Millennial Kingdom, but was *the actual Theocratic Kingdom itself*. It is this very Davidic throne/Davidic Kingdom that is to be restored in the millennium. **"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old;** that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. **And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God"** (Amos 9:11-15). "The Theocracy is no type but a reality; its restoration is not an ideal matter, but one of actual occurrence" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:535).

Chapter 11: The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom

As we saw in our previous chapter, the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel attained its greatest monarchical glory under the kingships of David and Solomon. But alas, that glory was not to last.

The Decline of the Kingdom

The decline of the Kingdom began with Solomon's personal failures, and continued as the Kingdom split into two parts. "Without attempting to subtract from David and Solomon any of their excellencies, which were many, it is a striking commentary on the quality of sinful men that in the very period of the historical kingdom's greatest success, there were already present the seeds of political catastrophe. Thus, if we are wise we shall not misunderstand that with reference to salvation, whether spiritual or political, 'With men this is impossible' (Matt. 19:26). In such matters there are always things to be done which only God can do" (McClain, *GK*, p. 104). "Because of the excesses of Solomon the kingdom was divided. Ten tribes followed a Benjamite king to form the northern kingdom of Israel and two tribes remained under the administration of a Davidic descendant to form the southern kingdom of Judah. This division generated continued conflict between the two kingdoms, disrupting the peace brought about through David and Solomon. This conflict continued until the northern kingdom fell to Assyria and the southern kingdom fell to Babylon as divine discipline in keeping with Deuteronomy 28. The covenant people came under the rule of Gentiles, which would continue until there was national repentance, at which time a Davidic king would assume the throne again" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 163).

The decline of the Kingdom began with Solomon's failures. "I will be his father, and he shall be my son: **if he [David's seed, v. 12] commit iniquity, I will chasten him** with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men" (2 Sam. 7:14) Dr. McClain explains, "Here it must be recorded to the shame of Solomon, this favored king of Israel, that at last he had settled down in open violation of the first three divine rules which had been given by Jehovah to govern the conduct of kings under the constitution of the kingdom (cf. Deut. 17:14-17). First, he multiplied military forces of a kind specifically forbidden in the law of God, gathering together 'chariots and horsemen' and 'horses brought out of Egypt' (1 Kings 10:26, 28). Second, Solomon 'loved many foreign women,' and he had 'seven hundred

wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines' (1 Kings 11:1, 3-4, ASV). Third, he piled up silver and gold, until the silver became common as stones in Jerusalem and even the vessels of his own house of Lebanon were ordered made of pure gold (1 Kings 10:21, 27). And so, along with all this great worldly power and wealth, there came moral deterioration and finally religious apostasy—"his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father' (1 Kings 11:4)" (GK, p. 104). "But this was not all; economic problems arose. Building projects, military fortifications, ship construction, foreign trade—all these required the labor of men. One source of manpower was found, of course, in the non-Israelites still living in the land and who were pressed into continual bond-service (1 Kings 9:15-21). Military service was apparently restricted to Israelites (1 Kings 9:22-23), which was doubtless the intent of David in numbering the people (2 Sam. 24:1-9); and Solomon may have used this original census for his purposes. But now in addition to this type of service, Solomon proceeded to raise a 'levy out of all Israel,' amounting to thirty thousand men who were forced to labor in Lebanon one month out of every three (1 Kings 5:13-14). This was a revival of the hated *corvee* system remembered by the nation as an intolerable experience in the land of Egypt. It has been estimated that thirty thousand men under forced labor in Israel, compared in terms of the present population of the United States, would equal no less than five million men" (*ibid.*)! "Furthermore, to maintain his far-flung government and the luxury of his own court and household, Solomon required more and more wealth. His father David had been able to enrich the national treasury by means of the spoil taken in his unbroken succession of military victories (2 Sam. 8:1-11). But the era of peace under Solomon made it essential to find internal sources of income. This meant taxation, which free men from time immemorial have hated and resisted. The king's plan was thoroughly organized under twelve chief officers whose duty was to see that the court of Solomon was provided for, month by month (1 Kings 4:6-19). At the end of twenty years of building, more money had to be raised. And in some kind of a deal made with King Hiram of Tyre, Solomon must have either given away or mortgaged 'twenty cities in the land of Galilee' (1 Kings 9:10-14). One wonders just how such a business deal appeared in the eyes of the tribes which owned the territory thus handed over cavalierly to an outsider—who was a Canaanite! Grateful as England might feel toward our own country for aid in two world wars, it takes no special imagination to picture what would happen to the current English government if its prime minister would hand over to us twenty cities of the British Isles; even if

these cities were not much to look at, as Hiram seemed to have regarded Solomon's gift" (*ibid.*, p. 105)! "With all this constant drain upon the economic resources and manpower of Israel, which must have stirred up irritation and discontent, it is little wonder that when Solomon's son came to the throne, the first word of the people was, 'Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee' (1 Kings 12:4). But the reply of Rehoboam was a contemptuous 'No,' an ominous harbinger of worse things yet to come" (*ibid.*, p. 106). "Ford C. Ottoman has well said, 'A king never came to a mighty throne with greater promise than Solomon... Yet Solomon failed. Ascending the throne girded by omnipotence itself, he ended his career shorn of his strength, bereft of his glory, with his heart turned away from Jehovah, and the anger of God kindled against him'" [quoting Ford C. Ottoman, *God's Oath*, p. 27] (*ibid.*). Dr. Pentecost adds, "Solomon multiplied military forces and fortified cities so that Israel's confidence was in their horses and military establishment, not in God. This was disobedience" (*TKC*, p. 158).

Soon, under the leadership of Solomon's son Rehoboam, Israel ruptured into two separate kingdoms. "Therefore **Jehovah was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only**" (2 Kings. 17:18). "Even before the death of Solomon the sickness of the state was clearly evident. The tribes had always been jealous of their independency and rights. And both David and his son had worked for a genuine political unification of the nation. The undertaking of the magnificent temple at Jerusalem had given definite impetus to a greater centralization of the national worship of Jehovah. Actually, of course, only the true religion of Israel could forge a bond capable of holding the tribes together; and the apostasy of Solomon severed this bond (1 Kings 11:1-10). Adversaries began to stir up trouble in various places (1 Kings 11:14, 23, 26-28). The final result was the secession of ten tribes under the leadership of Jeroboam, whose outstanding ability had already been recognized by Solomon (1 Kings 11:29-43). Since it had been authorized directly by Jehovah through the prophet Ahijah, the secession must be regarded as a divine judgment upon the chosen nation and its mediatorial king, for both had grievously sinned" (McClain, *GK*, p. 106). "Viewed from the standpoint of Solomon's immediate successor, Rehoboam, the loss of the ten tribes was a perfectly senseless thing. At the death of Solomon, we are told, 'all Israel were come to Shechem' to make Rehoboam king; even his rival Jeroboam was among them (1 Kings 12:1-3). They offered to serve the heir of Solomon if he would only lighten the heavy burdens which had

been imposed by his father. But Rehoboam, impatient with the sage advice of his older counselors, chose to follow the reckless course suggested by his 'playboy' associates. To the very moderate and reasonable plea of his people, the king replied roughly, 'My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions' (1 Kings 12:4-14). The hostile reaction of the people was thus made inevitable: 'What portion have we in David?' they cried, 'to your tents, O Israel.' The northern tribes turned to Jeroboam and 'there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only' (1 Kings 12:16-20). The tribe of Benjamin was probably divided in its allegiance, for we read in the next verse (21) that when Rehoboam assembled his military expedition to force a reunion of the tribes, the 'tribe of Benjamin' was represented in the army" (*ibid.*, p. 107). "But above and beyond all the political intrigues and the force of armies there was a divine providence which had the last word in this secessionist movement. The prophet Shemaiah was sent of God to Rehoboam to say, 'Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; *for this thing is from me*' (1 Kings 12:22-25, italics added). This injunction was obeyed for the time being, but evidently the season of peace was very brief, for the Word of God declares that 'there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their day' (1 Kings 14:30). But the sword of man could not undo what the judgment of God had decreed, and there was no healing of the rupture of the kingdom" (*ibid.*). "The catastrophic division of the tribes, however, did not bring an end to the mediatorial kingdom in Old Testament history. Solomon had indeed been fully warned of the impending judgment; but he had also been promised by Jehovah that his kingdom would be perpetuated. 'Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom,' God had said, 'but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen' (1 Kings 11:11-13). Hence, Orelli is correct in observing that 'The smaller and often overpowered Kingdom of Judah, which faithfully adhered to the royal line of David, passed through many crises and had many unworthy rulers. But the legitimate royal house, which had been selected by Jehovah, constituted spiritually a firm bond which kept the people united, as is seen, e.g., by a glance at the addresses of Isaiah, who is thoroughly filled with the conviction of the importance of the House of David, no matter how unworthy the king who happened to rule appeared to him' As the dying patriarch Jacob had said prophetically, 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah' (Gen. 49:10)" (*ibid.*).

The Kingdom's decline fulfilled Samuel's predictions. **“And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you; and Jehovah will not answer you in that day”** (1 Sam. 8:18). “It is easy to forget that ‘we the people’ in the long run must always pay for whatever the government does for us. Only fools suppose that by committing a matter to the government, they can get it done for nothing. Still worse, human government not only makes the people pay for everything done for them, but it always makes them pay more than it should cost. For only a part of the wealth taken by the government ever comes back to the people in services. No lesson in human history is taught more clearly than this, yet the lesson apparently is never learned. When, in the days of Samuel, the Jewish people became dissatisfied with the simple and direct rule of Jehovah and demanded a king ‘like all the nations,’ they had been plainly warned of the high cost they would pay for being thus governed (1 Sam. 8:7-20). The passage reads as follows: ‘And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, in that they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit thou shalt protest solemnly unto them, and shalt show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them. And Samuel told all the words of Jehovah unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them unto him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots; and he will appoint them unto him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and he will set some to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you; and Jehovah will not answer you in that day. But the people refused to hearken unto the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay: but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may

judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.’ (1 Sam. 8:7-20) This remarkable passage deserves to be studied, not only by theologians and preachers, but also by political scientists and economists. It shows that the needs and problems of human government do not change much from generation to generation. The student will find here, not only an accurate prediction of the trends of government in the historical kingdom of Israel, but also many items which are currently trying the souls of thoughtful men in the field of government. Actually there is not much difference between the various types of political government, as regards their avowed purposes and general tendencies. For all alike start out with the best of professed intentions to give the governed something better than they have had” (McClain, *GK*, p. 109). “In the days of Samuel, Israel had wanted a king to ‘judge’ them and to lead them in their ‘battles’ (vs. 20). We have here a recognition of the two problems of *order* and *power*; the one internal, and the other external. These two have been called ‘the original and... fundamental values of government.’ [quoting Ralph Barton Perry, *The Moral Economy* p. 157]. It is an axiom of history that no government has ever succeeded, even temporarily, without offering to the people these two values. No dictator or tyrant ever ruled who did not, to some extent, provide for order within the state and protection against external enemies. This, then, is the fundamental good supplied by all government in some measure, regardless of its character or motives” (*ibid.*). “The real difference between the various kinds of government is found in the *price* people have had to pay for these benefits of internal order and external safety. And the stability of government will vary according to the cost of being governed. This is why a dictatorship in the long run is the most unstable of all governments, because it greatly overestimates the price men will be willing to pay for its benefits” (*ibid.*). “We may say, therefore, that Israel was right in her desire for the benefits of order and power. Her mistake is found in the *kind* of government she asked for. Not that there is anything fundamentally wrong with the *monarchial* form; for the final and perfect government on earth will be centralized in a ‘King.’ But Israel asked for a king *like all the nations* (1 Sam. 8:19-20). And that kind of a government would cost the people dearly in the long run, as Samuel warned the nation. For, no matter how low the cost at the beginning, the inevitable trend is upward; and the rise is often swift. Compare, for example, the simple requirements of the government under Saul with the gigantic and costly machine under Solomon—all within the brief span of one generation” (*ibid.*). “Let us now, in the prophecy of First Samuel 8:7-20, observe the tendencies which would arise to plague Israel, and which are inherent in all government under sinful men, i.e., government

'like all the nations.' *a. Government service.* Under the contemplated king the government will bring the people into its service: first, into *military* service for 'chariots' and 'horsemen' (vs. 11); and second, into *civil* service of various kinds—agricultural, manufacturing, and food processing (vss. 12-13). Here we have a beginning of governmental bureaucracy, the growth of which in all recorded history of the nations has never been voluntarily halted. *b. Job-making.* This will begin in the military department of government where there will be not only 'captains over thousands' but also 'captains over fifties' (vs. 12). Speaking in modern terms, they make the units smaller so as to create and use more generals! Some men will be employed to 'run before' the king's chariots (vs. 11)—a perfectly useless procedure, except for creating public attention. Once launched, men have generally found it impossible to control or dislodge any department of government service. On the contrary, each one invariably tries to expand in scope and numbers. *c. Labor scarcity.* The Word of God through Samuel warns Israel that the government will take 'your sons' and 'daughters,' 'your menservants' and 'maidservants' (vss. 11, 13, 16). Thus the unwarranted expansion of the governmental service will take many people out of normally productive pursuits. Sons and daughters who ought to be helping in family activities, as well as other workers needed on farms and in factories, are drawn into the service of the government. The result is labor shortages and serious economic maladjustment. *d. Government for its own sake.* The state now comes first. As the Bible puts the matter, the ruler sets his employees to doing 'his work' (vs. 16), 'for himself' (vs. 11), for 'his harvest' (vs. 12), and for 'his chariots' (vs. 11). Thus the energies of the state are now primarily devoted to the maintenance of the government. For, no matter how idealistically political officials may talk about serving 'the people,' the ugly fact remains that a government is interested first and last in its own support and perpetuation. Therefore, the average employee must render his first loyalty to the government, which generally means to the 'party' or cabal that controls it. In this way the labors of men tend to become nonproductive; personal incentive is diminished; and the vested interests of government operate for their own sake. *e. Burdensome taxation.* To support all its army of employees and officials takes money. Hence, the state must always be increasing the taxes to keep up with the growth of the bureaucracy. And so, in the words of Samuel, the government will take 'a tenth of your seed... of your vineyards... of your sheep' (vss. 15, 17). Gloomy as the picture seems, it should be noted that this predicted tax would be only one-tenth of one thing, namely, the food production of the governed. In our more enlightened modern times, the cost of government actually exceeds the value of all

our expenditure for food! Today a mere ten per cent on all production would be hailed as an approach to the Millennium. The curse of heavy taxation has been thus described by a noted modern economist: 'For every additional dollar that the government spends, the taxpayers have one dollar less to spend. The situation is worse than this. Taxation erodes the incentives to produce and earn. It penalizes success, and the production of marketable products, often in order to subsidize continued production of unmarketable products. It sets up an army of taxgatherers. In the end it meets fewer real needs than before. People spend the money they themselves earn on what they themselves really want. The government spends money, not on what the rest of us want, but on what the bureaucrats think is good for us.' [quoting Henry Hazlitt, 'The Fourth Dimension,' *Newsweek*, Nov. 28, 1955, p. 94] *f. Property confiscation.* This is the next logical move of the state. Hence, we read in this eighth chapter of First Samuel that the government, no longer satisfied with a tax on production, begins to take over the basic sources of wealth; i.e., 'your fields... your oliveyards, even the best of them' (vs. 14). Respect for private property diminishes in proportion to the expansion of government and its vast monetary requirements. The devices of confiscation today are various and often disguised by high-sounding terms—controlled currency, social legislation, income taxation, the public good—but underneath them all, the relentless search goes on to find more sources of income for the state. And once started on this road, there is humanly speaking no point of return. *g. Political corruption.* The ancient prophecy of Samuel warns further that the government will take the wealth, acquired by taxation and confiscation, and 'give to his officers, and to his servants' (vs. 15). It is an unpleasant fact that a large share of government income always finds its way into the hands of the partisans of the ruling party. Of course, politicians will talk grandly about devoting the 'public wealth' to the 'common good,' but this is never wholly the case. Often it is taken away from those who produced it and given to the undeserving. In fact, some modern economists and state officials have frankly asserted the desirability of thus redistributing the wealth of society. But to carry out these 'benevolent' purposes, the rulers must keep themselves in power. And once a government gets enough people working for it, the problem is solved. The formula is simple—spend, tax, elect—as one cynical official tersely put the matter. *h. Totalitarian control.* The final word of Samuel's prophecy, concerning the Gargantuan growth of human government when left to itself, is addressed to the *whole nation* of Israel, 'Ye shall be his servants' (vs. 17). Thus the end of the vicious circle is reached when all the people exist and work only for the State, which swallows up the very citi-

zens who created it. It is to the lasting credit of the founding fathers of our own American system that they regarded all highly centralized government with a deep and cold suspicion, holding that the less we had of it, the better off we would be. But strangely enough today, for every failure of highly centralized government, its supporters have no remedy except a larger dose of the same thing—‘the hair of the dog that bit them.’ *i. Intolerable oppression.* The overall result of the above tendencies is deep distress for all the subjects of the State. In the words of Scripture, ‘Ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you’ (vs. 18). And we must not fail to note that this oppression has been caused, not by some foreign power, but by the very government that the people had chosen. Human government is necessary, but people who are wise never let it get too big or powerful. Unless strictly limited, the end is the loss of liberty, economic distress, and political despair” (*ibid.*, pp. 110-112).

The desire to be like the surrounding nations was a major cause of the decline. “**that we also may be like all the nations**, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles” (1 Sam. 8:20). “The root of all the political problems of Israel, as listed above, was not the king demanded by the nation. There is nothing inherently evil about the office of a king. In the Word of God, even the eternal and perfect state of mankind is not described as a soviet, or a republic, or a democracy, but a kingdom. The notion that monarchical forms of government are somehow responsible for the world’s political ills is a total myth which should have been destroyed by two world wars. In 1917, when America entered the first conflict, it was widely supposed that once we had abolished the kings and emperors, all would be well. So we witnessed the dethronement of the Russian Tzar and the German Kaiser, to say nothing of some lesser breeds. And in their stead we got Stalin and Hitler! Today we look back nostalgically, not too sure that the abolishing of the kings has improved the world political situation over the days prior to 1914” (McClain, *GK*, p. 113). “Actually, basic to Israel’s troubles in the historical kingdom was her desire for a government *like all the nations* (1 Sam. 8:20). The mention of a ‘king’ in the Biblical context has served to confuse the real issue. But the important point is that Israel was determined to have a government which would be similar to the other nations of the ancient world. She was not satisfied to continue under the system set up at Sinai, uniquely distinct from all other political forms, ancient or modern. She wanted to be in fashion politically. The Constitution of the State, shall we say, must be ‘reinterpreted’ to meet the problems and conditions of the ‘new day.’ Instead of seeing that what they already had was infinitely superior to any existing political system, the

nation wanted to move with the world. This is a kind of ‘bastard’ internationalism which is recognizable in America today. Instead of seeing that God in His good Providence has given to us a unique system which with all its imperfections has provided a refuge for political liberty unparalleled in the world, there are some voices which call upon the nation to merge its interests in a world organization where all distinct values are likely to be submerged. And we need to be reminded that, as in the case of Israel, there are some political values which can not be preserved, except by what is often scornfully called ‘isolationism’” (*ibid.*). “It cannot be said too often that the theocratic and mediatorial kingdom of Israel was divinely intended to be *different*, not *like* the other political systems of the world. Here the reader is referred back to the discussion of the Constitution and Laws of the Kingdom established at Sinai. What a contrast between the early and later history of that kingdom! Think of the ten plagues which brought the proud Egyptian Pharaoh to his knees; or the supernatural passage through the Red Sea; or the bread from heaven and the water from the rock in the wilderness; or the solemn procession of the Israelites around the city of Jericho, its massive walls falling at the blast of trumpets. Recall the simple and unpretentious circumstances of the rule of Moses, Joshua, the Judges, and Samuel; with no worldly pomp or palaces. And then, over against this, consider the proud legions of Solomon with the horsemen and flashing chariots; his royal palace thirteen years in building, his summer house in the forest of Lebanon, the house for Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Kings 7:1-8), and his great throne of ivory and gold (1 Kings 10:18); his stables with 40,000 stalls for the chariot horses alone (1 Kings 4:26); his enormous harem of a thousand women (1 Kings 4:22-24). Even if it be argued that all these riches had been given by Jehovah (1 Kings 3:13), certainly the responsibility for their proper use rested upon Solomon who also had been granted divine wisdom above all other rulers (1 Kings 3:12). Yet his use of these riches reveals no great quality of superior wisdom. In this respect, he became at last like the kings of ‘all the nations.’ And Israel had asked for that kind of a king! It was only the mercy of God that Israel was not given all that she had asked for, for then her historical situation would have become still more desperate” (*ibid.*, p. 114).

The Hebrew prophets prophesied during the decline. “Yet **many years didst thou bear with them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit through thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the peoples of the lands**” (Neh. 9:30). “It is a marvelous fact that it was not because Israel was succeeding in fulfilling its mission, but because it was failing in it, that

the spirit of prophecy wrought so powerfully...” [quoting James Orr, “Kingdom of God,” *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. II, p. 847] (McClain, *GK*, p. 104) “A detailed discussion of the years following the secession of the ten tribes is not essential... It will be enough to say in general that, the seeds of disaster having been sown by Solomon, the political decline of both divisions of the nation became both swift and certain. To be sure, the reigns of Jeroboam II in the north and Uzziah and Josiah at Jerusalem seemed for a time to revive the former glories of the kingdom; but these proved to be only the final rays of a setting sun. After Solomon the kings are no longer chosen directly by Jehovah, but take the throne either by inheritance or force. Finally the tide of Jerusalem’s fortune fell so low that foreign powers decided who would occupy the throne (2 Kings 23:34; 24:17). And, with a few notable exceptions, the line of rulers degenerates. The period is characterized in general by a more indirect rule of God. Prophets become the immediate spokesmen of God, conveying the knowledge of His will to the kings, who sometimes obey, and at other times reject the prophetic counsel” (*ibid.*, p. 114). “It is a striking fact that this period of human failure in the historical kingdom is also the period when divine prophecy reaches its greatest volume and highest brilliance. But the prophets of Israel were more than predictors of the things to come... These prophets were also men of their own times, in the sense that they spoke a message which was immediately relevant to the things present in the historical kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 115). “It should also be noted here that the period of the writing prophets parallels the period of the decline and end of the historical kingdom. There had been prophets in Israel before this. But formerly the chief function of the prophet had been to speak the word of the ever-present divine King for the immediate guidance of the nation in its conduct and affairs. For the most part such prophetic utterances were not recorded. But now the historical kingdom is drawing to a close, when the immediate presence of Jehovah will be withdrawn. Thus the need arises for a written body of divine prophecy for the guidance and encouragement of Israel during the ‘many days’ the nation will abide ‘without a king’ and ‘without an ephod’ (Hos. 3:4). As S. J. Andrews has well said: ‘The transition, therefore, from spoken to written prophecy marks an epoch in the history of the elect people’” [quoting S. J. Andrews, *God’s Revelations of Himself to Men*, Chap. XII] (*ibid.*). “The ministry of the prophets in the period of the decline of the historical kingdom was at least fivefold: *a. The Prophets Probed the Sickness of the Kingdom.* Isaiah, first in the canonical order, thus begins his oracle: ‘The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider... the whole head is sick, and the

whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment' (1:3-6). There was *moral* sickness: 'Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter' (Isa. 5:20). There was *social and economic* sickness: 'Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?' (Amos 8:4-6). There was degeneration among the *rulers*: 'Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards; they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them' (Isa. 1:23). 'As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them' (Isa. 3:12). There was evil among the *spiritual leaders*: 'The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine... they err in vision, they stumble in judgment' (Isa. 28:7). 'Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?' (Ezek. 34:2). 'Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the LORD... they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD... I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied... I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed... Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart' (Jer. 23:1, 16, 21, 25, 26).

b. The Prophets Called the Nation Back to Its Original Constitution and Laws. In the face of the desperate sickness of the nation, the first concern of the prophets was not to establish something new in a political way, but rather to call for a return to the ancient Mosaic Code. The prophet Amos set the pattern in his demand for the restoration of the old theocratic ideal. He 'was no revolutionary summoning the downtrodden masses to the barricades. He was no humanitarian, moved by the plight of the poor, who advanced a program of social reform designed to cure the national malady. He was—let us not mistake it—no teacher of a new ethic which would ultimately, so the handbooks used to tell us, tame the rough-and-ready morality of the people and lift them to the heights of ethical monotheism. Amos was no innovator, but a man of the ancient ways. His ethical protest was drawn from a well five hundred years deep. His were the ethics of the Decalogue... He advanced no cure for

the schism of society save a restoration of the covenant brotherhood which had created Israelite society in the first place.’ [quoting John Bright, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 65] Isaiah speaks in the same vein, ‘To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them’ (8:20). Jeremiah has no other remedy for the sickness of the state: ‘Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls’ (6:16). And the final word in the Hebrew canon of the prophets only repeats the well-known formula: ‘Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments’ (Mal. 4:4). These are words which cannot be misunderstood; and although in the case of Malachi they were uttered *after* the close of the mediatorial kingdom in history, they nevertheless call the people back to the ancient ideal revealed in the original constitution and laws given from heaven when the kingdom was established at Sinai. Every revival in Israel was the result of a return to the Law of Moses (cf. 2 Chron. chaps. 29-31). *c. The Prophets Warn of Divine Judgment.* The nation of Israel was the elect nation in the Kingdom of God; and the people knew this, as they had a right to know, even in the darkest days of the decline of the kingdom. But, as is always the case, there was a very present danger that the people would fall into the terrible sin of presumption. Some would say, as they said many times in history, ‘We be Abraham’s seed’ (John 8:33); therefore, nothing can happen to *us*. Now to their major premise the prophet Amos fully assents, as he speaks the Word of Jehovah to Israel, ‘You only have I known of all the families of the earth’ (3:2). But the prophet’s conclusion is something else: ‘therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities’ (3:2). The nation must learn that election means not only a place of divine favor, but also a place of divine punishment when favor is presumptuously abused. The nation of Israel has priority with God—no question about that—but this is a priority in divine judgment as well as divine favor (Rom. 1:16; 2:9). The moral and spiritual responsibility of Israel, the prophets argue, cannot be abrogated but only heightened by the divine election. And for a people that forgets this, the longed-for day of Jehovah can bring no blessing, but only judgment: ‘Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall and a serpent bit him’ (Amos 5:18-19). No mere forms of religion can help: neither their ‘feast days,’ nor their ‘solemn assemblies,’ nor their ‘burnt offerings,’ nor the ‘noise’ of their songs. The time has come to ‘let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty

stream' (Amos 5:21-24). The judgment of the seventy years' captivity in Babylon should have taught the chosen nation the lesson that divine election does not abolish human responsibility. Yet in the days of the Return, Malachi found many who had forgotten this lesson. While living in open sin and rebellion against Jehovah, they were nevertheless longing for the coming of the Messiah—"the LORD, whom ye seek... whom ye delight in' (3:1). But here again the prophet warns that Messiah's coming would bring judgment as well as blessing: 'Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap... And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts' (Mal. 3:2-5). But to the voice of the prophets the answer of a rebellious nation was too often: 'Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits' (Isa. 30:10). *d. The Prophets Reassert the Inviolability of God's Kingdom-Covenant.* Through all the bitter prophecies of judgment uttered against Israel, there is never the slightest intimation that God's covenant with Israel can be broken or ultimately fail. Men may fail, but Jehovah never fails in His purposes: 'For I am the LORD,' He says, 'I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed' (Mal. 3:6). Concerning the covenant of the kingdom, Jeremiah writes: 'For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel... If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne' (Jer. 33:17, 20-21). *e. The Prophets Promise a Future and Better Kingdom.* It is the shame of man to bring darkness upon the world by reason of his oft-recurring failure. It is the glory of God to bring light in the midst of the gross darkness. Beyond the night of man's sin there is always the glorious day of God's unfailing grace. To the anxious question of the longing souls in Israel, 'Watchman, what of the night?' the answer of the prophet comes back in comforting assurance, 'The morning cometh' (Isa. 21:11-12). This note of divine encouragement is never wholly absent from Old Testament prophecy, regardless of its severity. First, the darkness; but afterward there will be light: 'It shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one LORD, and his name one' (Zech. 14:7, 9)" (*ibid.*, pp. 115-119).

The Fall of the Kingdom

Ultimately, after the theocracy had declined to the point of no return, the Kingdom fell.

The Fall Had Been Prophesied

Long before its actual occurrence, the theocracy's downfall had been prophesied. "And **it shall come to pass**, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and **the curse**, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among **all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee**, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn **thy captivity**, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from **all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee**" (Deut. 30:1-3). "For the children of **Israel shall abide many days without king**, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim" (Hos. 3:4) "And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, **the prince of Israel**, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Remove the mitre, and take off the crown; this shall be no more the same**; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. **I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him**" (Ezek. 21:25-27). "The Prophets, some even before the Captivity, foreseeing the overthrow of the Kingdom, both foretell its downfall and its final restoration" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:240). "Thus, e.g., Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Micah deliberately predict the withdrawal of God's protection as Ruler on account of the rebellious spirit of the nation, the abolishment of the Kingdom, and the destruction of the very place of the Ruler's special manifestation. But they also announce, just as distinctly, that at some period in the future there shall be a complete restoration of the same Kingdom under David's son, and a restoration, too, pre-eminently glorious" (*ibid.*).

The Fall of the Theocracy

Soon after Ezekiel was shown Israel's apostasy and the Shekinah glory departing the temple, the Kingdom fell to the Babylonians. "Tragically, the early kingdom, set up as a vehicle through which Messiah could reign, was destroyed by the Babylonians" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:469).

In stark detail, Ezekiel was shown the nation's apostasy. "And he said unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even **the great abominations that the house of Israel do commit here**, that I should go far off

from my sanctuary? but thou shalt again see yet other great abominations” (Ezek. 8:6). “Then he said unto me, **Hast thou seen this, O son of man?** Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that **they commit the abominations** which they commit here? for **they have filled the land with violence, and have turned again to provoke me to anger:** and, lo, they put the branch to their nose” (Ezek. 8:17). “His vision of the departure of the ‘glory of Jehovah’ is carefully dated by Ezekiel in ‘the sixth year’ (8:1), a reference to the time of the captivity of King Jehoiachin (1:2). The prophet had been carried away to Babylon and was sitting in his own house there with the elders of Israel assembled before him, when he was suddenly caught up by the hand of God and brought in his ‘visions’ back to the city of Jerusalem (8:1-3). Whether he was actually transported to Jerusalem bodily, or whether, like John in the isle of Patmos, the events at the city were caused supernaturally to pass before his vision, is a question which need not detain us here. The last sentence of 11:24 seems to indicate that Ezekiel remained in Babylon during the vision. But the important point is that the prophet not only saw the vision in the ‘sixth year’ of the captivity, but also that he saw the actual situation there at that particular time. Furthermore, what he saw of the spiritual and moral conditions there fits the historical situation as revealed briefly in other Biblical records (2 Kings 24:17-20; Jer. 52:1-3). Following his vision of the events transpiring at Jerusalem, Ezekiel is brought back in his visions to Babylon where he reported to the captives all that the LORD had showed him (11:24-25)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 121). “And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin’s father’s brother, king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. **Zedekiah** was twenty and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother’s name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And **he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of Jehovah did it come to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence.** And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon” (2 Kings. 24:17-20). “It should be recalled that when the king of Babylon had come against Jerusalem, he had with deliberate astuteness taken back to Babylon King Jehoiachin, his family, his treasures, and also all the people of any consequence, leaving in Jerusalem only ‘the poorest sort of the people of the land,’ and setting up Zedekiah as a vassal ruler there (2 Kings 24:11-16). Now it might be supposed that such a disaster would have provided an unforgettable lesson to the people left in the land. On the contrary, ‘they acted like men intoxicated with new power; their accession to property and un-

wonted position turned their heads.’ [quoting J. F. Genung, ‘Zedekiah,’ *I.S.B.E.*, Vol. V, p. 3141] False prophets arose predicting a speedy restoration of what had been lost to Nebuchadnezzar, contrary to the word of Jeremiah (27:14-22). Furthermore, there was an attempt to secure help against Babylon by diplomatic approaches to surrounding nations (Jer. 27:1-7). The consequence was only a deeper plunge into the ways and idolatries of those nations whose friendship was being cultivated. To view this tragic situation, Ezekiel was brought in vision to Jerusalem, and there the unmistakable warning of Jehovah is sounded: ‘Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary?’ (8:6). The implication is clear: In the face of the intolerable situation already existing there, God is still in His sanctuary at Jerusalem; *but He may depart*” (McClain, *GK*, p. 122). “Then the prophet, doubtless with an aching heart, was given to see the evidence of Israel’s dreadful apostasy as it unfolded in the vision before him. Seventy of the elders of Israel stood in the attitude of worship before the creature-idols, even ‘creeping things and abominable beasts,’ which had been painted on the wall of the LORD’s temple (8:10). At the north gate of the house Ezekiel saw the ‘women weeping for Tammuz’ (8:14), a heathen god corresponding to the Greek Adonis whose worship was attended by such licentious orgies that the cult was finally suppressed by Constantine the Great. Then the prophet was brought into the ‘inner court,’ the court of the priests, where he saw ‘five and twenty men’ with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and facing toward the east while they worshipped the rising sun (8:16). And who were these men? They were the priesthood of the nation, represented here by the presidents of the twenty-four courses with the high priest at their head” (*ibid.*)! “In the record of this shocking vision there seems to have been a definitely designed contrast between this situation at the approaching end of the historical kingdom and the situation at its beginning at Sinai. The people of Israel were far from perfect back there. But at Sinai ‘all the people’ had together united in a solemn pledge: ‘All that the LORD hath spoken we will do’ (Exod. 19:8). There also we saw the ‘women’ of Israel giving freely of their skill and possessions in the preparation of the tabernacle for Jehovah’s dwelling place (Exod. 35:25-26; 38:8). But most impressive of all, at Sinai ‘seventy of the elders of Israel’ with ‘Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu’ of the priesthood actually went up with Moses into the Mount, and there they ‘saw God, and did eat and drink’ in His presence (Exod. 24:9-11). But now in Ezekiel’s day the entire picture was changed; the apostasy of Israel had become total in Jerusalem; and it involved the people, the elders, the women, and the priesthood (Ezek. 8:6,

11, 14, 16). And the verdict of Jehovah is rendered in verse 18: ‘Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.’ The end had come” (*ibid.*).

The Shekinah glory departed the temple. Its departure was significant, slow and permanent.

The departing of the Shekinah glory from the temple was a *significant* event. “The ‘glory of Jehovah,’ often referred to in the Old Testament and named the ‘shekinah’ in non-Biblical Jewish writings, was more than a mere symbol of God’s presence. It was indeed a ‘sign and manifestation of his presence,’ but it also described the ‘form’ in which the God of Israel revealed Himself. Doubtless it is correct to find manifestations of this ‘glory’ in such Old Testament phenomena as the Burning Bush and the Pillar of Cloud and Fire, but there can be no question as to its identification on the mount of Sinai where, we are told, ‘The LORD descended upon it in fire’ (Exod. 19:18). And when Moses went up by divine command the inspired record declares that ‘the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai’ (Exod. 24:15, 16). It was here that, as we have already noted, the historical kingdom received its constitution and laws; and when the tabernacle had been completed according to all the divine specifications, we read that ‘the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle’ (Exod. 40:34). Later in the history of the kingdom, when King Solomon had finished his dedicatory prayer in the magnificent temple he had built, the Word of God records once again that ‘the fire came down from heaven... and the glory of the LORD filled the house’ (2 Chron. 7:1). Thus the Shekinah-Glory was the visible evidence of Jehovah’s personal presence and rule in the Mediatorial Kingdom of Israel throughout its history” (McClain, *GK*, p. 120).

The Shekinah glory departed *slowly*, in four stages, as though reluctant to leave. “And **the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of the house:** and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writer’s inkhorn by his side” (Ezek. 9:3). “And **the glory of Jehovah mounted up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house;** and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of Jehovah’s glory” (Ezek. 10:4). “And the glory of Jehovah went forth from over the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. And the cherubim lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight when they went forth, and the wheels beside them: and they stood at the door of **the east gate** of Jehovah’s house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above” (Ezek. 10:18–19). “Then did the cherubim lift up their wings,

and the wheels were beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of Jehovah went up **from the midst of the city**, and stood **upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city**" (Ezek. 11:22–23). "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly" (Hos. 5:15). "The total vision of the departure of the Glory must be constructed from references found in chapters 8 through 11. First, the prophet saw the Glory still in the city of David in its proper place in the temple: 'Behold, the glory of the God of Israel *was there*' (8:4, italics added). A little later in the vision he notes that 'the glory of the God of Israel was gone up... to *the threshold* of the house' (9:3, italics added). Then Ezekiel writes, 'The glory of the LORD... *stood over the threshold*' for a moment, illuminating the inner court with the ineffable 'brightness' of Deity (10:4, italics added). Finally, the cherubim lifted up their wings, and the prophet records the tragic end: 'The glory of the LORD *went up from the midst of the city*, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city' (11:23, italics added). Later, following its destruction by the Babylonian armies, the city was rebuilt and within its walls successively two temples were erected; but we read of no Glory therein. Even Josephus admits the regal absence. (*The Jewish War*, V, v. 5.) The immediate and personal presence of Israel's divine King was departed" (McClain, *GK*, p. 123). "In this connection, we cannot fail to be impressed with the gracious circumstances of the LORD's withdrawal: not suddenly, but slowly and gradually by stages, with seeming tender reluctance; as if He were actually yearning to remain in the place He had chosen for His dwelling place. But there is no evidence of entreaty or repentance on the part of the nation. The elders bow down to the idols, the women weep for the god Tammuz, the priests turn their backs on the Temple and worship the eastern sun. The God of Israel is forgotten. Although Jehovah had not yet forsaken the nation, the people in their wishful thinking said, 'Jehovah hath forsaken the land' (8:12, ASV). And so at last they got what they wanted: as God had warned in the days of Hosea, 'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face' (Hos. 5:15)" (*ibid.*, p. 124). "Samuel J. Andrews has a fine paragraph on the significance of the departure of the visible Glory: 'This departure of Jehovah from His temple and land... marked a change in His theocratic relation to His people—a change that continues even to this day. They did not cease to be His covenant people (Lev. 26:44 [And **yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I**

am Jehovah their God]). His purpose in them was still unfulfilled, His promises respecting the Messiah and His kingdom were not withdrawn, and He continued to accept their worship. But He Himself was no more reigning at Jerusalem; the Visible Glory no more dwelt between the cherubim; the Ark was not in the Most Holy Place; the holy fire no longer burned upon the brazen altar; there was no response by Urim and Thummim. The people might return, as they did from Babylon, the temple be rebuilt, the worship again set up; yet there was a change. They came back from their first exile and dispersion, but no more to be an independent nation. To their original standing as the theocratic people under His immediate rule, they were not restored... This cannot be till the Lord their God again dwells among them, and rules them through His King of the House of David, in truth and righteousness” [quoting Samuel J. Andrews, *God's Revelations of Himself to Men*, pp. 112-113] (*ibid.*). Dr. Fruchtenbaum summarizes, “The Book of Ezekiel relates the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory. The *Shechinah* Glory left Israel reluctantly in four stages” (*FM*, p. 605). “The first stage of the departure was from the Holy of Holies (first position) to the threshold of the door of the Temple (second position). This is described in Ezekiel 9:3a... and again in 10:4” (*ibid.*). “The second stage of the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory occurred with the movement of the *Shechinah* from the threshold of the door of the Temple to the eastern gate (third position), in Ezekiel 10:18-19” (*ibid.*, p. 606). “In the third stage, the *Shechinah* Glory departed from the eastern gate and moved over to the Mount of Olives (fourth position) in Ezekiel 11:22-23” (*ibid.*). “Finally, in the fourth stage of departure, the *Shechinah* Glory left Israel and disappeared from Jewish history. It is only here that we truly see *ichabod*, the glory had departed. In rabbinic tradition, the *Shechinah* Glory remained on the Mount of Olives for three and a half years, waiting for Israel to repent. When Israel failed to do so, it departed from the Mount of Olives” (*ibid.*). “After the return of the Jews from Babylon, the Second Temple was built. But the *Shechinah* Glory was not in the Second Temple” (*ibid.*)

The departure was *permanent*; the Shekinah glory was not to be restored in the second temple. “The second Temple, among other deficiencies, possessed not the manifestation of the Divine Presence of the great King in the Holy of Holies, and gave not forth, as the first Temple, the responses of an earthly Ruler” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:238). “There was no Shekinah-Glory in the second and third temples” (McClain, *GK*, p. 248).

Finally, the theocracy was removed. “And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, **the prince of Israel**, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Remove the mitre, and**

take off the crown; this shall be no more the same; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezek. 21:25-27). "In brief, all the circumstances indicated, that the distinctive features which manifested a Theocracy, were withdrawn, and the religious, the ceremonial, indispensably necessary for the moral preparation and culture of man, was alone continued. The nation was undergoing divine punishment for its non-appreciation of Theocratic privileges" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:237). "The writer has often been pained at the recklessness of statement on this subject. Many excellent authors, not distinguishing what really constitutes a Theocracy (viz.: God's condescending to act in the capacity of an earthly Ruler, etc.), make the Theocracy or Kingdom existing down to the fall of Jerusalem, and then coolly transfer it over to the Christian Church. No solid advancement can be made in Theology until such utterly unfounded positions are relinquished" (*ibid.*, p. 251). "Furthermore, it was the end not only of Israel's political supremacy but also of her *religious* supremacy. For just as the historical kingdom had begun at Sinai with a vital union between the political and religious areas of Israel's national life, so now both were involved in the end, symbolized by the 'mitre' of the high priest and the 'crown' of the king. Both are mentioned by Ezekiel in his utterance of divine judgment upon the mediatorial nation in the days of Zedekiah: 'Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Remove the mitre, and take off the crown... until he comes whose right it is' (21:26-27, ASV)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 123).

Causes of the Theocracy's Fall

The causes of the theocracy's fall were the imperfection of its people and the imperfection of its leaders. "In closing this discussion, the question might properly be raised: Why did the Mediatorial Kingdom of history deteriorate and apparently fail? Space will not permit any venture to answer this question fully, but at least two factors can be mentioned" (McClain, *GK*, p. 128)

Regarding the imperfection of its *people*, "First, there was a *lack of spiritual preparation on the part of the people*. No government can wholly succeed unless there exists a sufficiently large body of its citizens who are in inward harmony with its constitution and laws. Men are constantly in danger of forgetting the importance of this political principle. To cite a rather recent instance: Many of the American people who helped to pass the 18th Amendment, because they felt sincerely that such a law would be beneficial to the nation, were nevertheless not personally in favor of it for themselves.

And so the inevitable result was dismal failure and repeal. Certainly, I am not suggesting any possibility of an ultimate failure of the government of God. But even in the Kingdom of God, the citizens are not all robots to be controlled mechanically and externally by irresistible divine power. There is a better way” (McClain, *GK*, p. 128). “Old Testament history is the history of Israel breaking the Mosaic covenant” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:516).

Regarding the imperfection of its *leaders*, “A second defect in the Old Testament Kingdom was the imperfection of the rulers through whom the government of God was mediated. It is an axiom of political science that no government in the long run can be more perfect than its rulers. Certainly, it should not be necessary here to review the sorry record of even the best of Israel’s rulers: Moses who spoke intemperately and unadvisedly at the waters of Meribah; David with his appalling double crime against society and God; Solomon with his final violation of the most important regulations for the king under the mediatorial economy. And, apart from violent revolution, any lasting reform in government must always start at the top. That is doubtless one reason why the prophet Daniel, who knew a thing or two about government and rulers, thus made his confession for his nation: ‘O LORD, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee’ ([Dan.] 9:8)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 128).

The Times of the Gentiles

Once the theocracy fell, the world no longer had a theocratic nation. Instead, the world, including Israel, would now be dominated by Gentile (non-Jewish) powers, until a future time at which the Kingdom would again be restored to Israel.

The Hebrew prophets and Jesus Himself spoke of a limited period of time during which Israel would not have a king and the world would be ruled by Gentile nations. Jesus spoke of this period as the “times of the Gentiles.” “And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, **the prince of Israel**, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Remove the mitre, and take off the crown; this shall be no more the same**; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. **I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him**” (Ezek. 21:25-27). “For **the children of Israel shall abide many days without king**, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim” (Hos. 3:4) “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and

Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**’ He said to them, ‘**It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority**’” (Acts 1:6–7)

The times of the Gentiles were seen by the prophet Daniel in considerable detail. “By three major visions, which were amplified by lesser visions, Daniel foresaw the times of the Gentiles, which had already begun and which, apart from revelation, must perplex the Jew who had before his eyes the covenants and promises to Israel. Naturally the question arises, in view of the setting aside of Israel’s program and the intrusion of Gentile domination, What has become of that unchangeable, eternal, divine favor upon Israel? In all three major visions, Daniel saw the Gentile times through to their consummation and the final realization of Messiah’s kingdom and the fulfillment of every promise to Israel” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:331). “Daniel... What he misunderstood about the prophecies of Jeremiah, Isaiah, and perhaps others was that he thought the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom would be set up following the seventy years of captivity... In a play upon words, he informed Daniel that it was not going to be seventy years, but seventy sevens of years before the kingdom would be established” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 187).

Definition of the Times of the Gentiles

As to definition, *the times of the Gentiles is a temporary period of time ordained by God during which Jerusalem, Israel and the world are to be dominated not by a Jewish Kingdom, but rather by a succession of Gentile powers.* “This being ‘the times of the Gentiles’ (i.e. the period in which Gentile nations shall rule over the world and no visible Theocratic Kingship shall exist)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:774) “The Kingdom was expressly withdrawn and postponed during a period called ‘the times of the Gentiles’” (*ibid.*, 3:242). “The period between the captivity and the second advent of Christ is named by Him ‘the times of the Gentiles,’ and its peculiar identification is the fact that, throughout its duration, Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:330). “The time of the Gentiles, then, is that extended period in which Jerusalem is occupied by Gentiles and the seed of Abraham is ruled over by Gentiles. Today Israel has no Davidic king and God is working through Gentile nations rather than through Israel. And while Israel will some day be the theocratic kingdom again, during the present ‘times of the Gentiles,’ it is under Gentile domination” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 163). “...the southern kingdom of Judah was exiled in 589 B.C...

From that point on, God administered His kingdom through the Gentile nations. It was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2, and to Daniel in Daniel 7, that four Gentile empires in succession would be the instruments God would use not only to discipline His covenant people, but also to be the channel through which He would administer the affairs of His kingdom here on the earth. That is why Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus could be called God's servants or God's anointed ones (Isa. 45:1)" (*ibid.*, p. 293). "The Times of the Gentiles can best be defined as that long period of time from the Babylonian Empire to the Second Coming of the Messiah during which time the Gentiles have dominance over the City of Jerusalem... Any Jewish takeover of the City of Jerusalem before the Second Coming must therefore be viewed as a temporary one and does not mean that the Times of the Gentiles have ended" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 21).

The Theocratic Kingdom does not exist during these times. "Since the 'Captivity' but one King of the Davidic family has been crowned and He with 'thorns' (Matt. 27:29)" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 151) "The simple fact is, that since the overthrow of the Hebrew Theocracy, God has not acted in the capacity of earthly Ruler, with a set form of government, for any nation or people on earth; and the application of the word to any nation or people, or organization since then, is a perversion, and prostitution of its plain meaning" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:217). "So long as 'the city of the great King,' and so long as His land, His by inheritance, as David's Son, is under Gentile dominion, it is simply impossible for the Kingdom to exist" (*ibid.*, p. 419). "The Kingdom being one with the Davidic throne and kingdom, it was impossible because of the rejection and punishment of the nation for a certain time, to establish it" (*ibid.*, p. 421). "If the covenants teach any truth clearly, it is this: that the Jewish nation and the Kingdom are inseparably connected;— that the one cannot possibly exist without the other. It follows, therefore, that during the period of national rejection and punishment (i.e. during 'the times of the Gentiles,' and 'the treading down of Jerusalem'), imposed on account of sinfulness, the Kingdom cannot be in existence" (*ibid.*, p. 422). "David's throne... it cannot—according to prophecy—exist during these 'times of the Gentiles'" (*ibid.*, 2:206) "Dr. Seiss (*Last Times*, p. 135), after referring to this dispensation in which 'the throne of David is yet less than a cipher,' and during which His inheritance 'is still trodden by the vile foot of the destroyer,' remarks: 'Oh, tell me not that this is the glorious reign of the Messiah! Tell me not that these are the scenes to which the saints of old looked with so much joy! I will not so disgrace my Saviour or His Word, as to allow for a moment that this dispensation is the sublime Messianic Kingdom. No, no, no; Christ does not yet reign in the Kingdom which He has

promised, and for which He has taught us to pray. Isaiah and Gabriel have said that He should occupy the throne of His Father, David, and reign over the house of Jacob, and establish His government in eternal peace and righteousness; but David's sceptre He has never held, over Jacob's house He has never ruled, and the whole world is yet full of iniquity and woe.' (Comp. e.g. Luther on Ps. 2, quoted by Seiss, p. 254.) Hundreds of able and talented pens express the same faith and hope, for which we thank God" (*ibid.*). "...the restoration of all things... so long as we live in 'the times of the Gentiles' (which now exist, and will continue to exist so long as Jerusalem is trodden down by the Gentiles), these glorious and predicted 'times' are not to be realized" (*ibid.*, p. 472). "Indeed, it is impossible for the Kingdom to come so long as Jerusalem is trodden down by the Gentiles" (*ibid.*, p. 624). "...the folly, so widely prevalent, of exalting this present period of time—embracing as it does 'the times of the Gentiles'—above the position assigned to it in Holy Scripture... in this dispensation the Church, with all her blessings and privileges, is still in 'the night,' surrounded by darkness (herself led by 'the light shining in the dark place')... looking for an absent bridegroom, fighting, struggling, and pressed with the curse, it is certainly unwise, both against Scripture and existing fact, to appropriate to her blessings which only belong to her after these 'times' are ended" (*ibid.*, p. 774). "Our argument exposes the absurdity and arrogance of Gentile kings also (without a Theocratic claim) assuming to be such 'anointed by God,' and 'ruling by special divine appointment.' Not only the Papacy, but Prelacy, etc., has aided in keeping up such a gloss over Gentile domination. How God regards such ruling is seen from the prophecies and the expressive symbolical representations of 'beasts,' and yet such, under the professed sanction of religion, are to be transformed into 'God's anointed' to secure the reverence of the multitude" (*ibid.*, 3:541). "Though blessings abound in the individual heart where Christ is enthroned, yet not one trace of this glorious transformed earth can be found in the present Gentile age" (Chafer, *S*, C2:37/37). "Viewed from the vantage point of Old Testament prophecy, Daniel saw no relief short of the Kingdom: 'Unto the end shall be war' (9:26, ASV)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 182).

The times of the Gentiles is *one of two intercalations in the Kingdom program for Israel*. "Little true understanding of prophecy will be gained until it is recognized that the divine purpose for the earth is centered about Israel. Whatever may intervene, this program begins and ends with Israel. Two intercalations are experienced. The first is that of Gentile times, which began with the Babylonian captivity and serves as a chastisement upon Israel as well as a definite divine arrangement with the Gentiles out of which

they are to be judged as nations. The Gentile times are interrupted by the second intercalation, which is the age of the Church and which extends from the death of Christ to the removal of the Church from the earth, which age contributes the whole feature of indefiniteness to all that follows looked at from the standpoint of the time it begins. There will yet be seven years of Gentile times following the removal of the Church from the earth” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:341).

Purposes of the Times of the Gentiles

One purpose of the times of the Gentiles is *to demonstrate the nature of rulership by fallen man and the necessity of rulership by God*. “In this Gentile ordering God allows an exemplification to take place, on a decisive scale, ‘of what fallen man is as a ruler of his fellow-men,’ as essential to show what is in man, what he will do when in power, and to demonstrate the necessity—in order to have a perfect government—of Christ’s assuming the Theocratic rule” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:681).

A second purpose of the times of the Gentiles is *to prepare Israel for the Kingdom*. “As God disciplines and chastens man before He elevates him to kingship, as the Messiah Himself passed through humiliation and suffering before His exaltation, so also the city destined to such high distinction and grandeur passes through its allotted period of depression and tribulation” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:37).

Events of the Times of the Gentiles

The times of the Gentiles encompass a long period of time (over 2600 years and counting as of this writing), during which a number of significant prophesied events are to take place.

The times of the Gentiles *began with Jerusalem’s Babylonian captivity in 587-586 B.C.* Dr. McClain details the events of the captivity and their chronology: “A careful comparison of the events closely associated with the departure of the Shekinah-Glory from Jerusalem will show that we have here one of the most important milestones in all of human history. From the initial coming of the Glory at Sinai to its departure from Jerusalem, the Mediatorial Kingdom had endured for approximately eight centuries. During that long period the power and authority of the Theocracy was never in question. No nation, regardless of its size or strength, could stand successfully against Israel as long as that people followed the will of its divine King. Even their defeats because of sin were an evidence of the supernatural supremacy of this tiny nation; something which was never in serious dispute, from the miraculous destruction of the Egyptian armies in the Red Sea down to the disaster suffered by the Assyrian host at the hand of the angel

of the LORD. Israel went down in defeat only when she turned aside from the divinely written charter of her kingdom. And even then there was always a gracious restoration of supremacy when the nation came back to the path of God. But now under Zedekiah, last reigning king in Jerusalem, the cup of Israel's iniquity was filled up 'till there was no remedy' (2 Chron. 36:11-16). The end came quickly, indicated by at least three significantly related events, all occurring in the short space of about ten years. These events, with their approximate dates, are as follows: First, in 603 B.C. we have the divinely authorized *transfer of world supremacy to Gentile power*. The record of this transfer is found in the second chapter of the Book of Daniel. Here we have the dream of Nebuchadnezzar which, according to the inspired interpretation of Daniel indicates that political supremacy is being committed to Gentile empire of which Babylon is the first and golden head ([Daniel 2] vs. 38). After Babylon there will come three other Gentile empires in unbroken succession, the last to endure down to the end when once more the 'God of heaven' will establish the Mediatorial Kingdom on earth, never again to be interrupted (vs. 44). This transfer of political supremacy furnishes the immediate background of the next events" (GK, p. 125) "Second, in 597 B.C. the prophet Jeremiah pronounces *the divine ban putting an end to the Solomonic family succession* on the throne of Israel. The record of this important event appears in Jeremiah 22:24-30 [...O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for **no more shall a man of his seed prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling in Judah.**]. It is directed against 'Coniah the son of Jehoiakim,' who is known in Scripture by two other names: 'Jeconiah' (Jer. 24:1) and 'Jehoiachin' (2 Kings 24:6). Although Zedekiah succeeded this man after he had been carried away captive to Babylon (2 Kings 24:11-20), Jehoiachin was very probably the last *living* ex-king of Judah, for he is seen in the court of Babylon thirty-seven years later (Jer. 52:31-34). It was during his brief reign of 'three months' in Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:8) that Jeremiah was sent to pronounce the doom of his royal family line. It was an utterance of great solemnity and addressed to the entire world as a message of universal interest and concern" (*ibid.*) "In Jehoiachin the failure of the family of Solomon became complete, and no man of his 'seed' shall ever again sit on the throne of David. As a matter of historical fact, Jehoiachin was not 'childless.' After being carried away into Babylon, he had a son through whom the family line finally culminated in *Joseph*, the husband of the Virgin Mary (Matt. 1:12-16). But our Lord Jesus Christ was not the 'seed' of Joseph; He was the seed of Mary, who was descended from David through

Nathan (Luke 3:31), not through Solomon. Hence it is correct to say that Jehoiachin was to be *written* ‘childless,’ that is in the genealogical register of the royal family line” (*ibid.*, p. 126). “Finally, following close on the transfer of world supremacy to Gentile power and the divine judgment ending the Solomonic family succession, *the Mediatorial Kingdom of Israel was officially terminated by the departure of the Shekinah-Glory*, dated by Ezekiel in ‘the sixth year’ of the captivity of Jehoiachin (8:1 with 1:2). This was very probably the year 591 B.C. And it should be noted that although the great prophet Jeremiah was in the city of Jerusalem at the time, the vision of the departing Glory was given to a prophet who was a *captive outside* the city and the land of the historical kingdom. It may be significant that immediately following the vision which he recorded in chapter 11, Ezekiel refers to Zedekiah as ‘the *prince* in Jerusalem’ (12:10, italics added). Since the kingdom of the Old Testament was finished, in the mind of the prophet there could be no *king* in Jerusalem until the kingdom would be finally re-established in Millennial glory. In the long interim, political world supremacy has passed by divine decree into the hands of Gentile power, yet never wholly independent of that providential control which is being exercised by the never-ceasing Universal Kingdom of God” (*ibid.*). Dr. Pentecost adds, “Finally Nebuchadnezzar returned the third time in 586 B.C. and set siege against the city, bringing about its downfall and destruction (2 Kings 25:1-2; 2 Chron. 36:17-20; Jer. 39:8-10)” (*TKC*, p. 114). “...the southern kingdom that went into captivity in 606-605 B.C. under Nebuchadnezzar, when Daniel and the princes of Israel were taken. In 597 B.C. Ezekiel and many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were taken captive. Finally in 586 B.C. the city was destroyed and those previously left behind were taken” (*ibid.*, p. 161). And Dr. Fruchtenbaum, “Zedekiah, the last king of Jerusalem, at which point the Times of the Gentiles began” (*I*, p. 402). “Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the Solomonic Temple in 586 B.C” (*FM*, p. 23). “...the Times of the Gentiles, the lengthy period that began with Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C” (*ibid.*, p. 188).

Jeremiah’s 70 Years

According to Jeremiah, the Babylonian captivity was to last 70 years. “And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. And it shall come to pass, when **seventy years** are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith Jehovah, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it desolate for ever” (Jer. 25:11-12). “In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign *I*,

Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years whereof the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah the prophet, for the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem, even **seventy years**" (Dan. 9:1-2). "Hence the retention of 70 in the prophecy. Daniel made inquiry concerning 70 [years of Babylonian captivity—*ed.*], and the angel informs him that another 70 [weeks of years, Dan. 9:24—*ed.*] relating to his people must transpire" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:665).

The Succession of Gentile World Powers

In Daniel chapters two and seven, the succession of Gentile world powers is portrayed as four sections of a great statue (as seen by man) and as four wild beasts (as seen by God) respectively. "Fausset (*Com.*, Dan. 7) remarks: 'Daniel sees the world kingdoms in their essence as of an animal nature lower than human, being estranged from God; and that only in the Kingdom of God ("the Son of Man," the representative Man) is the true dignity of man realized.'... Humanity is impossible without divinity; it sinks to beastiality" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:16)

These four Gentile powers were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, with a revived Rome prophesied for the very end of the times of the Gentiles. "Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: **thou [Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon] art the head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that crusheth all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. And whereas thou**

sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron doth not mingle with clay. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:31-45). "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters. spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of heaven brake forth upon the great sea. And **four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man; and a man's heart was given to it. And, behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear; and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and, lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon its back four wings of a bird; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.** I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of

his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till **the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.** As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. **These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.** Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and **judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law;**

and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him” (Dan. 7:1-27). “But the ‘Colossus’ grows weaker and weaker until the feet and toes become a mixture of Iron and Clay. In other words the government degenerates from an Absolute Monarch to an Autocratic Democracy, a form of government in which the people largely have the say. In short the ‘Colossus’ shows that the Gentile dominion passes gradually from the Head, the organ which ought to direct the members, to the Feet, which are only made to carry the body whither the head directs. We see then that the first of these Kingdoms was a Unit, the second Dual, the third became Quadruple (Dan. 7:6, 8:8), and the fourth, in its final form, becomes Ten-Toed” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 67). “The reason why these Four Kingdoms are represented first as a ‘Golden Headed Metallic Image,’ and then as a succession of ‘Wild Beasts,’ is to show the difference between man’s view and God’s view of the World Kingdoms. Man sees in them the concentration of wealth, majesty and power; God sees them as a succession of rapacious wild beasts devouring one another” (*ibid.*, p. 69). “In the second and seventh chapters of Daniel there is given a preview of the coming of God’s Kingdom in its relation to the governments of men. Although the symbols used are totally different—a great image in chapter 2 and four beasts in chapter 7—the two visions have certain striking similarities. In each there is presented a succession of four world empires; and in each the fourth empire in its final development consists of a coalition of ten lesser powers. The vision of chapter 7 carries the political development one step further: among the ten powers a notable world ruler emerges who will embody the consummation of all sinful men’s efforts at political organization apart from and opposed to God (Dan. 7:20-25)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 152). “Through the great image made up of four different metals (Dan. 2), it was revealed that the land given to Abraham’s descendants, and the descendants themselves, would be subjected to the authority of four distinct world empires” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 115). “...four beasts that emerged from the sea (Dan. 7:3), which in prophetic Scripture often refers to Gentile nations... four world empires were to rule over Daniel’s people” (*ibid.*). “When Rome fell before the invading forces from central and northern Europe, the political power of Rome did not pass to the conquerors, as the power of Babylon had passed to Medo-Persia, the

power of Medo-Persia had passed to Greece, and the power of Greece had passed to Rome. Instead, the political power at the fall of Rome was divided among many separate individual nations. According to Daniel's vision, the Roman empire would continue in this divided state until the ultimate reunion of these nations under one head" (*ibid.*, p. 116). "...ten horns, or the ten nations that merged out of the Roman empire... the times of the Gentiles will culminate in a reunion of ten nations that emerge out of the old Roman empire to form a false kingdom in opposition to the kingdom of God" (*ibid.*, p. 117). "The prophetic foreview of Daniel 2 in Nebuchadnezzar's image and the fourth beast of Daniel 7:23-27 likewise ignores the present age" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 228). "After Daniel requests the interpretation in [Dan. 7] verses 15-16, he is given a summary interpretation in verses 17-18. In verse 17, Daniel is told that these four beasts represent four kingdoms. Nevertheless, it is the servants of the Most High who will possess the kingdom, for whatever will be possessed by the four Gentile empires will be only temporary (v.18). Whereas earlier the four beasts arose out of the sea, here they arise out of the earth. Coming out of the *sea* emphasizes their Gentile identity. Arising out of the *earth* emphasizes their humanity: these are human, not divine, kingdoms" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 29).

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When Jeremiah's seventy years were almost completed, thinking that the Kingdom would soon be restored to Israel, Daniel prayed for understanding regarding the restoration of the theocracy. The answer to Daniel's prayer came in the form of an explanation from the angel Gabriel to the effect that although Jeremiah's *seventy years* were about to expire, the Kingdom would not be restored to Israel for *another seventy weeks of years*, or four hundred ninety years. "yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man **Gabriel**, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he instructed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee wisdom and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment went forth, and I am come to tell thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision. **Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city**, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy" (Dan. 9:21-24). "...the times of the Gentiles, evinced in the four world empires of Dan. 2 and 7, previously existed, yet Jewish time existed more or less contemporaneously down to the First Advent; for while periods of non-recognition ex-

isted (owing to sinfulness, and almost total in respect to the ten tribes), yet, in view of the divine purpose of God relating to the First Advent, He still recognizes the city and nation until we come to the crucifixion of the Messiah, when the non-recognition intervenes, and Gentile domination has paramount sway in power and time” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:666). “Since the divine reply contains a prediction of the First Advent of Christ, it is wholly appropriate that the messenger should have been Gabriel, the same angel who several hundred years later would announce His birth of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26 [‘Now in the sixth month the angel **Gabriel** was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth’])” (McClain, *DP*, p. 11). “‘Seventy weeks’ (of years) are determined upon Israel and Jerusalem to bring in the long predicted blessings of the Mediatorial Kingdom ([Dan.] 9:24). These seventy weeks of years will begin with ‘the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem’; and the end of the first sixty-nine of the weeks will mark the arrival of ‘Messiah the Prince’ (9:25)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 173). “Know therefore and discern, that **from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks:** it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. **And** he shall make a firm covenant with many for **one week:** and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:25-27). “God cut a fixed time of 70 weeks (sevens) of years to chasten Israel and end its rebellion against Him” (Showers, *M*, p. 53). “God determined all 70 weeks or 490 years for Daniel’s people and holy city (v. 25); therefore, all 70 weeks were determined specifically for Israel and Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 239). “A Summary of Facts... The examination of the 70-weeks prophecy of Daniel 9 has produced several significant facts. First, the Daniel 9:24-27 prophecy involved 70 weeks or 490 years of time. Second, God determined all 70 weeks or 490 years specifically for Israel and Jerusalem, not for the church. Third, the first 69 weeks or 483 years ended with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey on Palm Sunday. Fourth, the church did not exist during any part of the first 69 weeks or 483 years. God consistently kept the church out of this entire period of time. It is evident that He intended the first 69 weeks or 483 years

to be His program specifically for Israel, not the church. Fifth, God temporarily interrupted His 70-weeks program for Israel at the end of the first 69 weeks or 483 years. Sixth, God started the church very shortly after He interrupted His 70-weeks program for Israel and Jerusalem with a gap of time at the end of the first 69 weeks” (*ibid.*, p. 242).

These seventy weeks were decreed upon the Jews and upon Jerusalem to complete six things.

The seventy weeks were decreed *upon the Jews and upon Jerusalem*. “Seventy weeks are decreed **upon thy people and upon thy holy city**, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy” (Dan. 9:24). “‘Upon thy people and upon thy holy city;’ respecting or pertaining to the Jewish nation, and Jerusalem” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:660). “This promise specially given to the nation and city cannot, without violation of the prediction, be thus applied to the present experience of believers” (*ibid.*). “The ‘Seventy Weeks,’ or 490 years, only cover the period when the Jews are, by God’s permission, dwelling as a people in their own land. It does not cover the present period of their Dispersion” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 70). “...decreed upon your people [Daniel’s people, the Jewish people] and upon your holy city [Jerusalem]” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 188)

The seventy weeks were decreed *to complete six things*. “Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, [1] **to finish transgression**, and [2] **to make an end of sins**, and [3] **to make reconciliation for iniquity**, and [4] **to bring in everlasting righteousness**, and [5] **to seal up vision and prophecy**, and [6] **to anoint the most holy**” (Dan. 9:24). Individually, these six things are:

1. *To finish transgression*. “...the death of Christ fearfully increased the sinfulness and the punishment of the nation, and increases the sinfulness of the world in rejecting Him. Transgression produced that death, continued transgression rejects Him, and yet the prophecy declares that, as pertaining to them and the city, at the close of the seventy weeks they shall be no longer under the dominion of transgression... it is certainly wrong to insist upon a fulfillment, in which neither the nation nor city, as such, participated to any extent, but terribly suffered for transgression... It is at the end of this last week that the transgression is to be restrained. The only explanation is, that, as the prophecy itself intimates, this one week is detached, separated from the rest, and held in abeyance—owing to the rejection of the nation and pre-eminence of Gentile times—until this nation is again recognized in its national capacity” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:660). “In the Hebrew text, it

has a definite article. It is not merely to finish transgression, but to finish **the** transgression, to finish **the** rebellion. It refers to one specific act of rebellion, one specific act of transgression, to bring it to a finish, to bring it to completion. The one specific transgression in this context is the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. The finishing of this one transgression is seen in Isaiah 53:1-9 and Zechariah 12:10-13:1” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 189). “Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. **He was despised, and rejected of men;** a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and **we esteemed him not.** Surely **he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows;** yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But **he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and **as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?** And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth” (Isa. 53:1–9). “**And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem,** as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. **And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness**” (Zech. 12:10–13:1). “In this

first purpose, sin is to come under control so that it will no longer flourish, specifically, Israel's sin of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. Israel's national sin is now to be firmly restrained, to be brought to completion. The same point is brought out in Isaiah 59:20 and Romans 11:26. The first purpose, then, is to bring to an end Israel's national transgression: the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 190). "**And a Redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith Jehovah**" (Isa. 59:20). "**and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, 'THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB'**" (Rom. 11:26).

2. *To make an end of sins.* "...while there may be sin among the Gentile nations, in the Kingdom there will be no sin in Israel. This very same truth is taught in Isaiah 27:9; Ezekiel 36:25-27; 37:23; and Romans 11:27. This is also the point of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34, where Jeremiah clearly predicts the day will come when all Israel's sins will be removed and all Israel will be saved, from the least to the greatest" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 190). "Therefore by this shall the iniquity of **Jacob** be forgiven, and this is all the fruit of **taking away his sin**: that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, so that the Asherim and the sun-images shall rise no more" (Isa. 27:9). "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: **I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it**; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and **their sin will I remember no more**" (Jer. 31:31-34). "**And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.** A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. **And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them**" (Ezek. 36:25-27). "**neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their de-**

testable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and **will cleanse them:** so shall they be my people, and I will be their God” (Ezek. 37:23). “**AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS**” (Rom. 11:27).

3. *To make reconciliation for iniquity.* “Instead of pardoning the iniquity of the Jewish nation, to whom the prophecy specially applies, the nation is still feeling the effects of God’s withdrawal, but the time is coming when their iniquity shall be forgiven and the forgiveness manifested in prosperity and exaltation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:661). “The phrase ‘to make reconciliation for iniquity’ does not here refer to the death of Christ, as some have assumed, but refers to what God will do for Israel on the basis of the death of Christ. As the late Sir Robert Anderson has already pointed out, the sacrifice itself was not the reconciliation, but rather the means by which the reconciliation was made. At His glorious appearing, which will close the Seventieth Week, our Lord on the basis of His sacrifice at Calvary will ‘reconcile’ the chosen people unto Himself” (McClain, *DP*, p. 66). “The Hebrew word for *reconciliation* is a word that means ‘to make an atonement.’ This is the means by which the first and second purposes will be accomplished. The means by which Israel’s national sin of rejecting the Messiah will be removed and the means by which her daily sins will be removed is by an atonement. The third purpose is to make an atonement specifically *for iniquity*. The word *iniquity* refers to the sin nature. The program of the Seventy Sevens is a cleansing of Israel that will include the removal of all three things: first, the national sin of rejecting His Messiahship; second, sinning daily; and third, dealing with the sin nature itself” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 190).

4. *To bring in everlasting righteousness.* “The *fourth* purpose of the Seventy Sevens is: *to bring in everlasting righteousness* or more literally, ‘to bring in an age of righteousness,’ which is what the Hebrew word for *everlasting* really means. This age of righteousness is called the Messianic Kingdom and the Millennium” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 191). “The fourth purpose is to bring in an age of righteousness, to establish the Kingdom. Daniel thought the Kingdom would be set up immediately after the seventy years of captivity; now he is told that this will occur not after seventy years, but after seventy sevens of years or 490 years” (*ibid.*).

5. *To seal up vision and prophecy.* “‘to seal up vision and prophecy’ is generally taken to mean that prophecy is to be brought to an end by its fulfillment, but there may also be the further idea that the very fountain of prophecy will be sealed because with the Son of God personally on earth

His word will go forth *directly*, no longer through the medium of the prophet” (McClain, *DP*, p. 66). “The fifth purpose of the Seventy Sevens is to cause a cessation of both oral and written prophecy, because the program of the Seventy Sevens will contain the final fulfillment of all prophecies; the function of all prophecies will cease at the Second Coming of the Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 191). “The thing to remember, however, is that the Eternal State is New Testament revelation; no Old Testament prophet ever saw beyond the Kingdom into the Eternal Order. From the perspective of the Old Testament and in light of the fact that no prophet ever saw beyond the Messianic Kingdom, when Daniel speaks about the sealing up of vision and prophecy with the Kingdom, he means that insofar as Old Testament prophecy is concerned, everything will indeed be fulfilled” (*ibid.*, p. 192).

6. *To anoint the most holy.* “‘To anoint the Most Holy’... Christ will consecrate, at His Second Coming, with His presence the Holy hill of Zion” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:662) “‘to anoint a most holy place’ (A.R.V. margin) is undoubtedly the correct reading and translation. The reference is to the great millennial Temple which will be consecrated as a place of worship and prayer for all nations at the beginning of Messiah’s kingdom. During that blessed age, not to Geneva, nor to Rome, will men come to worship the Lord. But there will be a temple of the Lord in *Jerusalem*, and there God will meet with men in a ‘holy place’ sanctified by the personal presence of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This will not abrogate the universality of worship ushered in by Calvary (John 4:21-24 [“Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, **an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father.** You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But **an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth;** for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. **God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.**”]), as some have objected, but will add to this universality a further glory in the personal presence of the Son of God on earth. To go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord will no more detract from the present universality and spirituality of worship than the going to a church-building for worship as we do today. Today even modernistic theologians will spend a great deal of time and energy and money to make the trip to Jerusalem for the purpose of seeing the city where His blessed feet once trod. It will be a thousand times more wonderful to go when He Himself is there once more, as we trust He soon will be” (McClain, *DP*, p. 66). “...*to anoint the most holy*... it is the Fourth Temple, the Temple of the Messianic Kingdom, built by the Lord Himself, and it will

be anointed as part of the program of Seventy Sevens” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 192). We’ll discuss the millennial temple in detail in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.

These seventy weeks are *weeks of years*, not weeks of days. “The Hebrew word is *shabua*, which means literally a ‘seven,’ and it would be well to read the passage thus, dropping for a moment the word ‘week’ which to the English ear always means a week of days. Thus the twenty-fourth verse of Daniel’s ninth chapter simply asserts that ‘seventy sevens are determined’” (McClain, *DP*, p. 18) “In their divinely inspired calendar, the Jews had a ‘seven’ of *years* as well as a ‘seven’ of *days*. And this Biblical ‘week’ of years was just as familiar to the Jew as the ‘week’ of days. It was, in certain respects, even more important. *Six years* the Jew was free to till and sow his land, but the *seventh year* was to be a solemn ‘Sabbath of rest unto the land’ (Lev. 25:3-4)... Nothing could be so important to the Jew as this week of years” (*ibid.*, p. 19). “Daniel also knew that the very length of the Babylonian captivity had been based on Jewish violations of the divine law of the Sabbatic year. Since according to 2 Chronicles 36:21 [**to fulfil the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths: for as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years**] the Jews had been removed from off the land in order that it might rest for *seventy years*, it should be evident that the Sabbatic year had been violated for 490 years, or exactly seventy ‘sevens’ of years. How appropriate, therefore, that now at the end of the judgment for these violations the angel should be sent to reveal the start of a new era of God’s dealing with the Jew which would extend for the same number of years covered by his violations of the Sabbatic year, namely, a cycle of 490 years, or ‘Seventy Sevens’ of years (Dan. 9:24)” (*ibid.*). “Seventy weeks... One of the greatest tragedies in biblical interpretation is that the word has been translated here as weeks. This would require the Hebrew word *shavout*. But the word used here is *shavuim* which does not mean weeks, but simply means ‘sevens.’ As such, it could refer to ‘seven’ of anything, just as the English word ‘dozen’ simply means ‘twelve’ and can be twelve of anything... the context must be studied to determine the content... In this context, obviously, it must be a seven of years, because Daniel has been dealing with years. He has been counting up the seventy years of the Babylonian Captivity, assuming that after seventy years the Kingdom was going to be set up. Clearly, Daniel has been thinking in terms of years. In the Hebrew text there is a play upon words. Daniel is told that it is not ‘seventy years’ but that ‘seventy sevens of years’ must pass before the introduction of the Kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 188).

These seventy weeks *began with the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 B.C.* “The commandment to Restore and Rebuild Jerusalem.’ The date of this ‘commandment’ is given in Neh. 2:1, as the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, which was the 14th day of March, B.C. 445” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 84). “And it came to pass **in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king**, when wine was before him, that I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence” (Neh. 2:1). “...the famous edict of Artaxerxes Longimanus, dated March 14, B.C. 445” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 85) “The official ‘commandment’ authorizing the rebuilding of Jerusalem was issued to Nehemiah by the Persian king, Artaxerxes, in ‘the twentieth year’ of his reign, which happens to be one of the best authenticated dates in ancient history—445 B.C. From this date to the arrival of the Messianic King, according to Daniel, will be 69 weeks or 483 prophetic years. After allowing all due consideration for the various differences in computing these years, the prophecy remains unshaken. Its *terminus ad quem*, within close limits, is fixed and must fall somewhere within the earthly career of Jesus of Nazareth. If He is not the Messianic King of Old Testament prophecy, then prophecy has failed, and we can have no certain hope that there will ever be any such king” (McClain, *GK*, p. 173).

Division of the Seventy Weeks

Daniel’s seventy weeks are divided up into four sections: Seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, “after” the sixty-two weeks, then the final seventieth week. “**Seventy weeks** are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be **seven weeks**, and **threescore and two weeks**: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And **after the threescore and two weeks** shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for **one week**: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:24–27).

The First Seven Weeks

The first *seven weeks*, or forty-nine years, were for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. “Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment **to restore and to build Jerusalem** unto the anointed one, the prince, **shall be seven weeks**, and threescore and two weeks: **it shall be built again, with street and moat**, even in troublous times” (Dan. 9:25-26). “The first subdivision, the seven sevens, is a total of forty-nine years and refers to the forty-nine year period that it took to rebuild Jerusalem” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 193).

The Sixty-two Weeks

The next *sixty-two weeks*, or sixty-nine weeks (four hundred eighty-three years) total, end with the arrival of Messiah the prince. “Know therefore and discern, that **from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks [7 + 62 = 69 weeks]**: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times” (Dan. 9:25). “And as they were untying **the colt**, its owners said to them, ‘Why are you untying the colt?’ And they said, ‘The Lord has need of it.’ And **they brought it to Jesus, and they threw their garments on the colt, and put Jesus on it**. And as **He was going**, they were spreading their garments in the road. And as **He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives**, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, saying, ‘**BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest” (Luke 19:33–38)! “And when He approached, **He saw the city and wept over it, saying, ‘If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation’**” (Luke 19:41-44). “And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in **this thy day**, the things which belong unto thy peace! **but now they are hid from thine eyes**” (Luke 19:41–4, KJV) “On the exact measurement of the time indicated by Daniel, Dr. Henry C. Thiessen writes (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1935, XCII, 47-48): Sir Robert Anderson proves that the luni-solar year was the form of the year in use in Bible

times, both at Babylon and at Jerusalem. He shows this from the Scriptures and from authorities on astronomy (*Daniel in the Critics' Den*, pp. 117-23). On the basis of information furnished him by the Astronomer Royal, Sir Robert assigns the 1st Nisan, B.C. 445 [some scholars suggest the 1st Nisan, B.C. 444—*ed.*], the time when the decree was issued to rebuild Jerusalem, to March 14th. On the basis of the chronological data supplied by the Gospels he assigns the 10th Nisan, the day when Christ entered Jerusalem on the colt of an ass, to the 6th April, A.D. 32 [or 6th April, A.D. 33, if the 1st Nisan, B.C. 444 start date is the correct one—*ed.*]. This is the Sunday preceding the Passover of that year. 'The interval [between these two termini],' Sir Robert says, 'contained exactly and to the very day, 173,880 days, or seven times sixty-nine prophetic years of 360 days, the first sixty-nine weeks of Gabriel's prophecy [$7 \times 69 \times 360 = 173,880$ days—*ed.*]' (*The Coming Prince*, pp. 123-29). In computing the time from the 14 March, B.C. 445, to the 6th April, A.D. 32, he uses the following language: 'The intervening period was 476 years [445 B.C. to 32 A.D. = 476 years; there is no zero year in the Gregorian calendar—*ed.*] and 24 days [March 14 to April 6 inclusively = 24 days—*ed.*] (the days being reckoned inclusively, as required by the language of the prophecy, and in accordance with the Jewish practice). But 476 times 365 is 173,740 days [$476 \times 365 = 173,740$ days—*ed.*]; add (14th March to 6th April, both inclusive) 24 days; add for leap years 116 days [(476 years/4 years per leap year) - 3 days = 116 days; a leap year is skipped every 100 years, but is kept every 400th year, hence the subtracting 3 days—*ed.*]; and we have 173,880 days [$173,740 + 24 + 116 = 173,880$ days—*ed.*]. And 69 weeks of prophetic years of 360 days (or 69 times 7 times 360) equals 173,880 days.' Cf. Luke 19:42. This careful computation of the time covered by these weeks has all the appearance of accuracy and therefore commends itself as the true one. It makes the sixty-ninth week end on Palm Sunday, and so is in harmony with Daniel's statement that Messiah would be 'cut off *after* these weeks" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:338). "The division of those weeks is as follows: (1) seven weeks, or 49 years, (2) sixty-two weeks, or 434 years, (3) one week, or 7 years. The beginning of the reckoning is the time of the decree to restore and build Jerusalem, which was in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, or 445 B.C. (Neh. 2). From that time till Messiah the Prince there were to be sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, and it is only another proof of the infallibility of the Word of our God that the Lord Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem (according to the calculations of Sir Robert Anderson), at the consummation of the sixty-ninth week" (Showers, *M*, p. 150). "...triumphal entry (Matt. 21:1-17), which conformed to the time of Messiah's coming announced in Daniel 9:24-27" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 460).

“27: ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, in *this thy day*, the *things which belong unto thy peace*, but now they are hid from thine eyes’ ([Luke 19:] 42). What ‘day’? Why the day God had fixed in Daniel’s prophecy, the day that belonged to Israel, the day on which their ‘Messiah’ would manifest Himself as the ‘Prince,’ the exact *173,880th* day of the prophecy! And what were ‘the things’ belonging to their peace? They are the identical ‘things’ named in verse 24 of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, those marvelous blessings promised to Israel by that God Who never breaks a covenant. But now for a time all these ‘things’ are to be hid from the eyes of the nation; their enemies will prevail over them; and the city will be once more destroyed. But why? The answer is tragic but just: ‘*Because thou knewest not the Time of thy visitation*’ (44)” (McClain, *DP*, p. 27). “The 173,880 Days of the first Sixty-nine Weeks ran their course to the very day—deep and abiding encouragement to all who love the Lord and His precious Word of prophecy... The exact fulfillment of this prophecy is sufficient to demonstrate the accuracy of Daniel and also by implication the inspiration of the Bible and the truth of Christianity. Only *God* can ‘declare the end from the beginning’ and forecast to the very day ‘things that are not yet done’ (Isa. 46:10)” (*ibid.*, p. 27). “The prophet Daniel had spoken of the ‘day’ when ‘Messiah the Prince’ would arrive: ‘from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks: and threescore and two weeks’ (9:25). These 69 weeks of prophetic years of 360 days each add up to 173,880 days, and on the final one of these days our Lord rode into Jerusalem as the Messianic King of Israel... If the day was fixed by divine prophecy, this would explain the complete absence of any other official offer before this particular time” (McClain, *GK*, p. 351). “The fact that Gabriel referred to the Messiah as ‘the Prince’ implies that the event must be related significantly to the Messiah’s being Israel’s Prince or coming King” (Showers, *M*, p. 240). “As Jesus approached Jerusalem on that day, He wept over the city and said, ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hidden from thine eyes.’ He warned Jerusalem that it would be destroyed by enemy forces ‘because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation’ (Lk. 19:41-44). Jesus’ language indicated that that particular day had been marked out by God as the time of Jerusalem’s visitation by her Messiah-Prince—the day that could have brought lasting peace to that city if its people had accepted Jesus for who He was. It also indicated that the people of Israel should have recognized that that particular day was the day when the Messiah would visit Jerusalem as Prince because several centuries earlier, in Daniel 9, God had revealed the exact time when the Messiah would

present Himself as Prince to Israel” (*ibid.*). “...the first 483 years of the 490 year period came to an end with the First Coming of the Messiah” (Frucht-enbaum, *FM*, p. 193).

“After” the Sixty-two Weeks

After the sixty-two weeks, several important events were to occur.

After the sixty-two weeks, which is after the (total) sixty-nine weeks, Messiah was to be cut off, and the city and temple destroyed. “And **after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.**” (Dan. 9:26). “Instead of a Kingdom and great glory described as pertaining to the nation, we have the Messiah cut off, the destruction of the city, desolations determined ‘even until the consummation,’ or for a certain period of time. Thus do the facts, as they exist to-day, tally with the previously given predictions” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:391). “...the advanced student... Dan. 9:26, to the clause ‘shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself.’... Barnes, however, asserts that the marginal reading is the correct rendering: ‘And shall have nothing.’... ‘there shall be nothing for Him; He will be rejected, and His earthly Kingdom will be a thing on which He will not enter’” (*ibid.*, p. 693). “And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off;’ this, as eminent commentators have abundantly shown, was fulfilled in the death of the Messiah. ‘But not for himself;’ if this rendering is correct, then He died for the benefit of others; if the marg. reading is to be preferred, ‘and shall have nothing,’ it refers to the fact that the Messiah, as David’s Son, did not obtain His inheritance” (*ibid.*, 2:663) “‘the people’... the Romans. The prince is the Roman emperor or head who comes with his armies after the death of the Messiah for purposes of devastation. ‘Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;’ how this was accomplished under the Roman power is part of history, and needs no explanation... ‘And unto the end of the war desolations are determined;’... The city and the sanctuary being overthrown, this desolation would be continued on during a period of time decreed or determined by God, as e.g. the Messiah predicted that Jerusalem would continue (after it was taken) to be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. The impressive feature that after the taking of the city by the Romans the overthrow and desolation of the Jewish nation would not cease, but continue on, has been fearfully verified in its history” (*ibid.*). “The word translated ‘cut off’ was used for the death penalty (Lev. 7:20-21, 25, 27) and often referred to a violent death (1 Sam. 17:51; Obad. 9; Nah. 3:15)” (Showers, *M*, p. 240). “It is a

fact of history that Jesus was condemned to death and crucified several days (less than a week) after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Mk. 11-15)” (*ibid.*).

This cutting-off of Messiah and destruction of the city were to occur *after* the sixty-ninth week, but *before* the seventieth week. “It should be carefully observed that, in the literary sequence of the prophecy, both the cutting off of the King and a subsequent destruction of Jerusalem are placed before the seventieth week” (McClain, *GK*, p. 174) “Daniel 9:24-27... The anointed one, or the Messiah, is cut off after the sixty-ninth week, but not in the seventieth. Such a circumstance could be true only if there were a time interval between these two periods” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 228). “When he says, ‘after the sixty-two sevens,’ he means after the conclusion of the second subdivision of the Seventy Sevens and before the beginning of the third subdivision of the Seventy Sevens. This phrase clearly shows that a gap of time exists between the second and third subdivisions, that is, between the sixty-ninth seven and the seventieth seven. In this gap of time three events are to occur... a. The Messiah Would Be Killed... First, the Messiah shall *be cut off, and shall have nothing*. The expression *to be cut off* means ‘to be killed.’ This occurred in A.D. 30 [two years earlier than the A.D. 32 of Sir Robert Anderson’s chronology—*ed.*], approximately thirty-five years after the birth of Jesus. Furthermore, it says: and *shall have nothing*. The noun may mean ‘nothingness,’ to explain His state at death, or the Hebrew term may also mean ‘but not for Himself,’ meaning He did not die for Himself, but for others. That is probably the intent of the passage. b. The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple... *The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...* By saying *the prince*, Daniel uses the article of previous reference, because he has spoken of him in the previous chapters... Since the Antichrist must be of the same nationality as the people who destroyed the city and the Temple, it is this verse that shows that the Antichrist will be a Gentile of Roman origin... Whenever the figure of a flood is used symbolically, it always is a symbol of a military invasion. c. Continuing War... *Even unto the end shall be war...* For the remainder of the interval before the start of the seventieth seven, the Land will be characterized by war. This has certainly been true throughout the history of the Middle East. As a result of the wars, desolations are determined, a reference to the state of the Land as determined or decreed by God” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 194).

We know that the seventieth week did not immediately follow the sixty-ninth week because the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. occurred at a time beyond such a contiguous seventieth week. “Daniel 9 indicates that the

destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans fits within the scope of the 70 weeks or 490 years of the prophecy. Thus, this destruction was to occur before the end of the 70th week or last period of seven years. In light of this and the fact that the first 69 weeks ended with Jesus' triumphal entry, if the last seven of the 490 years had followed immediately after the end of the first 69 weeks, Jerusalem and the Temple would have been destroyed just seven years after Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem in the early 30s A.D. It is a fact of history, however, that Jerusalem and the Temple were not destroyed until 70 A.D., several decades after Jesus' triumphal entry. Only if there were a gap of time between the end of the first 69 weeks and the beginning of the 70th week could this destruction have taken place so late and still be within the scope of the 70-weeks or 490-years prophecy" (Showers, *M*, p. 241).

Now, although we can readily identify in history the event prophesied to occur at the end of the sixty-ninth week (arrival of Messiah), and the two events prophesied to occur after the sixty-ninth week (Messiah cut off and the city and temple destroyed), we cannot identify in history any of the events prophesied for the seventieth week. This strongly suggests that there must be an unspecified gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. "...the Seventy Weeks of Daniel... between the last week and the preceding weeks there is an interregnum or lengthy interval, of which, not being Jewish time, no account is taken. This interregnum embraces a large portion of the time in this dispensation" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:459). "While the interpretation of the first sixty-nine sevens is thus afforded a literal fulfillment, nothing can be found in history that provides a literal fulfillment of the last seven or the seventieth week. It has been taken by many that this indicated a postponement of the fulfillment of the last seven years of the prophecy to a future seven-year period preceding the Second Advent. If so, a parenthesis of time involving the whole present age is indicated" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 26).

It is not uncommon for time gaps to occur in Bible prophecy. "It is not unusual for biblical prophecies to contain gaps of time. For example, Isaiah 9:6 says, 'For unto us a child is born' (referring to the Messiah's first coming), and 'the government shall be upon his shoulder' (related to the Messiah's Second Coming). Zechariah 9:9-10 states, 'behold, thy King cometh unto thee... lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass' (referring to the Messiah's triumphal entry during His first coming), and 'his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth' (related to the Messiah's Second Coming)" (Showers, *M*, p. 242).

The time gap has enabled the creation and building of the church. “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18). “The clock of God stopped at the end of the sixty-ninth week and the Jewish age has been interrupted. That interval is the church age, not foreseen in the Old Testament. It is that interval that solves the problem that troubled the prophets when they searched for the specific time of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory that should follow. The church age began, then, when Daniel’s sixty-nine weeks were finished and will come to an end before the beginning of the seventieth week” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 150).

The time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks was likely not disclosed clearly for the sakes of enabling human freedom and not unnecessarily depressing the Jewish eschatological hopes. “The critical student will not fail to notice one peculiarity connected with this prophecy, viz., that God in the manner of presenting the truth avoids the fearful depressing effect that the real facts of the future would have had, if fully stated, upon the nation. Suppose e.g. that the Spirit had revealed that the time determined upon the Jewish nation and city would embrace over eighteen centuries of trial and persecution—what a terrible blow this would have been. God’s mercy veils this in the peculiar manner of prediction. Daniel, who obtained a view of this long interval, was so deeply affected that for weeks he mourned and fasted ([Dan.] ch. 10:2, 3). Let us briefly place ourselves in Daniel’s position, and then we may more correctly imagine his feelings. He had previously received (chs. 2, 7) an epitome of history which indicated the deliverance of the nation at the Advent of the covenanted Messiah. But these were also so framed that they mercifully concealed the awful fact of the rejection and death of the Messiah by the nation and the consequent long-continued tribulation. The framework of the prophecy, dealing with the times of the Gentiles, allowed this skilful and compassionate veiling of the nation’s sin and doom. Now Daniel, because of this merciful concealment of facts, entertained (ch. 9:2-19) the hope that, according to Jeremiah, the restoration from the Babylonish captivity would result in the ultimate restoration under the Messiah. To ascertain the correctness of this hope, he proceeds to ‘prayer and supplication with fasting, and sackcloth and ashes,’ and proceeds to a confession of sin and supplication for mercy. The result is, that God reveals to him the inexpressible painful fact that his nation would reject the Messiah, and that fresh and long-continued tribulations would have to be endured, Jerusalem again being destroyed. No wonder that Daniel was astounded and mourned over that dreary, dark future—having a clear and unmistakable view of the inevitable postpone-

ment of the Messiah's Kingdom. Happy we, if, like Daniel, we feel deeply interested in, and ponder over, such predictions. In the world to come we may hear from Daniel's own lips how powerfully his feelings were wrought upon, and what fervent supplications flowed from his heart. God will honor him for his expression of feeling, and we, too, shall be honored with him because of our respect and reverence for such communications" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:667).

In theory, had the Jews accepted Jesus as Messiah, Daniel's sixty-ninth week could have been followed immediately by the seventieth week. "If the question be asked why such a brief period should be cut out of the larger portion and be thus expressed, several answers are suggested: (1) the time stated is, if we may so call it, Jewish time, i.e. time relating to the nation, and hence the period of Gentile domination is not included under it; (2) the Divine Spirit in a most remarkable manner presents His abhorrence of the appalling act of which the nation was guilty, viz., in crucifying the Messiah, by which act the nation forfeited for a period God's recognition of it as a nation, and hence the period of such non-recognition is not reckoned; (3) Jesus Himself tells us that 'the times of the Gentiles' shall intervene, which are not included, they becoming such pre-eminently by the rejection of the Messiah. For, at the appearing of the Messiah... the Kingdom was tendered to the nation on condition of repentance. Had the nation repented, the period of seventy weeks alone would have embraced their degradation, for the Kingdom would have been re-established... Hence the prophecy is given in view of the offer of this Kingdom, and yet fully by implication expresses the refusal of the same" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:660). "Since all the promised blessings are associated with the second coming of Christ (Rom. 11:26-27), if there were no gap, the Lord would have returned three and a half or seven years after His death to fulfill the promises. Since His coming is still anticipated there must be a gap between the last two weeks of the prophecy" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 248).

Even with the time gap, God can still deal with Israel in some ways during this period. "This does not mean that God stopped working altogether with Israel and Jerusalem when He interrupted the 70-weeks program and started the church. Instead, it means that God temporarily stopped one specific program (the 70-weeks program) with Israel and Jerusalem while He works His program with the church in the world. There is a major difference between saying that God stopped working with Israel altogether and saying that He temporarily stopped one specific program with that nation. God worked with Israel and Jerusalem in ways other than the 70-weeks program for many centuries before He started that specific program

after Daniel's time. In like manner, during the present interruption of the 70-weeks program, He works with the nation and city in ways other than that program" (Showers, *M*, p. 243).

The Seventieth Week

Daniel's seventieth week is packed with prophetic significance (especially is this seen when it is recognized that most of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Revelation chapters six through nineteen fit within the week). "And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of **the prince that shall come** shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And **he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week**; and **in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease**; and **upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate**; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate" (Dan. 9:26-27). "The seventieth week of Gentile times is, according to all prediction bearing on it, a period of vital importance and burdened with stupendous events. From the viewpoint of Gentile and Jewish prediction, there is continuity or unbroken sequence between the 483 years which were completed by the death of Christ and the 7 years yet to run. This continuity will be largely governmental and political. In many matters—social, economic, educational, and material—the world will have made its progress during the Church age; but, as in the 483 years, the divine reckoning will be in the last seven years with Gentile authorities and not with the outcalling of the Church. In the continuity of divine reckoning, the feet of iron and clay are attached and their representation follows the iron-leg period without interruption" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:339). "Likewise, Daniel's seventieth week is in a sequence of 69 which have gone before and completes that belonging to the 69. Though 2,000 years fall in between, prophetic continuity sees only the Gentile realities represented by an unamputated image, and the Jewish history of 490 years unbroken by any unforeseen and unrelated age. As before indicated, though the feet of the image are in point of time removed 2,000 years from the legs of iron and a new divine undertaking runs its course in between, the Smiting Stone is said to destroy that which the image represents—Gentile dominion—and serves no purpose as a judgment upon the Church or world conditions in her age. Similarly, what constituted the character of 483 years will be revived and consummated in the last 7 of the total 490" (*ibid.*).

We'll deal at length with the contents of Daniel's "seventieth week" prophecy in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*. Here, in this chapter, we will be covering only a few basic points, concerning the the timing of the seventieth week and identification of its two main characters. This will help prepare us for our more detailed study later.

First, regarding *the timing of the fulfillment of Daniel's seventieth week*, this writer is convinced that *there is an irrefutable line of argument that proves that Daniel's seventieth week has not been fulfilled in the past, and that it therefore must necessarily find fulfillment in the future*. This line of argument is as follows: 1. Daniel placed the abomination of desolation in the middle of his seventieth week (Dan. 9:27). 2. Jesus placed the abomination of desolation in the future (admittedly, the future from standpoint of the time at which He gave the prophecy), *at the time of the Great Tribulation* (Matt. 24:15-21). 3. In the same passage, Jesus said that *immediately after the tribulation of those days*, the Son of Man would come on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory (Matt. 24:29-30). Now, 4. The Son of Man has not yet come on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. Therefore, 5. The Great Tribulation, which *immediately precedes the Son of Man's coming* in glory has not happened yet and, therefore, 6. The abomination of desolation, which *immediately precedes the Great Tribulation* ("the abomination of desolation... then there will be a great tribulation," Matt. 24:15-21), has not happened yet. Therefore, 7. Daniel's seventieth week, which features the abomination of desolation at its midpoint, has not happened yet. This line of argument also proves that 8. Since all commentators concede that Daniel's sixty-ninth week was fulfilled at Jesus' First Advent, there must therefore be a (almost two thousand-year-long now) time gap between Daniel's sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. This linking of Daniel's seventieth week, the abomination of desolation, the Great Tribulation and the coming of the Son of Man is made by the following passages: "And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and **upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate**; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate" (Dan. 9:27). "Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel** the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But

pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for **then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:15-21). “But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and **then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then** all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other” (Matt. 24:29-31). “In Matthew 24:15 reference is made to the coming of the ‘abomination of desolation’ and this is a sign to Israel that the great tribulation is approaching (Matt. 24:21). But even in this time there is hope, for ‘immediately after the tribulation of those days... they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory’ (Matt. 24:29-30). Thus the Lord is placing the seventieth week of Daniel at the end of the age immediately before His second advent to the earth. Coupling this with Acts 1:6-8, we see that a whole age of undetermined duration is to intervene between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of the prophecy. The only conclusion must be that the events of the seventieth week are as yet unfulfilled and await a future literal fulfillment” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 249). “There are several evidences for this gap of time between the end of the first 69 weeks and the beginning of the 70th week. First, Daniel 9:27 teaches that abomination will come with desolation *during* the 70th week, but Jesus indicated that this abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel will come shortly before His Second Coming immediately after the Great Tribulation (Mt. 24:15-21, 29-31), meaning that the 70th week or last seven years of the prophecy must also come shortly before Jesus’ Second Coming” (Showers, *M*, p. 241). (See also the section *The Timing of The Great Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Next, *we identify the “prince that shall come” as the Antichrist; not the Christ*. “And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of **the prince that shall come** shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And **he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease**; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined,

shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:26-27). “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week;... the one alluded to, who shall make the covenant, is by the tenor of the prophecy connected with ‘the people of the prince that shall come,’ i.e. shall also belong to, or be head of, this persecuting Roman power” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:663) “Christ did not make a covenant for a week, or seven years” (*ibid.*) “...there are two different princes mentioned: first, ‘*Messiah the Prince*’; and second, ‘*the prince that shall come.*’ The expression ‘prince that shall come’ cannot possibly refer to ‘Messiah, the Prince’ for the simple reason that it is ‘the *people* of the prince that shall come’ who are to destroy Jerusalem after the death of Messiah. And since it is now a matter of history that Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the *Roman* people, not by the Jewish people, it follows that ‘the prince that shall come’ cannot be the Jewish Messiah but is some great prince who will arise out of the Roman Empire” [quoting Alva J. McClain, *Daniel’s Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks*, p. 42] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 249). “His well-known identity is undoubtedly one reason why in chapter nine he is referred to simply as ‘the prince that shall come.’ For those who had read the great vision of chapter seven, no further identification would be needed. This same prince is, in my judgment, also the ‘king of fierce [strong] countenance’ of chapter eight, the Willful King of chapter eleven, the ‘man of sin’ of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the beast ‘out of the sea’ of Revelation 13:1; the last great persecutor of Israel, Satan’s false Christ” (McClain, *DP*, p. 50) “[Dan. 9] verse 27... Does the ‘he’ refer back to the Messianic prince or to the Roman prince? Grammatically, it might refer to either, although presumption favors the latter because he is mentioned last before the pronoun... ‘he’ will make a firm covenant with the Jewish nation for a period of one week, or seven years. Now, there is absolutely nothing recorded in the earthly ministry of our Lord which even remotely resembles such a covenant... the death of Christ did not cause the Jewish sacrifices to cease. They continued, in fact, until the destruction of Jerusalem nearly forty years later... to insist that Messiah was the maker of this seven-year covenant necessarily puts the entire Seventieth Week in the past, immediately following the Sixty-ninth Week. But this is impossible... The Seventieth Week is still in the future, not in the past, according to the Word of our Lord Himself in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew [verse 15]” (*ibid.*, p. 51). “The one that makes desolate is the Antichrist, who will cause desolations to fall upon the Jewish people” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 197).

And finally, we emphasize that *the “covenant with many” is a covenant, not with the church, but with Israel.* As Paul clearly taught, the church is a “mystery” not seen at all in the Old Testament (Eph. 3). We’ll

examine this “mystery” characteristic of the church in detail in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.

The end of the times of the Gentiles was foretold by Jesus. In fact, in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew chapter twenty-four, Jesus gave a detailed composite sign that would be identifiable in world events at the time the times of the Gentiles were about to expire. “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and **what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age**’” (Matt. 24:3)? “Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel** the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for **then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:15-21). “But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and **then** the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.** And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other” (Matt. 24:29-31). “When Christ was asked by His disciples for a sign of the end of the age (Matt 24:3), reference was being made to the age then in progress, namely, that foreseen by Daniel, the Gentile age... There could be no allusion to the present age of the Church, concerning which nothing had at that time ever been revealed. The sign, then, is needed to indicate the end of Gentile times, or, more specifically, the remaining seven years yet to be experienced at the close of the age of the Church” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:349). We’ll have more to say on this composite sign of the impending end of the times of the Gentiles in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.

Finally, *the times of the Gentiles will be terminated by Christ’s Second Advent.* “I will tell of the decree: **Jehovah** said unto me, Thou art **my son**; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee **the nations**

for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. **Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel**" (Ps. 2:7-9). "And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of **Israel**, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Remove the mitre, and **take off the crown**; this shall be no more the same; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, **until he come whose right it is**; and I will give it him" (Ezek. 21:25-27). "And in the days of those kings **shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed**, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but **it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever**. Forasmuch as thou sawest that **a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold**; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:44-45). "I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a **son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed**" (Dan. 7:13-14). "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. But **the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever**" (Dan. 7:17-18). "And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of **the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him**" (Dan. 7:27). "And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and **even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined**. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and **even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate**" (Dan. 9:25-27). "O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, who kills the

prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, **your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, “BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD”**” (Matt. 23:37–39)! “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteous he doth judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called **The Word of God**. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And **out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron**: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, **KINGS OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**” (Rev. 19:11-16). “Justin Martyr (*Dial. with Trypho*) quotes Dan. 7, and refers its fulfillment to the future... His coming was in humiliation... Justin correctly meets the objection by showing that the prophecy will be fulfilled at the Sec. Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:680). “Fausset (*Com. Dan. 2:4*) says: ‘The falling of the Stone on the image must mean destroying judgment on the fourth Gentile power, not gradual evangelization of it by grace; and the destroying judgment cannot be dealt by Christians, for they are taught to submit to the powers that be, so that it must be dealt by Christ Himself at His coming again’” (*ibid.*, p. 681). “The fact that this Stone is not presented as a foundation stone (i.e. preservative), but as a judgment stone (i.e. destructive), confirms the same. So also the image is not presented as something transformed or changed by the action of the Stone, but a complete demolition of it is expressed... The ‘breaking to pieces’ in Dan. 2:40 (comp. Dan. 7:7, 19, 23) is admitted by all to indicate violence, but the same phraseology is applied to the action of the Stone” (*ibid.*, p. 682). “[Dan 9:26] ‘Even until the consummation;’ that is, until the completion of the period appointed, showing that all is under God’s control, and that this power, after all, endures just as long as He allows it. ‘And that determined shall be poured upon the desolate or desolater;’ God has foretold the rise, progress, and apparent triumph of this Roman power, but He has also predicted the fearful vengeance that shall

befall this hostile power at the time of the end. What God has determined to pour out upon him is stated in numerous prophecies, as e.g. in those already adduced, Rev. 19:20, 21; Rev. 14:10, 11; Rev. 10, etc. Thus the latter part of this prediction was applied by the early Church to the events preceding the future open personal Advent of Christ” (*ibid.*, 2:664) “We cannot receive the predictions of otherwise able writers on the perpetuity and prosperity of ‘the times of the Gentiles’... a false principle, viz., that truth must inevitably prevail and triumph, which is proven by history to be untrue, as exemplified in the Antediluvian world, in the Theocracy, in the life and death of Jesus, in the retrogressions of Christianity, in the overthrow of nations, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 776). “Jesus comes in ‘the times of the Gentiles,’ hence in this dispensation” (*ibid.*, 3:104) “in predictions like Daniel, this Kingdom is outward, external, visible, just as the preceding empires” (*ibid.*, p. 463) “This vast program, it will be observed, is terminated by the God of heaven setting up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed—one to be set up by the resistless impact of the glorious return of Christ who is likened in His coming to a smiting stone (cf. Ps 2:7-9; Isa. 63:1-6; Rev. 19:11-16)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:333). “the Stone does not ‘become a mountain and fill the whole earth’ until the great image has been scattered to dust” (Chafer, *S*, C2:27/37). “If the first empire is on earth, so are the others. In the succession of powers, beginning with historical Babylon, there is no point where a shift can be made from earth to heaven, from things seen to things unseen” (McClain, *GK*, p. 153). “Just as the fourth power shall ‘*break in pieces*’ the political power it displaces, even so the heavenly Kingdom will ‘*break in pieces*’ the powers which it supplants (Dan. 2:40, 44)” (*ibid.*). “It is not the Kingdom but the present age which will be consummated at the second advent of Christ. At that time the age of Gentile misrule will end, being supplanted by the glorious and perfect rule of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 367). “Thus it was revealed that the Messiah, the rock in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, will destroy the nations that subordinated Israel to their authority during the times of the Gentiles, and He will establish a kingdom that will fill the whole earth. Therefore Israel must be redeemed from Gentile bondage in order to become the theocracy through which God ultimately will demonstrate His right to rule” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 115). “The times of the Gentiles would end when Christ the Messiah (referred to as a smiting ‘rock’ in Dan. 2:34-35, 45) would destroy the nations that ruled over Jerusalem and liberate that city, land, and people from bondage to the Gentiles” (*ibid.*, p. 249). “The kingdom over which the beast ruled will pass to the authority of Messiah and will become the kingdom of the saints (Dan.

7:27)” (*ibid.*, p. 305). We’ll have more to say regarding the termination of the times of the Gentiles in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.

Duration of the Times of the Gentiles

The duration of the times of the Gentiles is unknown, because the duration of the intercalary Church Age is unknown. We can say in summary, though, that the times of the Gentiles span from the beginning of Jerusalem’s Babylonian captivity in 586 or 587 B.C. to the time of Christ’s future (as of this writing) return. This time period encompasses Jeremiah’s seventy years of captivity, the period from the end of the captivity to the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 B.C., Daniel’s first sixty-nine weeks which ended with Jesus’ presentation of Himself to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the entire church age which ends with the Rapture of the church, the time gap, if there is one, between the Rapture of the church and the beginning of Daniel’s seventieth week, and Daniel’s seventieth week itself. This will be, at least, a *finite* period of time. “...whether the mention of the present era as ‘the times of the Gentiles’ is not sufficiently suggestive of their ending” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:58)

Now, because of the unknown length of the Church Age, we can be sure that anyone who claims to have calculated the exact duration of the times of the Gentiles (as Jehovah’s Witnesses claim to have done through their convoluted, grossly assumptive interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s ‘seven times’ of Daniel chapter four) are badly mistaken. The end of the times of the Gentiles is yet future, and will be evident to all when it transpires, at the unmistakable, visible return of Israel’s Messiah (Rev. 1:7). At that blessed time, Jerusalem’s trampling by the Gentiles will end (Luke 21:24) and God’s restored Davidic, Theocratic Kingdom of Israel will “come” (Matt. 6:10).

Israel to be Preserved

Even during the times of the Gentiles, wherein the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel lies dormant, *Israel is to be preserved as a people*. “**And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God**” (Lev. 26:44) “In the midst of the melancholy vision given to Ezekiel concerning the end of the Old Testament kingdom, the prophet was authorized to say that God will be a refuge to Israel even during the long period of her captive and dispersed condition. ‘Thus saith the LORD God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a *little sanctuary* in the

countries where they shall come' (Ezek. 11:16, italics added). The original word rendered 'little' in this passage may refer to either time or degree. Against Ellicott and Lange, I feel that the idea of *degree* better fits the context. The temple in Jerusalem is being abandoned by Jehovah, and with the city it will soon be destroyed; but scattered Israel will be compensated to some degree by God's presence and help for the elect remnant through the long centuries of dispersion until the Kingdom is restored and the outcasts are regathered back in the promised land to worship once more in the final temple at Jerusalem (Ezek. 11:17). This comforting promise, however, is not something wholly apart from moral and spiritual considerations. If God will continue to be a 'little sanctuary' to scattered Israel, it is also true that He will also be to many in the nation a 'stone of stumbling' and a 'rock of offence' (Isa. 8:14)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 127). "That the blessing of God would in some degree continue to rest upon the nation, even after the end of the Theocratic Kingdom, is evidenced by God's command through Haggai to rebuild the temple (2:1-4). For their encouragement, two motives were set before the people: first, the Mosaic Covenant still holds good (2:5); second, there is the prospect of a future Millennial Temple which will surpass in glory any building in the past (2:6-9)" (*ibid.*). We'll further discuss the preservation of Israel as a people in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.

Eventual Restoration of the Theocracy Promised

Even with the theocracy's fall, *its restoration is promised*. "**In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old**" (Amos 9:11) "And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, '**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know **times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority**'" (Acts 1:6-7) "God has had in the past, as such admit, a 'Kingdom of God' in a visible form, and He will not allow this visible Kingdom to prove a failure, but is making his preparations to reproduce it, at the appointed time, in greater power and glory" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:121). "If such a Theocratic Kingdom, as God Himself instituted, is not permanently and gloriously re-established here upon earth, then it follows that God's efforts at the establishment of government and the interest which He manifests in it are fruitless of abiding results. Or, in other words, His own Kingdom has proven a failure" (*ibid.*, p. 125). "If the general opinion is to be received, as expressed by numerous theologians, that it would be foolishness to expect such a restoration; that it has given place to a much higher, refined, spiritu-

al Theocratic order, etc., then it leaves God's direct attempt at exercising the functions of an earthly Ruler an inscrutable riddle" (*ibid.*, p. 126). "The same Kingdom in which God ruled on earth as an earthly king is to be reinstated. To this all the prophets with one voice testify, and this is the one postponed to the Second Advent" (*ibid.*, 3:460). "If such a restoration here on earth is not effected, it places God in the position of a Ruler who in His attempt at an earthly rule has been defeated" (*ibid.*, p. 544) "Hosea 3:4... At this point the political supremacy was transferred to the Gentiles. Hosea foretold: 'The Israelites will live many days without king or prince,' and from here onward it was a matter of prophesying a coming messianic kingdom" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:469). "God's purposes for His people were unchanged in spite of their disobedience—because God's covenant was unchangeable" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 118). Several hundred prophecies concerning the future restoration of the Kingdom will be presented in our chapter *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*.

The same theocratic, Davidic kingdom that was overthrown will be restored. **"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old;** that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. **And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them;** and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. **And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God"** (Amos 9:11-15). "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform that good word which I have spoken **concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah"** (Jer. 33:14). "And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, **I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all"** (Ezek. 37:21-22) "And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your

womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus**. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:30-33). “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know **times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority**’” (Acts 1:6-7) “Such passages as Amos 9:11, Luke 1:32, 33, Ezek. 37:21, 22, Jer. 33:14, etc., it is admitted by all men, do in their plain grammatical sense distinctively teach such downfall and restoration. This is denied by no one; but we are informed by eminent and pious men, that this is not the sense (excepting only as it pertains to downfall) intended by God. Aside from the inconsistency of charging God with employing a sense—the one, too, in common usage between men—that fairly expresses this idea and fosters corresponding hopes, we hold with the Primitive Church, and shall prove as we proceed, that it is the only sense which consistently maintains God’s covenant, oath, promises, and election of the nation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:240). “When this Theocracy was overthrown, all the prophets, with one mind and voice, proclaim that the same identical Theocracy shall be restored again with increased splendor and glory” (*ibid.*, p. 218) “...the identical Theocratic Kingdom overthrown shall be restored” (*ibid.*, 2:123). (See also our discussion of the Davidic Covenant in our next chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.)

The Shekinah Glory will return to the temple. “Afterward he brought me to the gate, even **the gate that looketh toward the east**: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And **the glory of Jehovah came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east**. And the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, **the glory of Jehovah filled the house**. And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, **this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever**; and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by the dead bodies of their kings in their high places” (Ezek. 43:1-7) “Furthermore, to the same prophet who saw the

departure of the Glory and the end of the Kingdom in Old Testament history, the LORD graciously gave a vision of the future return of the same Glory (Ezek. 43:1-7). Just as Ezekiel had seen the Glory of God leaving by way of ‘the door of the east gate’ (10:19), even so likewise he describes the final return of the Glory: ‘And the glory of the LORD came into the house by way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east’ (43:2, 4). As to the general meaning of all this there can be no misunderstanding—the Glory of Jehovah will return to the Jewish temple; the Kingdom of God will again be established on earth; the temple will again be built in the city of Jerusalem. Here, the Word of God declares, is ‘the place of my throne... where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever’ (43:7). And if historically the final glimpse of the departing Glory was ‘upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city’ (11:23), even so the same Glory shall be seen at the last returning in the Person of the Messianic King: ‘His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth’ (Zech. 14:4, 9)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 127).

The Jews will be perfected, and they will have a perfect King. “**But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people**” (Jer. 31:33) “**And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked**” (Isa. 11:1-4). “But over against the darkness of failure on the part of both rulers and the people in the Old Testament kingdom, the prophets spoke of a future and better age when the two defects stated above would be remedied. First, it will be an age when the laws of the Kingdom will be written in the very hearts of its citizens by the Spirit of God (Jer. 31:33); and second, an age when the mediatorial ruler of the Kingdom will be God’s own Messianic King; perfect in His character, wisdom, and ways (Isa. 11:1-4)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 129). (See also our discussions of Is-

rael's holiness and the government of the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

The theocracy will be supernaturally restored. “Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: **behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you**” (Isa. 35:4). “This means, of course, that the future independence and success of the Jewish State is inseparably bound up with the divine re-establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth by supernatural means. The Maccabees made one of the most desperate and heroic attempts in all recorded history to re-establish the independency of the Jewish State, and failed in the end. All other attempts, through political and military means alone, must likewise fail. In its finality and fullness, this must wait for a supernatural intervention on the part of God in human affairs, just as the Kingdom originally began in history with such an intervention in Egypt and at the mount of Sinai. ‘The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king’ (Hos. 3:4). But during the ‘many days’ of waiting, there is always the blessed promise of God through Isaiah: ‘Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you’ (35:4)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 129). (See also our discussion of the supernatural characteristics of Christ's return in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

The theocracy will be restored *only in Israel*; not in any other group. Jehovah's theocratic earthly government has always been and always will be through the nation Israel. All other would-be usurpers of the Kingdom are doomed to failure, whether they be the church, Jehovah's Witnesses or anyone else.

The theocracy will be restored *in God's due time*. Misunderstanding the timing of the Kingdom's reestablishment has led to bad theology, with tragic consequences, both in the church and in groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. The church has had its crusades and its dominion theology¹⁸; Jehovah's Witnesses have only 144,000 ‘spiritual Israelites’ going to heaven, a ‘great crowd’ of unregenerated souls clinging to an entirely unbiblical (for this Church Age) ‘earthly hope,’ and severe shunning and ostracism of those few who do manage to find their way out of the Watchtower maze into ‘the kingdom of His beloved Son’ (Col. 1:13). All of these tragedies could have been entirely avoided through a correct understanding of the time and nature of the restoration of the Kingdom.

¹⁸ Dominion theology teaches that it is the church's duty to “take dominion” over the world; to gradually and/or forcefully transform the world's culture into a Christian culture.

We'll discuss the details of the restoration of the Kingdom in our chapters *The Second Coming of the King, Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom*.

Chapter 12: Covenants of the Kingdom

Essential to our understanding of God's Kingdom program is our understanding of the eight covenants that God has made with mankind. These eight covenants form the legal and prophetic foundations of the biblical Kingdom of God.

Basic Principles Concerning the Biblical Covenants

Before investigating the specifics of each of the eight covenants, it will be helpful for us to first consider some basic principles concerning the biblical covenants.

Our Reception and Understanding of the Covenants

It is a sad fact of our day that both in formal seminary training and in local biblical instruction, the covenants that God has made with mankind are largely *ignored* and/or *misunderstood*, resulting in appalling *ignorance* and/or *misunderstanding* of the covenants among the majority of Christians. "Entire systems of Divinity, given by learned men, make no mention whatever of the Davidic covenant" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:565). "It is a sad fact, that more ignorance and misunderstanding exist in relation to the covenants than perhaps of any other portion of the Bible" (*ibid.*, 1:320).

However, if we are to correctly understand God's revelation to us, the Bible, and particularly His Kingdom program, then our understanding the covenants is *vitally important*. "Oosterzee (*Ch. Dog.*, vol. 2, p. 471) observes: 'We have learned to recognize the covenant of God with Abraham as the foundation of the entire revelation of Salvation.' Abraham is this chosen instrument, and through his promised seed complete redemption is to be obtained. Certainly then the Abrahamic history becomes one of absorbing interest, in view of its fundamental and living connection with final Salvation. It deserves and demands our most earnest and closest attention, for to it all other things, in the development, must sustain a close and abiding relation. We cannot overestimate the importance of this, as Isa. 51:1, 2 teaches. Even the incarnation, life, etc., of Christ grow out of the deep significance, and in behalf of the fulfillment, of the covenant made with Abraham" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:293). "**Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek Jehovah: look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hold of the pit whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for when he was but one I called him, and I blessed him, and made him many**" (Isa. 51:1–2). "...the most essential portion of God's

Word, viz.: the Covenants” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 454). “All notions of the Kingdom that do not stand the test of the Covenant must be discarded” (*ibid.*, p. 606). “It certainly is unjust to ignore the Jewish and early Church belief, that the covenant would be fulfilled in the restored Davidic throne and Kingdom, which was to be accomplished by a resurrection of saints, and the numerous passages alleged to sustain this view as found in the Old Test. Rev. 20 was adduced by the Primitive Christians in confirmation of this doctrine. The foundation of the Millenarian system is the covenant, and Rev. 20 only illustrates how a certain feature pertaining to it is to be realized. Hence any attack upon us which leaves untouched the covenant and covenant promises is one-sided and unavailing” (*ibid.*, 2:281).

The Purposes of the Covenants

The covenants serve to determine the fundamental form and responsibility of life in each dispensation, and also form the foundation of all prophecy, helping us to correctly interpret and understand prophecy.

Regarding the covenants’ *determination of the form and responsibility of life in each dispensation*, Walvoord says, “The premillennial and dispensational interpretation of Scripture builds upon the successive Biblical covenants which are expressly revealed in the Bible, interprets them literally, and conditions the form and responsibility of life in successive dispensations according to the covenants which apply” (*MK*, p. 90).

The covenants also *form the foundation of all prophecy, and help us to interpret and understand prophecy*. George Peters explains the vital connection between the covenants and subsequent prophecy: “The relation that the Kingdom sustains to ‘the covenants of promise,’ enables us to appreciate the prophecies pertaining to the Kingdom. All predictions, all promises, all preparative measures, relating to the Kingdom, are based on, and result from, these covenants” (*TTK*, 1:337). “...one intent of prophecy, viz.: to instruct us in the manner by which God will ultimately fulfill His covenants and establish His Theocratic rule over the nations” (*ibid.*). “All applications of prophecy which do not incorporate as fundamental the restoration of the Jews, is radically defective, simply because it makes the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant an utter impossibility” (*ibid.*). “The covenanted foundation of the predictions is overlooked or perverted, and, of course, the superstructure is correspondingly untenable. Thus valuable Scripture is given up to unbelief” (*ibid.*, p. 340). “The covenants outline the Plan of the Divine Purpose; prophecy partially fills up and deepens the lines thus drawn” (*ibid.*). “The keystone of the whole system (i.e. Millenarian) is not to be found, as Prof. Sanborn (Essay on Mill.), in the pre-Millennial Ad-

vent (however indispensable), but in the covenants. The promises are not in the Sec. Advent, but in the covenants and prophecies based on them; the Advent being only the necessary means toward their accomplishment” (*ibid.*, p. 348). “Any theory, inference, or doctrine which militates against the covenants is not only open to grave suspicion, but must be rejected, no matter by whom presented or however eloquently urged. God cannot, does not, contradict Himself... the covenant is the measure of accuracy, being the most solemnly given and strongly affirmed portion of God’s Holy Word” (*ibid.*, 3:565).

Characteristics of the Covenants

At least three characteristics are common to all eight of the biblical covenants.

First, the covenants are presented and worded such that they are *easily understood*. “A covenant must, in the nature of the case, be understood by the parties to whom it is given” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:342). “The very nature of a covenant demands, that it should be so worded, so plainly expressed, that it conveys a decisive meaning, and not a hidden or mystical one that requires many centuries to revolve in order to develop” [quoting George Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom, I*, pp. 290-91] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 69).

Second, the covenants are *to be understood literally*. “If it is important in any mere earthly relationship for the parties to understand each other, and such a comprehension is based on the plain grammatical sense of the language used, is it not equally, yea more, essential in so weighty a case as this; and to insure comprehension of the same is it not most reasonable to expect the same literal language? Indeed, when the covenants embrace the vital interests of a nation and the destiny of the race and the world, is it not requisite that they should be presented in such a form that the parties to whom they are given can readily perceive their meaning, without searching around for another and very different one to be engrafted upon them, or, without waiting for an Origen or Swedenborg to arise and spiritualize them into a proper conception? It is saddening (it would be crushing to the few believing ones, if this lack of faith—its universality—had not been also predicted) to see how extensively the latter is done by good and great men, thereby darkening knowledge and obscuring the revealed purposes of God... God never gave the covenants to deceive in their plain, grammatical sense! Men, indeed, say so; learned men declare it so; but this does not make it so—leaving the Word to speak for itself” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:290). “Our Proposition is confirmed by the indisputable fact that God has stamped the grammatical sense as the correct one by literally fulfilling a portion of the

covenants. Take e.g. the promised ‘seed.’ He has come from Abraham, through the line of David...” (*ibid.*, p. 291) “If all the rest contained in these covenants has not yet been thus literally confirmed by fulfillment, we should not hastily limit the Almighty in His dispensational proceedings by rejecting the remainder, or by attaching another meaning to it to suit present circumstances. No! With Abrahamic faith clinging to His revealed intention, at some time, to fulfill them as He has done a part, let us calmly ask, Why has it not all been thus fulfilled? When this question is scripturally answered, and the reasons assigned, which God Himself gives, then, then we shall not only be satisfied to let its plain meaning stand, but rejoice in its precious significance” (*ibid.*). “The partial fulfillment of them clearly shows that they are not to be regarded as typical” (*ibid.*). “To answer unbelief, by endeavoring to make out a fulfillment by spiritualizing the promises, by substituting something else in their place, is only another form of unbelief in the precise words of the covenants” (*ibid.*, p. 294). Dr. Geisler adds, “...a category mistake: Not all Old Testament predictions were types... a covenant is *not* a type” (*ST*, 4:587)

Third, the covenants always *have an earthly focus*. “Concerning the future life, upon which the Egyptians had so much to say, Moses taught nothing. His rewards and punishments were inflicted in this world. Retribution, individual and national, took place here. As this could not have been from ignorance or accident, it must have had a purpose, it must have been intentional... Moses carefully rejects the Egyptian theories and confines himself to a specific Plan... lay down a foundation in relation to this earth that (if accomplished) is adapted to secure the blessedness of man and creation in deliverance from an imposed curse... No man, unless he apprehends the inheritance that Moses says God promised to the Patriarchs and the relation that believers sustain to it through coming resurrection power, can do justice to Moses or properly vindicate his unity with the after statements of prophets and apostles... Let it be noticed, the Theocracy pertains to this earth—it is God’s Kingdom here on the earth, He ruling in it as the earthly Ruler... with the Theocracy the interests, the rewards, of every believer are identified, and it pertains to the earth” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:310).

However, there is one characteristic that is not the same for every covenant, namely, the characteristic of *conditionality*. Each covenant is either *conditional* or *unconditional*, and it is essential that we determine whether each covenant is conditional or unconditional, if we are to correctly understand the relationships between it and the other covenants, and the outworking of the covenants in history. A *conditional* covenant is a covenant whose fulfillment is conditioned upon man’s obedience. “A condi-

tional covenant is a bilateral covenant in which a proposal of God to man is characterized by the formula: *if you will, then I will* whereby God promises to grant special blessings to man providing man fulfills certain conditions contained in the covenant. Man's failure to do so often results in punishment. Thus one's response to the covenant agreement brings either blessings or cursings. The blessings are secured by obedience and man must meet his conditions before God will meet His. Two of the eight covenants of the Bible are conditional: the Edenic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant" (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 5). An *unconditional* covenant is a covenant whose fulfillment is dependent only upon God, and whose fulfillment is independent of man's obedience or disobedience. "An unconditional covenant is a unilateral covenant and is a sovereign act of God whereby He unconditionally obligates Himself to bring to pass definite blessings and conditions for the covenanted people. This covenant is characterized by the formula: *I will* which declares God's determination to do as He promises. Blessings are secured by the grace of God. There may be conditions in the covenant by which God requests the covenanted one to fulfill out of gratitude, but they are not themselves the basis of God's fulfilling His promises. Six of the eight covenants are unconditional: the Adamic Covenant, the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Palestinian or Land Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant" (*ibid.*). It should be recognized, however, that unconditional covenants may (and sometimes do) contain conditioned blessings. "The failure to observe that an unconditional covenant may have certain conditioned blessings attached to it had led many to the position that conditioned blessings necessitate a conditional covenant, thus perverting the essential nature of Israel's determinative covenants" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 68).

God's Eight Covenants With Mankind

God has made a total of eight covenants with mankind. "God has made eight Covenants with man. They all relate to the earth. Each one introduces a New Dispensation" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 149).

Three Covenants With Mankind in General

Three of the eight covenants were made with *mankind in general*. They are the Edenic, Adamic and Noahic Covenants.

The first of these three covenants made with mankind in general, the *Edenic Covenant*, was *conditional*. In the Edenic Covenant Adam and Eve's idyllic life in the garden was conditioned on their obedience to the covenant. They disobeyed the covenant's one prohibitive condition by eat-

ing of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thereby breaking the covenant. Then, as promised in the Edenic Covenant, in the very day that they ate from the forbidden fruit, they died spiritually and also began to die physically. They were then dismissed from the garden and forbidden reentry. “And **Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**” (Gen. 2:16–17). “But they like **Adam** have **transgressed the covenant**: there have they dealt treacherously against me” (Hos. 6:7). We discussed the Edenic Covenant at length in the *Covenant #1: The Edenic Covenant* section of our chapter *God and Creation*.

The second of these three covenants made with mankind, the *Adamic Covenant*, was *unconditional*. In the Adamic Covenant the serpent was cursed, and a seed was promised that would one day bruise the serpent’s head. Also, the earth was cursed, Eve was told that childbearing would now be painful, and Adam was told that he would return to the dust from whence he came. All of these features of the Adamic Covenant were unconditional; they depended upon God alone for fulfillment. “And **Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou** above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and **I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.** And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return**” (Gen. 3:14-19). We discussed the Adamic Covenant at length in the *Covenant #2: The Adamic Covenant* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.

The third of these three covenants made with mankind in general, the *Noahic Covenant*, was also *unconditional*. In the Noahic Covenant Noah was promised that the earth would never again be deluged by a global flood,

and the State was given authority to punish sin. These features of the Noahic Covenant were unconditional, being parts of the unconditional Noahic Covenant. “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.** And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens. With all wherewith the ground teemeth, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered. **Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you.** As the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require. At the hand of every beast will I require it. And at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man’s brother, will I require the life of man. **Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.** For in the image of God made he man. And **you, be ye fruitful, and multiply. Bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.** And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And **I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you.** And with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you. Of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. And **I will establish my covenant with you. Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood. Neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.** And God said, **This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.** And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, And **I will remember my covenant,** which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud. And I will look upon it, **that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.** And God said unto Noah, **This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth”** (Gen. 9:1-17). We discussed the Noahic Covenant at length in the *Covenant #3: The Noahic Covenant* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.

Five Covenants With Israel

The other five of the eight biblical covenants were all made *exclusively with Israel*. They are the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants. If we are to understand the biblical Kingdom program correctly, it is essential that we keep in mind that these five covenants were made by God with Israel; not with Gentiles.

One of these five covenants with Israel, the Mosaic Covenant, was *conditional*.

At Mount Sinai, Jehovah made the *Mosaic Covenant* with Israel, which was comprised of six hundred thirteen laws, designed to govern the religious, moral and civil aspects of Jewish life. The Mosaic Covenant is stated in Exodus 20:1-31:18. As it has been well said elsewhere, the Old Testament is the record of Israel breaking the Mosaic Covenant. Hence the need for its replacement by the promised New Covenant. “And he cried unto Jehovah; And Jehovah showed him a tree, and he cast it into the waters, and the waters were made sweet. There he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them; and he said, **If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his eyes, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will** put none of the diseases upon thee, which I have put upon the Egyptians: for I am Jehovah that healeth thee” (Ex. 15:25-26). “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, **if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then** ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine” (Ex. 19:4-5) “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake,** although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). We discussed the Mosaic Covenant at length in the *Covenant #5: The Mosaic Covenant* section of our chapter *The Theocratic Kingdom*.

Israel's Four Unconditional Covenants

The other four covenants made with Israel, the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants, were *unconditional*. Again, the unconditionality of these four covenants is essential for us to keep in mind if we are to understand the Bible and its overall Kingdom program correctly.

Characteristics of Israel's Four Unconditional Covenants

Israel's four unconditional covenants all share several important characteristics:

They present us with an outline of God's Kingdom program. "There is a Judaism founded on the temporary provisions of the Mosaic economy and the traditions of the past, which is irreconcilable with our doctrine of the Kingdom; and there is a Judaism grounded upon the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, and the promises to the nation, which is inseparably connected with our belief—indeed, is fundamental to it" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:428). "Pre-Millenarians are beginning to realize, as they have never before (unless we except the quite early Church) that the foundations of their faith rest on two everlasting covenants, the Abrahamic and Davidic" (*ibid.*, 3:132). "God's kingdom program was the outworking of His eternal and unconditional covenants" [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 9] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 629).

They bind God to a specific course of action. "These [four unconditional] covenants not only had a relation to the nation at the time of their inception and built a foundation on which God dealt with Israel, but they bind God to a course of action in relation to future events, as illustrated in Bible prophecy" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 176).

Together, they promise seven things to Israel. "Of the five [plus two added below for a total of seven—*ed.*] eternal features of Jehovah's covenants with Israel—an everlasting nation, an everlasting possession of her land, an everlasting throne, an everlasting king, and an everlasting kingdom—two, the nation and the possession of the land, are covenanted through Abraham, while the remaining three, the throne, the king, and the kingdom, are covenanted through David" (Chafer, *ST*, 5:318). "When the covenants are studied analytically we find seven great features which are determinative: (1) a nation forever, (2) a land forever, (3) a King forever, (4) a throne forever, (5) a kingdom forever, (6) a new covenant, and (7) abiding blessings" [referencing Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:315] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 128) These seven things are: 1. *A Nation Forever*. "The fact is that the reason God will bring salvation to the nation is because they are the Jewish nation, and it is with them that God has a covenant" (Fruchten-

baum, *I*, p. 307). “The first feature is ‘A Nation Forever.’ Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 4:315] points out that the clear teaching of Scripture is that Israel is an ‘elect nation’ and for this reason ‘will be preserved as such forever.’ For this reason Israel as a nation will continue to exist even beyond the Messianic Kingdom of one thousand years. They will continue to exist as Israel through all eternity. Since ‘their covenants respecting the land are everlasting, it follows, also that this people as a nation must inherit and inhabit the new earth that is to be.’ This is a teaching of the Old Testament. In the New Testament, Jesus also promised the ‘preservation of this nation throughout this age of her scattering.’ This nation ‘will be preserved forever.’ If this is not what the text means, then ‘language fails to express thought.’ The election of Israel is on the basis of ‘Jehovah’s love for that people’ and not on the basis of merit. This elective love is an everlasting love which ‘includes a love from all eternity past and extends on into eternity to come.’ For that reason Israel is ‘a nation forever’” (*ibid.*, p. 370).

2. *A Land Forever.* “The second feature is ‘A Land Forever.’ That the land of Canaan is Israel’s was promised by the Abrahamic Covenant, and it was reaffirmed by the Palestinian Covenant. Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 4:317-323] then points out that there are seven facets of this feature of ‘a land forever,’ all of which are based on the Palestinian Covenant of Deuteronomy 28-30. The first facet was the dispersion of Israel. There are a total of ‘three distinct dispossessions of the land... and three restorations.’ According to Chafer, the present dispersion is the third dispersion and the third restoration is still future. The second facet is a ‘Future Repentance of Israel,’ which will cause Israel to become ‘a mourning people’ which will occur at the second coming ‘when they recognize their true Messiah at the time of His return.’ The third facet is the ‘Return of the Messiah’ at which time Israel will gain ‘the final possession of the land.’ In fact, ‘Jehovah will Himself place Israel in their land at the time of His “return.”’ The fourth facet then becomes ‘Israel’s restoration to the land.’ The ‘truth that Israel will return to their own land’ becomes one of the major themes of prophecy. Jesus said that ‘Israel’s regathering... will be accomplished by angelic ministration and in relation to His second coming.’ Chafer then cites the many times that God said to the Patriarchs, ‘I will give you this land,’ to show that the possession of the land was promised to the Patriarchs as well as to their descendants. Obviously, they died without the promises ever being fulfilled. ‘Since it was given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as to their seed these must be resurrected and through resurrection come to the realization of this covenant.’ The point is that when the resurrection of the Old Testament saints occurs, they will possess the land and inherit the promises

made to them. The fifth facet is ‘Israel’s conversion as a nation.’ With the final regathering, Israel will experience a national regeneration that will keep them a saved nation throughout the kingdom period. When the ‘national conversion’ comes, it will include ‘from the least of them unto the greatest of them.’ The sixth facet is ‘judgment on Israel’s oppressors.’ Gentiles will all appear before this judgment at or after the second coming. They will be judged on the basis of their ‘treatment of Israel whom Christ identifies as “my brethren.”’ This judgment will determine who among the surviving Gentiles ‘are accounted worthy of entrance into Israel’s kingdom.’ The seventh facet is that ‘the nation will be blessed then.’ At this point Israel will enjoy all of the blessings and conditions promised in those four covenants” (*ibid.*, p. 371). 3. *A King Forever*. “...the covenant with David provided an unending occupancy of David’s throne. His throne is established forever (2 Sam. 7:16), His seed shall endure forever (Ps. 89:36), and David shall never lack for one to sit upon his throne (Jer. 33:17)... Christ was the rightful heir to that throne and He, from that time on and forever, fulfills the promise to David” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:323] (*ibid.*, p. 372). 4. *A Throne Forever*. “In addition to the initial covenant with David, three other passages announce the eternal character of David’s throne: ...(Ps. 89:36-37); ...(Isa. 9:6-7); ...(Luke 1:31-32). Here the observation may be made that David himself believed this promise was of an earthly throne, which would not be located in heaven then or ever... David was not promised a heavenly, spiritual throne, and the one who contends that David’s throne is now a heavenly rule is by so much obliged to name the time and circumstances when and where so great a change has been introduced” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:323-324] (*ibid.*). 5. *A Kingdom Forever*. “In Scripture usage, the King, His throne, and His kingdom are inseparable. The reign of the King, however, is over a theocratic kingdom. Its Ruler will be Immanuel—“God with us” (Isa. 7:14)... The kingdom will be heavenly in its character, since it manifests the rule of heaven over the earth and the heavenly demands... This kingdom will be in the earth... It will be centered in Jerusalem... This kingdom will be over regathered and converted Israel... Messiah’s kingdom will include Gentiles... That kingdom will be established by virtue of the returning King” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:324] (*ibid.*). 6. *A New Covenant*. “Reference at this point is to the new covenant yet to be made with Israel and not to the new covenant now in force in the Church. All unconditional covenants—the Abrahamic, the Palestinian, the Davidic—since they rest on the faithfulness of God and not at all on the unfaithfulness of men, are unbreakable by men. They endure forever... He will make a new covenant with

them—not to supersede any unconditional covenant, but to supersede the law covenant which they have broken... (Jer. 31:31-34).’ [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:325] Chafer believed in two new covenants, one which was ‘yet to be made with Israel,’ and one ‘now in force in the Church.’ This was and still is the view of many Dispensationalists, but not all. Even Chafer observed, after citing Jeremiah 31:31-34, which he identified as the New Covenant with Israel, that ‘the four blessings which this covenant promises... are the present possession of those who comprise the Church.’ At any rate, Chafer’s two new covenants are not germane to Dispensationalism” (*ibid.*). 7. *Abiding Blessings*. “Every promise found in Jehovah’s covenants, including those just named in the new covenant, will constitute Israel’s blessings forever... But no blessing is more far-reaching or complete than that oft-repeated assurance from Jehovah, “And I will be their God”... and they will be His people. This promise suggests that in the Messianic kingdom Israel’s relation to Jehovah will be one of unbroken fellowship such as was accorded Adam in Eden before the fall” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 3:77] (*ibid.*, p. 373).

They are unconditional. “The unfaithfulness of man, however it may delay the final result, cannot alter or reverse it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:222). “...the Abrahamic, the Davidic covenant... Those covenants have never, and can never, be broken because they do not depend in the slightest particular upon any act or performance of man, but are rooted and grounded in the immutable promise and oath of God” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 110). “God’s ability to make unconditional covenants in the outworking of His sovereign purpose is demonstrated in the covenants made with Abraham and David. The only responsibility in either of these covenants is contained in the sovereign ‘I will’ of Jehovah” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:318). “God intends to fulfill the content of the covenants, those promises dependent upon God for fulfillment, regardless of whether Israel fulfills her’s” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 571). “God made four unconditional eternal covenants with Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 646). “Third: it is necessary to re-emphasize that these are unconditional covenants that were not abrogated because of Israel’s disobedience; because the covenants are unconditional and totally dependent upon God for fulfillment, their ultimate fulfillment can be expected” (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 6).

They were given to and are to be fulfilled literally by Israel. “Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning **the covenant of our fathers**” (Mal. 2:10)? “First: they are literal covenants and their contents must be interpreted literally as well” (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 6). “Fourth: these covenants were made with a specific people: Israel. This point is

brought out by Paul in Romans 9:4: who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. This passage clearly points out that these covenants were made with the covenanted people and are Israel's possession. This is brought out again in Ephesians 2:11, 12: 'Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.' Five of the eight Bible covenants belong to the people of Israel and, as this passage notes, Gentiles were considered strangers from the covenants" (*ibid.*).

They were given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob personally; not to their seed only. "But as this Kingdom was tendered to those then living, it would have been incongruous to have told them at that period, before the unbelief of the nation and the downfall of the kingdom made it necessary to particularize God's purposes and to explain more in detail the manner of accomplishment, that they could only inherit the Kingdom at the period of the resurrection" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:220).

They are still in effect. "It follows, then, that it is a grave misapprehension of Scripture teaching to say, as some do, that all the older covenants ended in Christ" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:328). "While the Jewish ritual was abolished by the sacrifice of Jesus, this cannot be extended, as we have shown in detail in other places, to a termination of 'their national covenant'" (*ibid.*, 3:576). "Dispensationalists, though very clear as to how the unconditional covenants work out in relationship to Israel Past and Israel Future, have been far less clear with Israel Present. Chafer, as cited in the previous chapter, took the view that the Jewish covenants are now in 'abeyance,' and Pentecost failed to recognize the existence of the remnant today. No such view of the covenants is necessary or defensible. The fact is that all four unconditional covenants are not only still in effect, but also still operative at the present time" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 628). "The promises that God made to Israel have not been rendered null and void. Israel is yet to enjoy all the promises of the four unfulfilled unconditional covenants, each of which points respectively to the four facets of Israel's final restoration" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 436).

They are to be fulfilled by Christ. (See the sections on the fulfillments of the covenants in our chapters *The Second Coming of the King* and *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

And, *they are eternal*. “All of Israel’s covenants are called eternal except the Mosaic Covenant, which is declared to be temporal (i.e., it was to continue only until the coming of the promised Seed)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 60). “Second: the covenants that God has made with Israel are eternal and are not in any way restricted or altered by time” (Fruchtenbaum, *EC*, p. 6).

The first of Israel’s four *unconditional* covenants is the *Abrahamic Covenant*. In the Abrahamic Covenant God unconditionally promised to Abraham and to his descendants the land of Palestine, national identity, blessing, a great name, and potential blessing and cursing on other peoples. “Now **Jehovah said unto Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto **the land** that I will show thee. And **I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed**” (Gen. 12:1-3). “Abram dwelt in **the land of Canaan**, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly. And **Jehovah said unto Abram**, after that Lot was separated from him, **Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered**. Arise, walk through **the land** in the length of it and in the breadth of it. For **unto thee will I give it**” (Gen. 13:12-17). We discussed the Abrahamic Covenant at length in the *Covenant #4: The Abrahamic Covenant* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.

The second of Israel’s four *unconditional* covenants is the *Palestinian Covenant*. In the Palestinian Covenant, as the Israelites were poised to enter the promised land, Jehovah unconditionally confirmed eternal ownership of the land of Palestine to Israel, while at the same time conditioning the Israelites’ enjoyment of and blessing in the land on their repentance and obedience. “And it shall come to pass, **when** all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou** shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and **shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey** his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then **Jehovah** thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and

will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And Jehovah thy God will make thee plenteous in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul” (Deut. 30:1-10). We discussed the Palestinian Covenant at length in the *Covenant #6: The Palestinian Covenant* section of our chapter *The Theocratic Kingdom*.

The remaining two of Israel’s four *unconditional* covenants are the *Davidic Covenant* and the *New Covenant*. We will discuss these in detail now.

Covenant #7: The Davidic Covenant

The third of Israel’s four *unconditional* covenants is the *Davidic Covenant*. It was made by Jehovah with king David for the purpose of securing on earth an eternal Davidic house, throne, king and kingdom. In this writer’s view, the Davidic Covenant is one of the two most important covenants given to Israel (the other being the Abrahamic Covenant), and we will therefore be covering it here in considerable detail. “The Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom is the Kingdom of God” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:250) “He [David] notices also the connection that this promised Seed of his has with the older promises. For, we have first simply the seed of the woman; next that He shall be Abraham’s seed; next that He shall inherit the land and bless all nations; next, that He shall be a mighty King; and next that He shall be David’s Son and Lord, sitting on David’s throne and from thence exerting a world-wide dominion” (*ibid.*, p. 314). “According to Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 4:313-315], this [the Davidic Covenant] was both unconditional and eternal. It had four primary features. First, the House of David will

never lack one with the right to rule from his throne. Divine discipline ‘may cause the throne itself to be unoccupied; but there shall never lack one whose right it is to sit on that throne.’ Second, this covenant ‘can never... be abrogated.’ Third, an eternal throne is guaranteed. Fourth, an eternal kingdom is promised” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 345). “It promised to David ‘the perpetuity of the Davidic house, the Davidic throne, and the Davidic kingdom’” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:315] (*ibid.*). “Next in importance to the Abrahamic covenant in the Old Testament doctrine of premillennialism stands the Davidic covenant—the promises of God to David that his seed, throne, and kingdom would endure forever” [quoting Walvoord, *MK*, pp. 194-195] (*ibid.*, p. 349). “A major importance of the Davidic Covenant is that it is a basis for believing in a Messianic Kingdom and to counteract the claim of many Covenant Theologians that Revelation 20 is the only basis for such a belief” (*ibid.*). “Walvoord [in *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 196-197] next shows that the Davidic Covenant later had ‘Old Testament Confirmation: It should be clear to anyone who interprets the Old Testament prophecies literally that the entire theme of Messianic prophecy confirms the Davidic promises. The great kingdom promises of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel combine with the Minor Prophets in reiterating the theme of the coming Immanuel and His kingdom upon the earth’” (*ibid.*, p. 350). “Basically, the Davidic Covenant promised three eternal things: an eternal house or dynasty, an eternal kingdom, and an eternal throne” (*ibid.*, p. 352). “The fifth area is the ‘Covenanted Davidic Kingdom.’ This facet, Chafer writes, is ‘the most extensive and important feature of the eschatology of Judaism’” [quoting Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, pp. 57-67] (*ibid.*, p. 439). “To summarize, the Davidic Covenant promised four eternal things: an eternal house or dynasty, an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom, and an eternal descendent. The eternality of the house, throne, and kingdom are guaranteed because the Seed of David culminated in a person Who is Himself eternal: the Messiah, the God-Man” (*ibid.*, p. 585). “After the failure of Saul to fulfill the responsibilities of theocratic administrator, God appointed David from the tribe of Judah to that significant role. God later entered into an eternal, unconditional covenant with David, establishing the Davidic dynasty as the sole rightful occupant of His earthly throne. Through David a kingdom of peace and righteousness would be established over the covenant people in the land that God had previously promised to them. This covenant will have its eventual literal fulfillment here on earth at the second advent of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. This covenant was made through David with the nation Israel, and must be fulfilled by Israel. Thus the present session of Christ at the right hand of His

Father in heaven and His rule over the church cannot be a fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 155). “...the Davidic covenant—the promises of God to David that his seed, throne, and kingdom would endure forever” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 194). “As the Abrahamic covenant centers around the land, the Davidic covenant centers around the throne. The former provides the land and the nation; the latter provides a king to rule over the kingdom. Both involve literal, national, unconditional, and perpetual blessings” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:517)..

Statement of the Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant is stated in Second Samuel and First Chronicles, and is reiterated in the Psalms and in the Hebrew prophets. **“When thy [David’s] days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.** I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And **thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.** According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am *I*, O Lord Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord Jehovah; but **thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come;** and this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah” (2 Sam. 7:12-19)! “The emphasis in this first account of the Davidic Covenant has been on Solomon” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 803). “And **thou didst establish to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever;** and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God. And now, **O Jehovah God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, confirm thou it for ever, and do as thou hast spoken.** And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, Jehovah of hosts is God over Israel; and the house of thy servant David shall be established before thee. For thou, **O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house:** therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O Lord Jehovah, thou art God, and thy words are truth, and **thou hast promised this good thing unto thy servant:** now therefore **let it please thee to bless the house**

of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee; for thou, O Lord Jehovah, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever" (2 Sam. 7:24-29). "And it shall come to pass, when thy [David's] days are fulfilled that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that **I will set up thy seed after thee, who shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever.** I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my lovingkindness away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee; but **I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever.** According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am *I*, O Jehovah God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; but **thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come,** and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Jehovah God. What can David say yet more unto thee concerning the honor which is done to thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant. O Jehovah, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou wrought all this greatness, to make known all these great things. O Jehovah, there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, to make thee a name by great and terrible things, in driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou redeemest out of Egypt? **For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever;** and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God. And now, O Jehovah, **let the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast spoken.** And let thy name be established and magnified for ever, saying, Jehovah of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and **the house of David thy servant is established before thee.** For thou, O my God, hast revealed to thy servant that thou wilt build him a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray before thee. And now, O Jehovah, thou art God, and hast promised this good thing unto thy servant: and now **it hath pleased thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Jehovah, hast blessed, and it is blessed for ever**" (1 Chron. 17:11-27). "A slightly different emphasis is given in the second passage in I Chronicles 17:10b-14. The emphasis in this passage is not on Solomon, but on the Messiah... Since the

Chronicles passage emphasized the Messiah, there is no possibility of sin and, hence, no mention of sin. Finally, it is this Person Himself who is established forever and not merely the dynasty, kingdom, and throne (v. 14)” (Fruchtenbaum, I, p. 803). “Now therefore, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant **David** my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, **There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel**, if only thy children take heed to their way, to walk in my law as thou hast walked before me” (2 Chron. 6:16). “I will sing of the lovingkindness of **Jehovah** for ever: With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; Thy faithfulness wilt thou establish in the very heavens. **I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, And build up thy throne to all generations.** Selah” (Ps. 89:1-4) “I also will make him my first-born, The highest of the kings of the earth. My lovingkindness will I keep for him [David] for evermore; And **my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, And his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, And walk not in mine ordinances; If they break my statutes, And keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. But my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky.** Selah” (Ps. 89:27-37) “To leave no doubt whatever, and to render unbelief utterly inexcusable, God concisely and most forcibly presents His determination (Psl. 89:34) ‘My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.’ It would have been sheer presumption and blindness in the Jews to have altered (under the plea—modern—of spirituality) the covenant, and to have refused to accept of the obvious sense conveyed by the words; and there is a heavy responsibility resting upon those, who, even under the most pious intentions, deliberately alter the covenant words and attach to them a foreign meaning” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:316). “If the oath, covenant and promises of Jehovah cannot be trusted, what assurance can be drawn from any word He has spoken? Purposing to instruct us as to a yet future earthly kingdom for Israel, and for the nations through them, what more positive, or meaningful, language could He have employed” (Chafer, *KHP*, 37%)? **“How long, O Jehovah?**

wilt thou hide thyself for ever? How long shall thy wrath burn like fire? Oh remember how short my time is: For what vanity hast thou created all the children of men! What man is he that shall live and not see death, That shall deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? Selah Lord, where are **thy former lovingkindnesses, Which thou swarest unto David in thy faithfulness**” (Ps. 89:46-49)? “For thy servant David’s sake Turn not away the face of thine anointed. **Jehovah hath sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.** If thy children will keep my covenant And my testimony that I shall teach them, **Their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore. For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation**” (Ps. 132:10-13). “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever.** The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “**And a throne shall be established in lovingkindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness**” (Isa. 16:5). “then shall there enter in by the gates of **this city [Jerusalem] kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David,** riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of **Jerusalem; and this city shall remain for ever**” (Jer. 17:25). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely;** and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness” (Jer. 23:5-6). “**In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.** In those days shall **Judah** be saved, and **Jerusalem** shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: **David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;** neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: **If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my**

covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will **I multiply the seed of David my servant,** and the Levites that minister unto me. And the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which Jehovah did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith Jehovah: **If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:** for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:15-26). “**And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children’s children, for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever**” (Ezek. 37:24-25). “**For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days**” (Hos. 3:4-5). “**In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old;** that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. **And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God**” (Amos 9:11-15).

Features of the Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant promises to David an eternal house, throne, king and kingdom. “And thy **house** and thy **kingdom** shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy **throne** shall be established for ever” (2 Sam. 7:16). “It guarantees (1) an unfailing house or line of David’s sons—a king without cessation to sit on David’s throne (The necessity of chastisement may cause the throne itself to be unoccupied; but there shall never lack one whose right it is to sit on that throne—2 Sam 7:14-15; Ps. 89:30-33; Jer 33:17. The covenant can never—on the oath of Jehovah—be abrogated.); (2) a throne, the earthly throne of David to continue forever; and (3) a kingdom forever” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). “The essential features of the Davidic Covenant are found in these three words in 2 Samuel 7:16: *house, kingdom, and throne*” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 142). “The Davidic covenant... house... future kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 156) “This covenant promised four eternal things: house, throne, kingdom, and descendant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 632). “In essence then, the Davidic Covenant promised four eternal things: an eternal dynasty, an eternal kingdom, an eternal throne, and an eternal person” (*ibid.*, p. 803).

Regarding the *house (seed)*, “When thy [**David’s**] days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy **seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels**, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And **thy house** and thy kingdom **shall be made sure for ever before thee**: thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am *I*, O Lord Jehovah, and what is **my house**, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord Jehovah; but **thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come**; and this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah” (2 Sam. 7:12-19)! “I will sing of the lovingkindness of **Jehovah** for ever: With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; Thy faithfulness wilt thou establish in the very heavens. **I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever**, And build up thy throne to all generations. Selah” (Ps. 89:1-4) “I also will make him my first-born, The highest of the

kings of the earth. My lovingkindness will I keep for him for evermore; And **my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever**, And his throne as the days of heaven. **If his children forsake my law, And walk not in mine ordinances; If they break my statutes, And keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. But my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever**, And his throne as the sun before me. **It shall be established for ever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky.** Selah” (Ps. 89:27-37) (See also 2 Sam.7:24-29, 1 Chron. 17:11-27, Isaiah 16:5, Jer. 33:15-26 and Amos 9:11-15.) “The only necessary feature is that the lineage cannot be lost, not that the throne be occupied continuously” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 147).

Regarding the *throne*, “When thy [**David’s**] days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom... **thy throne shall be established for ever**... thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come; and this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah” (2 Sam. 7:12-19)! “Now therefore, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant **David** my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, **There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel**, if only thy children take heed to their way, to walk in my law as thou hast walked before me” (2 Chron. 6:16). “I will sing of the lovingkindness of **Jehovah** for ever: With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; Thy faithfulness wilt thou establish in the very heavens. **I have made a covenant with my chosen**, I have sworn unto **David** my servant: Thy seed **will I** establish for ever, And **build up thy throne to all generations.** Selah” (Ps. 89:1-4) “I also will make him my first-born, The highest of the kings of the earth. My lovingkindness will I keep for him for evermore; And **my covenant shall stand fast with him.** His seed also will I make to endure for ever, And **his throne as the days of heaven.** If his children forsake my law, And walk not in mine ordinances; If they break my statutes, And keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. But my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. **My covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gone out of**

my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, **And his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky.** Selah” (Ps. 89:27-37) “For thy servant David’s sake Turn not away the face of thine anointed. **Jehovah hath sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.** If thy children will keep my covenant And my testimony that I shall teach them, **Their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore.** For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation” (Ps. 132:10-13). “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David,** and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “**And a throne shall be established in lovingkindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David,** judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness” (Isa. 16:5). “then shall there enter in by the gates of **this city [Jerusalem] kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David,** riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of **Jerusalem; and this city shall remain for ever**” (Jer. 17:25). “In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto **David;** and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall **Judah** be saved, and **Jerusalem** shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: **David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;** neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: **If ye can break my covenant of the day,** and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; **then may also my covenant be broken with David** my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon **his throne;** and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. And the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which Jehovah did choose, he hath

cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith Jehovah: If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of **David** my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be **rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**: for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:15-26). “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the **Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever**; and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:31–33). “And so, because he [**David**] was a prophet, and knew that **God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne**” (Acts 2:30) See also 1 Chron. 17:11-27.

This Davidic throne is also David’s son *Solomon’s throne*, but it is *not to be occupied by Solomon’s seed*. “It should be noted that it was not Solomon, nor Solomon’s seed that ‘would be established forever,’ but only the ‘throne of Solomon’s kingdom would be established forever.’ This is significant in that Christ came from David through Nathan rather than Solomon.” [quoting Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, p. 458] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 346).

In identifying David’s throne, we should recognize that David’s (earthly) throne is not God’s (heavenly) throne. Contrasting passages that speak of God’s (heavenly) throne with those that speak of David’s throne will be helpful in this regard:

Regarding *God’s (heavenly) throne*, “So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and **sat down at the right hand of God**” (Mark 16:19). “But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD” (Luke 22:69). “Therefore **having been exalted to the right hand of God**, and having received from **the Father** the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: “THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, ‘**SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND**’”” (Acts 2:33–34) “He is the one whom **God exalted to His right hand** as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). “But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened up and **the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God**” (Acts 7:55–56). “who is the one who condemns? **Christ Jesus** is He

who died, yes, rather who was raised, who **is at the right hand of God**, who also intercedes for us” (Rom. 8:34). “which He brought about in **Christ**, when He raised Him from the dead, and **seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places**” (Eph. 1:20) “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, **where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God**” (Col. 3:1). “And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, **He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high**” (Heb. 1:3) “But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘**SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET**’” (Heb. 1:13)? “Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who **has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens**” (Heb. 8:1) “but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, **SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD**” (Heb. 10:12) “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and **has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God**” (Heb. 12:2). “who is **at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven**, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him” (1 Pet. 3:22). “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as **I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne**” (Rev. 3:21).

In contrast, regarding *David’s and the Son of Man’s messianic (Davidic) throne*, which in Scripture is never equated with God’s throne, “to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to establish **the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba**” (2 Sam. 3:10). “For unto us **a child is born**, unto us a son is given; and **the government** shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of **his government** and of peace there shall be no end, **upon the throne of David**, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.” (Isa. 9:6-7) “And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne**, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of **Israel**” (Matt. 19:28). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31). “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and

bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the **Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob** forever; and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:31–33). “**Men of Israel**, listen to these words: **Jesus the Nazarene, a man** attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — **this Man**, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And **God raised Him up again**, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. For David says of Him, “I WAS ALWAYS BEHOLDING THE LORD IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN. THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL ABIDE IN HOPE; BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; THOU WILT MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH THY PRESENCE.” Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding **the patriarch David** that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that **GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE**, he looked ahead and spoke of **the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. This Jesus God raised up again**, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended **into heaven**, but he himself says: “THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.” Therefore **let all the house of Israel know** for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — **this Jesus whom you crucified**” (Acts 2:22–36). “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with **Me on My throne**, as I also overcame and sat down with **My Father on His throne**” (Rev. 3:21). From these passages, it is evident that *David’s throne, which is the Son of Man’s messianic throne, is not God’s throne*. “Rev. 3:21, where the Father’s throne in heaven is distinguished from ‘my throne’—a distinction made requisite by the Covenant to David” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:355). “God’s throne in heaven and David’s throne on earth are never

employed in Scripture as synonymous or identical (Rev. 3:21; cf. also Acts 2:30, 34)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 147). “Christ... It is overlooked, alas, that He sits not on His own throne, as He shall in the kingdom, but He Himself declares (Rev. 3:21) that He is seated on His blessed Father’s throne” (*ibid.*, p. 254). “The New Testament has fifty-nine references to David. It also has many references to the present session of Christ. A search of the New Testament reveals that there is not one reference connecting the present session of Christ with the Davidic throne” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 203). “The New Testament is totally lacking in positive teaching that the throne of the Father in heaven is to be identified with the Davidic throne” (*ibid.*). “It is foolish to claim that the Throne of David and the Throne of God are the same unless Covenant Theologians wish to insist that David once sat on the Throne of God the Father” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 633)! “Today Messiah sits at the right hand of God on the Father’s throne. In the coming Kingdom He will sit as King and Priest upon His *own* throne” (McClain, *GK*, p. 242). “In the present time, between His ascension and His return, Christ is on His *Father’s* throne (Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:1)... [However,] in the Millennial kingdom Christ is on *David’s* throne (Luke 1:32; Acts 2:30). The throne of this His earthly ancestor is then *His* throne (Rev. 3:21; Matt. 19:28; 25:31).” [quoting Erich Sauer, *From Eternity to Eternity*, pp. 51-52] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:533). (See also our discussion of the fact that Jesus is not sitting on David’s throne now in our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*.)

In contrast with God’s throne, which is *heavenly*, the Davidic throne is *earthly*. “to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up **the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba**” (2 Sam. 3:10). “And **Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father**; and his kingdom was established greatly” (1 Kings. 2:12). “Now therefore as Jehovah liveth, who hath established me, and set me on **the throne of David my father**, and who hath made me a house, as he promised, surely Adonijah shall be put to death this day” (1 Kings. 2:24). “And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant **David** my father great lovingkindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great lovingkindness, that thou hast given him **a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day**” (1 Kings. 3:6). “And Jehovah hath established his word that he spake; for I am risen up in the room of **David** my father, and sit on **the throne of Israel**, as Jehovah promised, and have built the house for the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel” (1 Kings. 8:20). “Then **Solomon sat on the throne of Jehovah as king instead of David his father**, and prospered; and all **Israel** obeyed him” (1 Chron.

29:23). “And Jehovah hath performed his word that he spake; for I am risen up in the room of **David** my father, and sit on **the throne of Israel**, as Jehovah promised, and have built the house for the name of Jehovah, the God of **Israel**” (2 Chron. 6:10). “then **I will establish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel**” (2 Chron. 7:18). “**Jehovah hath sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne**” (Ps. 132:11). “**Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever.** The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:7). “And **a throne** shall be established in lovingkindness; and **one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David**, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness” (Isa. 16:5). “Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of **this land, even the kings that sit upon David’s throne**, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**, with drunkenness” (Jer. 13:13). “then shall there enter in by the gates of **this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David**, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of **Judah**, and the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**; and **this city shall remain for ever**” (Jer. 17:25). “Thus saith Jehovah, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no more shall **a man** of his seed prosper, **sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling in Judah**” (Jer. 22:30). “thus saith Jehovah concerning **the king that sitteth upon the throne of David**, and concerning **all the people that dwell in this city**, your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity” (Jer. 29:16) “For **thus saith Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel**” (Jer. 33:17) “then may also **my covenant** be broken **with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne**; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers” (Jer. 33:21). “Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the **throne of David**; and his **dead body** shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost” (Jer. 36:30). “And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in **the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne**, you also shall sit upon **twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Matt. 19:28). “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with

Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne” (Matt. 25:31). “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the **Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob** forever; and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:31–33). “**Men of Israel**, listen to these words: **Jesus the Nazarene, a man** attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — **this Man**, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And **God raised Him up again**, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. For David says of Him, “I WAS ALWAYS BEHOLDING THE LORD IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN. THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL ABIDE IN HOPE; BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; THOU WILT MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH THY PRESENCE.” Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch **David** that **he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day**. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that **GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE**, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the **Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. This Jesus God raised up again**, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For **it was not David who ascended into heaven**, but he himself says: “THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, **SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.**” Therefore **let all the house of Israel know** for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — **this Jesus whom you crucified”** (Acts 2:22–36). “And while he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement. But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, ‘**Men of Israel**, why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified

His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. **But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled. Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time**” (Acts 3:11–22) “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever**” (Rev. 11:15). (See also 1 Kings 1:13, 37, 47; 2:33, 45; 5:5; 8:25; 9:5 and 1 Chron. 6:16.) “The ‘Throne of David’ was on the earth, and can never be anywhere else” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 84). “The throne of David is precisely what David believed it to be, an earthly institution which has never been, nor will it ever be, in heaven” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:315).

This Davidic throne is *not yet occupied*. “The throne of His father David... That throne Jesus has never occupied. It was denied Him on earth, and since the ascension He has been seated on the throne of the Father” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:331).

However, it definitely *will be occupied*. “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David**” (Luke 1:32)

Regarding the Davidic Covenant’s promise of a *King*, “Now therefore, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant **David** my father **that which thou hast promised him**, saying, **There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel**, if only thy children take heed to their way, to walk in my law as thou hast walked before me” (2 Chron. 6:16). “For thy servant David’s sake Turn not away the face of thine anointed. **Jehovah hath sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne**. If thy children will keep my covenant And my testimony that I shall teach

them, **Their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore.** For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation” (Ps. 132:10-13). “**And a throne shall be established in lovingkindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness**” (Isa. 16:5). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.** In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness” (Jer. 23:5-6). “**In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David;** and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land... Thus saith Jehovah: If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away **the seed** of Jacob, and **of David** my servant, so that I will not **take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:** for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:15-26). “**For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king,** and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim: **afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king,** and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days” (Hos. 3:4-5). “...the nation’s King. This being the only office that is ever assigned to a ‘Son of David’” (Chafer, *KHP*, 24%).

Regarding the *Kingdom*, “When thy [**David’s**] days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and **I will establish his kingdom.** He shall build a house for my name, and **I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.** I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and **thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee:** thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am *I*, O Lord Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord Jehovah; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come; and this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah” (2 Sam. 7:12-19)! “And it shall come to pass, when

thy days are fulfilled that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will set up thy seed after thee, who shall be of thy sons; and **I will establish his kingdom**. He shall build me a house, and **I will establish his throne for ever**. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my lovingkindness away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee; but **I will settle him** in my house and **in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever**. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David... And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, to make thee a name by great and terrible things, in driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou redeemest out of Egypt? For **thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever**; and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God... And now, O Jehovah, thou art God, and hast promised this good thing unto thy servant: and now it hath pleased thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Jehovah, hast blessed, and it is blessed for ever” (1 Chron. 17:11-27). “In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: **David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel**... Thus saith Jehovah: If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be **rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**: for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:15-26). “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever**. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus**. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the **Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob** forever; and **His kingdom** will have no end” (Luke 1:31-33)

Characteristics of the Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant *is an amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant*. “the Davidic covenant (which is an amplification of the Abrahamic, showing how it will be fulfilled)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:322) “...the Davidic Covenant also, which is an outgrowth or enlargement of the Abrahamic” (*ibid.*, 2:452). “The seed promise contained in the Abrahamic Covenant was made the center or nucleus of the Davidic promise” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 140).

It is to be interpreted literally. “Our appeal, with Barnabas and all other Millenarians, for our foundation is in the covenanted Theocratic Kingdom. To show that we are fundamentally incorrect, to get at the root of our doctrine, let them go to the Davidic Covenant and prove that the grammatical sense of that covenant is not meant; that another meaning is to be engrafted upon it; that they have an express authoritative Scripture for making such an alteration; and that a covenant sworn to be fulfilled can be ignored or explained away. Let our opponents, in this connection, proceed to indicate how we are wrong in cleaving to the grammatical sense of the Bible in doctrine; and, if wrong, let them produce the unvarying rules of a spiritual or Origenistic interpretation to be a guide to us so as not to leave us at the pleasure of the expositor” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:244). Pentecost contends, “*The Davidic Covenant is to interpreted literally.* There are several reasons for this: (1) Portions of the covenant that already have been fulfilled have been fulfilled literally. As we’ve seen before, it is entirely logical and consistent that we determine our method of understanding unfulfilled portions by observing the nature of those portions that have been partially fulfilled. Since all the partial fulfillments have been literal and historical, we can safely assume that the unfulfilled portions will be the same. (2) It is apparent that David understood the covenant as literal, and its future fulfillments as literal. Throughout Scripture we can readily see that he never considered it as anything but a literal covenant, to be fulfilled literally (2 Sam. 23:5; 1 Kings 1:30-37). And David was so led by God to interpret it. [‘Verily **my house** is not so with God; Yet **he hath made with me an everlasting covenant**, Ordered in all things, and sure: For it is all my salvation, and all my desire, Although he maketh it not to grow.’ (2 Sam. 23:5); ‘verily as I swear unto thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I do this day. Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did obeisance to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever. And **king David said**, Call to me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. And the king said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord,

and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel; and blow ye the trumpet, and say, Long live king **Solomon**. Then ye shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit upon **my throne**; for **he shall be king in my stead**; and I have appointed him to be prince **over Israel and over Judah**. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: Jehovah, the God of my lord the king, say so too. As Jehovah hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.’ (1 Kings. 1:30–37)] (3) We also find support for the literal interpretation of the covenant in the way it was interpreted by the nation of Israel. We have already mentioned the way the literal aspects of the covenant were emphasized in all the Old Testament prophetic books. This same literal emphasis continued throughout Jewish history, as we will see in more detail later. (4) There is evidence for the literal interpretation from the New Testament references to the covenant made with David. Consider, for example, that the New Testament contains no fewer than 59 references to David. It also has many references to the present ministry of Jesus the Messiah. Comparing these with one another, a search of the New Testament reveals that there is not one reference connecting the present session of Christ with the Davidic throne. It is almost incredible that in so many references to David and in so frequent reference to the present session of Christ at the Father’s throne, there should be no references connecting the two in any authoritative way. The New Testament is totally lacking in positive teaching that the throne of the Father in heaven is to be identified with the Davidic throne. The inference is plain that Christ is seated on the Father’s throne, but that this is not at all the same as being seated on the throne of David. It can also be shown that in all the preaching concerning the kingdom by John (Matt. 3:2), by Christ (4:7), by the Twelve (10:5-7), and by the seventy (Luke 10:1-12), *not once is the kingdom offered to Israel as anything but an earthly literal kingdom*. Even after the rejection of that offer by Israel and the announcement of the mystery of the kingdom (Matt. 13), Christ anticipated such a literal, earthly kingdom (25:1-13, 31-46)” (TKC, p. 144). “Throughout the New Testament, as well as in the Old, the Davidic Covenant is everywhere treated as literal in its provisions as well as its fulfillment” (*ibid.*, p. 146). “Premillenarians believe these promises were intended to be interpreted literally as most certainly David understood them and as the Jews living in the time of Christ anticipated” (Walvoord, MK, p. 194).

David's throne and Kingdom are *to be restored, not to be created from scratch*. **“A ruin, a ruin, a ruin, I shall make it. This also will be no more, until He comes whose right it is; and I shall give it to Him”** (Ezek. 21:27). **“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old;** that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and **they shall build the waste cities**, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And **I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them**, saith Jehovah thy God” (Amos 9:11-15). **“And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end’”** (Luke 1:30-33). **“Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, ‘After these things I will return, And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, And I will rebuild its ruins, And I will restore it,** In order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name”” (Acts 15:14-17) **“It is ‘the fallen down’ throne and Kingdom (which shows that it is no type) that is to be restored”** (Peters, *TTK*, 1:345) **“The identical throne and Kingdom, now overturned, is the one that is promised to the Messiah to be re-established”** (*ibid.*, p. 347). **“The Theocratic crown cast down, the Theocratic throne overturned, the Theocratic Kingdom overthrown, is the crown, throne, and Kingdom that the Christ is to restore”** (*ibid.*). **“The future kingdom is to be a genuine revival and continuation of the ‘throne of David’”** (McClain, *GK*, p. 42). (See also our discussion of the eventual restoration of the theocracy in our previous chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom.*)

The Davidic Covenant is *to be fulfilled*:

It has not yet been fulfilled. “The claim of so-called ‘progressive dispensationalists’ that the Davidic covenant has already begun to be fulfilled is without justification” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:494).

It is to be fulfilled by Christ. “And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus**. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:30-33). “Remember **Jesus Christ**, risen from the dead, **descendant of David**, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:8-12) “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He [**Jesus**] who is holy, who is true, who **has the key of David**, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this” (Rev. 3:7) “and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals” (Rev. 5:5). “**I, Jesus**, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **I am the root and the offspring of David**, the bright morning star” (Rev. 22:16). “The Theocratic-Davidic rule was of heavenly origin, for God chose David, adopted his throne and Kingdom, calling it ‘His throne,’ and gives it as an inheritance to the Seed selected by Himself, to which Seed He unites Himself in the strictest Theocratic relationship” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:346). “David’s Kingdom is no type of Christ’s but a reality which David’s Son at the appointed time is to inherit, i.e. the same Theocratic throne and Kingdom over the same elect people” (*ibid.*, p. 524). “...Messiah (one who had the right to occupy the Davidic throne)... Genealogical records were preserved in the temple, and without doubt the religious leaders had examined those records to see if they could disprove Jesus’ claim to be the Davidic king. No such objection, however, was ever raised” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 154). *It is to be fulfilled in His humanity.* “Peters in *The Theocratic Kingdom*, Proposition 52... The throne and kingdom as a promise and inheritance belong to the humanity of Christ as the seed of David rather than belong to His deity” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 199). This writer would add that it’s only in His humanity that Jesus has any right to inherit

David's throne. If He has given up His humanity, as Jehovah's Witnesses claim, then He no longer has the qualification. Michael the archangel has no such right. No spirit creature has any right to David's throne.

It was given to and *is to be fulfilled literally by Israel in the Millennial Kingdom*. This is such a foundational premise of our view of the Kingdom that we'll give it a fairly extensive treatment here. "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, and to make him a name, and to do great things for you, and terrible things for thy land, before thy people, **whom thou redeemest to thee out of Egypt**, from the nations and their gods? **And thou didst establish to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever**; and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God" (2 Sam. 7:23-24). "And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, '**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel**'" (Acts 1:6)? "The covenant is distinctively associated with the Jewish nation and none other... 2 Sam. 7:23-24... this the same nation that was brought out of Egypt" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:315) "Consider Ps. 89, and observe these particulars as stated: (1) David acknowledges the bestowal of the covenant by God, and its confirmation by oath, 'I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations' (v. 1-4). (2) He expresses praise that God's wonders and faithfulness will be shown 'in the congregation (gathering) of the saints,' and that He has the authority, power, and mercy to perform His promises (v. 5 to 18). (3) He again refers to the covenant, shows that One shall be specially exalted, and that God says: 'I will make Him My First-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for Him forevermore, and My covenant shall stand fast in Him. His (David's) seed also will I make to endure forever, and His throne as the days of heaven' (v. 19-29). (4) Then as this Kingdom is offered to the regular descendants of David, and it is foreseen that they will become unworthy of it, God foretells the same, with the additional assurance to David that, notwithstanding such rebellion and His withdrawal for a time, the covenant will still be fulfilled, in these pregnant words: 'If his (David's) children forsake My law and walk not in My judgments, if they break My statutes and keep not My commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My Holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be

established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven' (v. 30-37). Here it is positively asserted that the relapse of the nation and a resultant infliction of punishment (just as centuries have witnessed) shall not change God's promise, to David respecting that seed of his that shall reign on his throne. (5) Now comes a remarkable transition, which should shame the unbelief of doubting ones, seeing that it is descriptive of the precise condition of things as they exist to-day. David having foretold the conditional overthrow of his kingdom, and yet that God will be faithful in its final restoration, now plainly predicts the downfall itself: 'But Thou hast cast off and abhorred; Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed' (i.e. the Theocratic kings that followed David). 'Thou hast made void the covenant of Thy servant; Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground,' etc. 'Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground,' etc. The covenant is unrealized; the Theocratic Kingdom is fallen; the very throne and Kingdom, the subject of such special promise, is now overthrown. Then, however, resting upon the assurances given, he asks: 'How long, Lord? Wilt Thou hide Thyself forever? Shall Thy wrath burn as fire?' 'Lord, where are Thy former lovingkindnesses, which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?' David's faith in God that He would remember His covenant and restore his cast-down crown and throne, is briefly but finely expressed: 'Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants.' 'Blessed be the Lord forevermore. Amen and Amen.' Who, that is an humble believer in the Word as written, can, in the face of such predictions, deride the early church faith evolved by them? Who, when observing how carefully every objection is answered lest faith should stumble and fall, can resist the conviction that there is a force in these words, which are yet—when realized—destined to, form one of the grandest displays of God's faithfulness and mercy in the Redemptive scheme" (*ibid.*, p. 319)? "The language of the covenant does not fulfill the conditions of typical language, for the throne and Kingdom of David were already incorporated as the real, undoubted Kingdom of God—a Theocracy" (*ibid.*, p. 345). "It is unreasonable to make it a type, because it makes a throne cast down the type of an eternal one in heaven, and David a type of the Father, which is an unfit application, there being no proper analogy between them. Such a view entirely overlooks the important and essential fact, that this throne and Kingdom was covenanted, not to the Son of God (for it, in virtue of His Theocratic relationship, already belongs to Him as God, and no covenant is necessary), but to the Son of Man. It is sadly defective in making the promises of such a nature, that pious Israelites, John the Baptist, and the disciples, were deceived by them, resting their faith and hope not in a reality, but in misconceived figures of

speech, thus placing the Church [Old Testament saints—*ed.*] before and at the First Advent in an exceeding low state of intelligence” (*ibid.*). “Change in the officials and government of a Kingdom does not destroy its identity, provided the regular succession (a descendant of David’s), the nationality (restored Jewish nation), and locality (Palestine) are preserved” (*ibid.*, p. 346). “It took a long time before the Seed promised came and before His coming the non-fulfillment of what afterward literally occurred, was no reason to spiritualize the promise away; and so again, it may require a long period before the remainder is fulfilled” (*ibid.*). “We are willing to accept covenanted promises and predictions as written, without setting ourselves up as a judge to decide whether they agree with our sense of proprieties, or our notion of the fitness of things. The Jews did this at the First Advent, and they made a fearful mistake. Those who, honestly but mistakenly, speak so degradingly of this throne and Kingdom forget that it is a Theocratic throne and Kingdom, and they might just as well write of God lowering His majesty, etc., when He condescended to act in the capacity of earthly Ruler over the Jewish nation” (*ibid.*). “The ancient faith in covenanted language must not be discarded through Gentile ‘high-mindedness’” (*ibid.*, p. 347). “No subject is more baffling within the range of prophetic themes to those who spiritualize the kingdom than the question why it was prerequisite for Christ to be born of the line of David” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:246). “Peters goes into the question of literal fulfillment more thoroughly, perhaps, than any other author. He argues for the literal interpretation of the covenant as follows [in *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:315-16]: ‘Before censuring the Jews... for believing that Jesus would literally restore the Davidic throne and Kingdom, we must consider in fairness, that they were justified in so doing by the very language of the covenant. It is incredible that God should in the most important matters, affecting the interests and the happiness of man and nearly touching His own veracity, clothe them in words, which, if not true in their obvious and common sense, would deceive the pious and God-fearing of many ages... (1) The words and sentences in their plain grammatical acceptation, do expressly teach their belief. This is denied by no one, not even by those who then proceed to spiritualize the language. (2) The covenant is distinctively associated with the Jewish nation and none other. (3) It is called a perpetual covenant, i.e. one that shall endure forever. It may, indeed, require time before its fulfillment; it may even for a time be held, so far as the nation is concerned, in the background, but it must be ultimately realized. (4) It was confirmed by oath (Ps. 132:11, and 89:3, 4, 33), thus giving the strongest possible assurance of its ample fulfillment... (5) To leave no doubt whatever, and to render unbelief utterly inexcusable,

God concisely and most forcibly presents His determination (Ps. 89:34): “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.” It would have been sheer presumption and blindness in the Jews to have altered (under the plea—modern—of spirituality) the covenant, and to have refused to accept of the obvious sense covered by the words; and there is a heavy responsibility resting upon those, who, even under the most pious intentions, deliberately alter the covenant words and attach to them a foreign meaning” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 104). “He then proceeds to give a list of some twenty-one reasons for believing that the whole concept of the Davidic throne and kingdom is to be understood literally. He writes [in *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:343-44]: ‘If the Davidic throne and Kingdom is to be understood literally, then all other promises necessarily follow; and as the reception of this literal fulfillment forms the main difficulty in the minds of many, a brief statement of reasons why it must be received, is in place. 1. It is solemnly covenanted, confirmed by oath, and hence cannot be altered or broken. 2. The grammatical sense alone is becoming a covenant. 3. The impression made on David, if erroneous, is disparaging to his prophetic office. 4. The conviction of Solomon (2 Chron. 6:14-16) was that it referred to the literal throne and Kingdom. 5. Solomon claims that the covenant was fulfilled in himself, but only in so far that he too as David’s son sat on David’s throne... 6. The language is that ordinarily used to denote the literal throne and Kingdom of David, as illustrated in Jer. 17:25 and 22:4. 7. The prophets adopt the same language, and its constant reiteration under Divine guidance is evidence that the plain grammatical sense is the one intended. 8. The prevailing belief of centuries, a national faith, engendered by the language, under the teaching of inspired men, indicates how the language is to be understood. 9. This throne and Kingdom is one of promise and inheritance and hence refers not to the Divinity but to the Humanity of Jesus. 10. The same is distinctively promised to David’s son “according to the flesh” to be actually realized, and therefore, He must appear the Theocratic King as promised. 11. We have not the slightest hint given that it is to be interpreted in any other way than a literal one; any other is the result of pure inference... 12. Any other view than that of a literal interpretation involves the grossest self contradiction. 13. The denial of a literal reception of the covenant robs the heir of His covenanted inheritance... 14. No grammatical rule can be laid down which will make David’s throne to be the Father’s throne in the third heaven. 15. That if the latter is attempted under the notion of “symbolical” or “typical,” then the credibility and meaning of the covenants are left to the interpretations of men, and David himself becomes “the symbol” or “type” (creature as he is) of the Cre-

ator. 16. That if David's throne is the Father's throne in heaven (the usual interpretation), then it must have existed forever. 17. If such covenanted promises are to be received figuratively, it is inconceivable that they should be given in their present form without some direct affirmation, in some place, of their figurative nature, God foreseeing (if not literal) that for centuries they would be preeminently calculated to excite and foster false expectations, e.g. even from David to Christ. 18. God is faithful in His promises, and deceives no one in the language of His covenants. 19. No necessity existed why, if this throne promised to David's Son meant something else, the throne should be so definitely promised in the form given. 20. The identical throne and Kingdom overthrown are the ones restored. 21. But the main, direct reasons for receiving the literal covenanted language [is that]... David's throne and Kingdom [are made] a requisite for the display of that Theocratic ordering which God has already instituted (but now holds in abeyance until the preparations are completed) for the restoration and exaltation of the Jewish nation (which is preserved for this purpose), for the salvation of the human race (which comes under the Theocratic blessing), and for the dominion of a renewed curse-delivered world... Such a throne and Kingdom are necessary to preserve the Divine Unity of Purpose in the already proposed Theocratic line" (*ibid.*, p. 105). "Lord, are You at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6)... Nothing that had taken place during the lifetime of Christ on earth, nor had anything He taught, altered their concept of a literal fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 155). "Ryrie [in *Basic Theology*, pp. 459-460] then turns to the 'New Testament Confirmation of the Covenant.' The issue is this: the Old Testament presents a concept of the kingdom as being a visible earthly kingdom over which a descendant of David will rule over Israel. Most Covenant Theologians even admit that if the Old Testament is taken at face value, that is the kind of kingdom which is clearly portrayed. However, Covenant Theology insists that Jesus changed that concept" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 347). "This leads to Walvoord's next point, 'Does the Davidic Covenant Require Literal Fulfillment?: The arguments in favor of literal interpretation are so massive in their construction and so difficult to waive that they are more commonly ignored by those who do not want to believe in literal fulfillment than answered by argument'" [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 196-197] (*ibid.*, p. 350). "Second, 'the Davidic covenant is to be interpreted literally.' This is evidenced by four things. First, the portions of the covenant which have already 'been fulfilled have been fulfilled literally,' and this shows that the unfulfilled portions will be fulfilled in the same way. Second, it is obvious from David's own exposition

of the covenant in Psalm 89 that he anticipated a literal fulfillment. Third, throughout Israel's history, both biblical and post-biblical, the Jews have interpreted the terms of the covenant literally. Fourth, the New Testament interprets the covenant literally. The 'preaching concerning the kingdom by John... by Christ... by the twelve... by the seventy... offered to Israel... an earthly literal kingdom.' Not once did they try to explain that the kingdom they were offering was something different from that which was commonly expected by the Jewish population which was 'a literal earthly kingdom.' Even after Israel rejected the offer, there were still prophecies of a future literal earthly kingdom. Furthermore, the 'New Testament never relates the kingdom promised to David to Christ's present session.' Finally, when Gabriel announced the birth of the Messiah to Mary, his 'message centers around the three key words of the original Davidic covenant, the throne, the house, the kingdom, all of which are here promised a fulfillment.' Pentecost concludes that 'throughout the New Testament, as well as the Old, the Davidic covenant is everywhere treated as literal'" [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 100] (*ibid.*, p. 353).

The Davidic Covenant is *unconditional*. "The covenant made with David (2 Sam 7:11-16), like the covenant made with Abraham, is unconditional and everlasting in its duration" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). "As in the case of Abraham, the Davidic covenant is both unconditional and irrevocable, for the one is simply a more detailed extension of certain features of the other" (McClain, *GK*, p. 156). "The one conditional element in this covenant was 'whether the descendants of David would continually occupy the throne or not.' While unfaithfulness on the part of the House of David 'might bring about chastening,' it can 'never abrogate the covenant.'" [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 100] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 353).

It is *irrevocable*. "In those days, and **at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely;** and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: **David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;** neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: **If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne;**

and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. And the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, **Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which Jehovah did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith Jehovah: If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them**” (Jer. 33:15-26). “Because the covenants are eternal, unconditional, and therefore irrevocable, the Davidic kingdom program would not be cancelled. It could, however, be postponed” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 233). “God’s second assurance (cf. vv. 19-22) to Jeremiah came because of external doubt and reproach. The group in question (these people) was not specified—they may have been doubting Israelites or Israel’s heathen neighbors. Whoever they were, ‘these people’ were claiming that God had so rejected the two kingdoms *mishpakhot*, lit., ‘families or clans’; cf. 31:1) that He would no longer regard them as a nation. They felt that Israel’s and Judah’s sin had invalidated all God’s covenant promises so that He was no longer obligated to fulfill them. God responded to this argument by reaffirming His commitment to His covenant promises. The covenants with Abraham and David were not conditioned on the people’s obedience but on God’s character. They were as sure as His covenant with day and night and as immutable as the fixed laws of heaven and earth. Only if these natural laws could be undone would God reject Jacob’s and David’s descendants. The reference to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob called to mind God’s covenant promise to these patriarchs regarding His selection of Israel (cf. Gen. 15:7-21; 17:1-8; 26:1-6; 28:10-15). God was bound to His promises and He would restore the nation’s fortunes (cf. Jer. 30:18; 32:44; 33:11; Deut. 30:3) and have compassion on her. The greatest argument for the future restoration of Israel as a nation is the character of God. He made a series of covenants with the patriarchs, David, and the Levites; His character demands that He will ultimately fulfill these promises to their nation” (Walvoord, *BKK*, Jer. 33:23-26). “Like the Abrahamic covenant, this Davidic covenant, which was an extension of it, was irrevocable” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:467)

It is *confirmed in the New Testament*. “The book of the genealogy of **Jesus Christ, the son of David**, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1). “But when he had considered this, behold, **an angel of the Lord appeared** to him in a dream, **saying, ‘Joseph, son of David**, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 1:20). “And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, and saying, ‘Have mercy on us, **Son of David**” (Matt. 9:27)! “And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, ‘This man cannot be **the Son of David**, can he” (Matt. 12:23)? “And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from that region, and began to cry out, saying, ‘Have mercy on me, O Lord, **Son of David**; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed” (Matt. 15:22). “And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, ‘Lord, have mercy on us, **Son of David!**’ And the multitude sternly told them to be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, ‘Lord, have mercy on us, **Son of David**” (Matt. 20:30–31)! “And **when they had approached Jerusalem** and had come to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them, and bring them to Me. And if anyone says something to you, you shall say, “The Lord has need of them,” and immediately he will send them.’ Now **this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, “BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.”** And the disciples went and did just as Jesus had directed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid on them their garments, on which He sat. And most of the multitude spread their garments in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees, and spreading them in the road. And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, ‘**Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!**’ And when He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ And the multitudes were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee” (Matt. 21:1–11). “But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were crying out in the temple and saying, ‘Hosanna to the **Son of David**,’ they became indignant” (Matt. 21:15) “Now while **the Pharisees** were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, ‘What do you think about **the Christ, whose son is He?**’ **They said to**

Him, ‘The son of David’” (Matt. 22:41–42). “And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, ‘Jesus, **Son of David**, have mercy on me!’ And many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me’” (Mark 10:47–48)! “And Jesus answering began to say, as He taught in the temple, ‘How is it that **the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David**’” (Mark 12:35)? “Now in the sixth month the angel **Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David**; and the virgin’s name was **Mary**. And coming in, he said to her, ‘Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. And **the angel said to her**, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, **you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**’” (Luke 1:26–33). “All four key aspects of the Davidic Covenant are mentioned here. The Son of Mary is to sit upon the eternal throne over an eternal kingdom, for He was born into the eternal dynasty” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 805). “And his father **Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant — As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old — Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.** And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on **BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; To give to His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us, TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace**” (Luke 1:67–79). “the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, **the son of David**” (Luke 3:31) “And he called out, saying, ‘Jesus, **Son of David**, have mercy on me!’

And those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, **‘Son of David, have mercy on me’**” (Luke 18:38–39)! “The multitude therefore answered Him, **‘We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man’**” (John 12:34)? “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, **‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority’**” (Acts 1:6-7) “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch **David** that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because **he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne**, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, **Until** I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.”” Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ [but not King—yet—*ed.*] — this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:29-36). “Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send **Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time**” (Acts 3:19-21). “Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, “After these things I will return, **And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, And I will rebuild its ruins, And I will restore it**, In order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name”” (Acts 15:14-17) “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He [**Jesus**] who is holy, who is true, who **has the key of David**, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this” (Rev. 3:7) “and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals” (Rev. 5:5). “I, **Jesus**, have sent My angel to testify to you these

things for the churches. **I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star**” (Rev. 22:16).

It is *still in effect*. “The Davidic Covenant, being an unconditional covenant, is still very much in effect” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 586).

And, *it is eternal*. “**And thy [David’s] house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever**” (2 Sam. 7:16). “...the Davidic House or Dynasty, the Davidic Throne and Davidic Kingdom will be eternal ([2 Sam. 7] v. 16)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 433). “**but I will settle him [David] in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever**” (1 Chron. 17:14). “I have found **David** my servant; With my holy oil have I anointed him: With whom my hand shall be established; Mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact from him, Nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his adversaries before him, And smite them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my lovingkindness shall be with him; And in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also on the sea, And his right hand on the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation. I also will make him my first-born, The highest of the kings of the earth. **My lovingkindness will I keep for him for evermore; And my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, And his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, And walk not in mine ordinances; If they break my statutes, And keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. But my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky. Selah**” (Ps. 89:20-37) “In those days, and at that time, will I cause a **Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying,**

Thus saith Jehovah: **If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne;** and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. And the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which Jehovah did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith Jehovah: **If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:** for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them” (Jer. 33:15-26). “Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make **an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David**” (Isa. 55:3). “The prophet Isaiah reiterates (55:3), pronouncing it ‘an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:316). “And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him **the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**’” (Luke 1:30-33). “This covenant, as herein stated, secures an established kingly order which will continue for ever. The element of perpetuity in this kingly rule was not conditioned in Jehovah’s oath by sin in the Davidic house. Chastisement was provided in case of disobedience, — chastisement which fell upon the nation in the captivities and the dispersion, — but the eternal purpose of the covenant is not abrogated: “Thy throne shall be established for ever”” (Chafer, *KHP*, 10%). “The covenant made with David (2 Sam 7:11-16), like the covenant made with Abraham, is unconditional and everlasting in its duration” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:314). “I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me’ (Ps. 89:20-37). Let the student read Jeremiah 33:15-26 and observe that this irrevocable covenant with David is linked historically to the promises made to the people of ‘Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob’ (vs. 26)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 156). “In keeping with the kingdom concept, McClain [in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, p.

156] views the Davidic Covenant as a ‘reaffirmation of the regal terms of the original Abrahamic covenant,’ with the addition that ‘these covenanted rights will now attach permanently to the historic house and succession of David.’ Although these regal rights might be ‘historically interrupted for a season,’ they will at some point ‘in a *future kingdom* be restored to the nation in perpetuity with no further possibility of interruption.’ The character of this covenant is both ‘unconditional and irrevocable,’ since it is ‘simply a more detailed extension of certain features’ of the Abrahamic Covenant. Because of its unconditional nature, disobedience on the part of the descendants of David brought discipline, but the covenant itself stood sure” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 354). “The Davidic Covenant promised four eternal things: an eternal Dynasty, an eternal Kingdom, an eternal Throne, and an eternal Person” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 434). “God put His name on the line. The Davidic kingdom—a political, religious, moral, visible, earthly kingdom—would be restored and remain forever” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:467).

Covenant #8: The New Covenant

The fourth of Israel’s four *unconditional* covenants, and the last of the Bible’s eight covenants is the *New Covenant*.

Statement of the New Covenant

The New Covenant is *stated in Jeremiah and Ezekiel*. “Behold, **the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake,** although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. **But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.** Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of **Israel** also shall cease from **being a nation before me for ever.** Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth

searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:31-37). “Behold, I will gather them out of all the countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them again unto **this place**, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and **I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever**, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and **I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me**. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. For thus saith Jehovah: Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them” (Jer. 32:37-42). “Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them; and I will reveal unto them abundance of peace and truth. And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and **will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me**. And **this city** shall be to me for a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it” (Jer. 33:6-9). “Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel**. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And **I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God**. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 11:17-21). “Nevertheless **I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant**. Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder sisters and thy younger; and I will give them unto

thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And **I will establish my covenant with thee**; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah” (Ezek. 16:60-62) “Multitudes, however, contend that God does *not* remember His covenant” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:422) “**And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them**” (Ezek. 36:25-27). “Moreover **I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.** And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore” (Ezek. 37:26-28).

Features of the New Covenant

The New Covenant will *take Israel's sins away*. “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel**, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more**” (Jer. 31:31-34). “**And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them**” (Ezek. 36:25-27). “and thus **all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE**

UNGodliness from **JACOB. AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS**” (Rom. 11:26–27). “The moral problem posed by the failure of the Mosaic covenant will under the New Covenant be met by God’s own sovereign grace and power... God says, ‘I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts’ (Jer. 31:33). By these means the benefits of the Mosaic covenant will be attained, and at the same time its moral requirements will be secured; not as a legal condition of blessing but as its divinely caused result... The New Covenant, therefore, is in the gracious spirit of the earlier Abrahamic covenant, rather than in the legalistic spirit of the Mosaic covenant which it supplants” (McClain, *GK*, p. 158). “The New Covenant will do the very thing which the Mosaic Covenant was unable to do. The latter was only able to cover the sins of Israel, but the New Covenant will take them away” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 587). “The major feature of this covenant was Israel’s national salvation down to every individual Jew” (*ibid.*, p. 633).

It will also *provide for the building of the Millennial Temple*. “Moreover **I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them**; and I will place them, and multiply them, and **will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them**; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when **my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore**” (Ezek. 37:26-28). “The Davidic Covenant provided for the building of the first Temple by Solomon; the New Covenant will provide for the building of the Messianic or Millennial Temple. This temple will be a continual reminder to Israel of all that God has done” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 587).

Characteristics of the New Covenant

The New Covenant was *made with Israel*. “Behold, **the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake**, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah:**

for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then **the seed of Israel** also shall cease from **being a nation before me for ever**. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all **the seed of Israel** for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:31-37). “Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel**. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and **they shall be my people**, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 11:17-21). “Nevertheless **I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth**, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder sisters and thy younger; and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah” (Ezek. 16:60-62) “Therefore **say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, saith the Lord Jehovah, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land**. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordi-

nances, and do them” (Ezek. 36:22–27). “Moreover **I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them**; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And **the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore**” (Ezek. 37:26–28). “That the Old Testament teaches that the new covenant is for Israel is also seen by the fact that in its establishment the perpetuity of the nation Israel and her restoration to the land is vitally linked with it (Jer. 31:35–40)...” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, pp. 108–10] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 120) “It is undeniable that the Mosaic Covenant was made with Israel—and since this covenant supplants the Mosaic Covenant, it must of necessity be made with the same people with whom the original Mosaic Covenant had been made” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 171). “According to Jeremiah 31, the New Covenant is solidly embedded in a historical context... people... children shall be gathered again ‘from the uttermost parts of the earth’... land... ‘land of Judah’... ‘mountains of Samaria’... city... Jerusalem... other cities... worshipers of Jehovah... ‘wheat’... ‘wine’... ‘oil’... ‘young of the flock’” (McClain, *GK*, p. 159) “Later [in *Premillennial Faith*, pp. 106–114], Ryrie discusses the ‘Old Testament Teaching on the New Covenant with Israel.’ Ryrie discusses what the Old Testament said about the New Covenant in three categories. First, ‘the people of the new covenant.’ His point is that the New Covenant is made with the Jewish people. This is evidenced in three ways. First, the wording of the covenant clearly states that it is made with the Houses of Judah and Israel. Second, the New Covenant is said to be made with the same people as the Mosaic Covenant. Since the Mosaic Covenant and the Law of Moses was made with the Jewish people, then obviously the New Covenant must be made with the Jewish people as well. Third, the New Covenant is frequently connected with the restoration of Israel to her land as a nation. The church ‘is never called a nation’ and has no land to be gathered into. Ryrie concludes ‘that for these three incontrovertible reasons, the very words of the text, the name itself, and the linking with the perpetuity of the nation, the new covenant according to the teaching of the Old Testament is for the people of Israel’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 357). “Ryrie’s [in *Premillennial Faith*, p. 114] own summary is: ‘By way of summary, it may be said that as far as the Old Testament teaching on the new covenant is concerned, the covenant was made with the Jewish people. Its period of fulfillment is yet future beginning when the Deliverer shall come and continuing throughout

all eternity. Its provisions for the nation Israel are glorious, and they all rest and depend on the very Word of God” (*ibid.*, p. 358). “One can agree with all that Ryrie has written and still believe in only one New Covenant, already ratified by the blood of the Messiah with present spiritual blessings now being enjoyed by the Church while Israel as a nation will enjoy them in the future along with the physical promises intended only for Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 360). “God made the new covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel; the Church does not have its own covenant with God” (Horner, *FI*, p. 368).

It is an *amplification of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants*; not of the Mosaic Covenant. “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make **a new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: **not according to the [Mosaic] covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake**, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:31-32). “The prophet calls this ‘a new’ covenant, not because it is entirely new, but, as is said by the apostle, because the other is superseded by it, i.e. it is renewed, as e.g. in the coming of the seed, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:322). “Persons are apt to be misled by the use of the word ‘new,’ thinking that it necessarily means something entirely new, different from what preceded. They forget that in Bible usage it frequently means renewed, restored again, newly confirmed, etc., as in new heart, new moon, new creature, new heavens and new earth, new commandment, drink new (Matt. 26:29), etc. It is important then to discriminate whenever the word is employed, especially in so weighty a matter as this, seeing the high interests that are involved. As the phrase ‘new covenant’ only appears once in the Old Test. and but a few times in the New, the general analogy of Scripture must be allowed to determine the sense in which it is used” (*ibid.*, p. 323). “Now down to Origen not a single Father has the least idea of an entire new covenant instituted by Jesus, but every one, either directly or indirectly as far as we can gather, confirms our view of it” (*ibid.*, p. 324). “Those who advocate that an entire new covenant was given and confirmed by the death of Jesus differ very much as to the nature and meaning of this alleged covenant. A variety of explanations are tendered, but all these, so far as noticed, with but few exceptions, attempt no Scriptural proof” (*ibid.*, p. 326). “...Origen, for we are indebted to him (Home’s *Introd.*, vol. I, p. 38) for first applying the phrase ‘New Testament’ to the writings of the Apostles. (This is a title, which, while merely of human origin and incorrect, if understood as pertaining to the New Covenant, may be retained.) Some, therefore, are misled in making the Scriptures as

contained in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse, the New Covenant. This embraces too much, and defeats itself. Lange, however, only applies this in a general way, for on the same page he particularizes: ‘the Lord designates the Eucharist the New Covenant in His blood, in the strict sense of the term.’ But Lange is again mistaken, for Christ did not call the Eucharist or Supper the covenant, because ‘the cup’ is significant of the Eucharist, and hence ‘the cup of the New Testament’ shows that the Supper or that expressed by it is separate from the covenant. It simply denotes what we have already shown, that by the death represented in this cup the covenant itself is renewed or confirmed” (*ibid.*, p. 327). “New Covenant... if it is so exclusively spiritual, how comes it that Jesus came literally in the flesh as the promised Seed” (*ibid.*)? “It will not answer to exalt the provision made by Christ for the fulfillment of covenant promise, however indispensable and precious, into the position of the covenant itself. Where is the express covenant, consecrated by the death of Jesus, found, if not in the Abrahamic? If any other exists, as Schmid and others state, why is it not formally expressed somewhere in the Scriptures” (*ibid.*). “Hence, we cannot receive the current phraseology on the subject, as e.g. Pressense (*The Early Days of Christianity*, p. 240), who says of Paul’s teaching: ‘The new covenant is to him essentially a new fact, the proclamation of pardon, the sovereign manifestation of grace—in one word, the Gospel’—for this is simply to mistake the means intended to secure covenant blessings for the covenant itself. Much that is said of a ‘covenant of grace’ (as distinguished from a ‘covenant of works’), while correct in principle and showing the contrast between the dispensations, may be retained, but just so soon as it is made to occupy the position of ‘the everlasting covenant’ which contains the promises and under which we inherit by grace extended, then we reject it as unscriptural and misleading” (*ibid.*, p. 328). “Advocating a New Covenant and ignoring the renewed Abrahamic, leads to an entire change of Biblical terms. Thus e.g. Israel and Judah are made to mean simply believers in Christ without the slightest reference to their adoption as the children of Abraham by which they become entitled to the name. The true Israel are a covenanted people, which they obtain by their relationship to Abraham as the covenanted head. Gentiles only can become such by adoption” (*ibid.*, p. 330). “2 Cor. 3:6... ‘Who has made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.’... not of the letter as Abraham received it and trusted in it, but of the Spirit, as it has been unfolded and ratified by the appearance of the Seed, His death and resurrection, etc.; for the mere letter, without this attestation and provision, killeth, i.e. it cannot give life because al-

though Abraham and all the ancient worthies believed in it yet they all died without receiving the promise... the apostle means that we now, in a covenant renewed by the blood of Jesus and by His resurrection from among the dead, have immensely more than the mere letter originally given and which in itself cannot save from death; for now we have the Spirit, which in the same chapter is said to be Christ, who 'giveth life,' i.e. fully ensuring to all who receive the promises that they by being also 'quicken'd' shall inherit the covenanted promises. Christ is the root of the whole matter; without Him and His solemn ratifying acts, the Abrahamic covenant would forever remain a dead letter. It is in Him, through Him, by Him, and for Him, that it is given, and proceeds to its final accomplishment" (*ibid.*, p. 332). "The New Covenant... the future covenant is 'new' only in relation to the Mosaic covenant... 'according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt' (31:31-32). The New Covenant is never thus set over against the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, as if they needed to be replaced by something better" (McClain, *GK*, p. 157). "But here it is deeply significant that when the sin has been confessed and pardon has been granted, it is not on the basis of any surviving rights in the broken covenant of Sinai but simply because Jehovah remembers His earlier 'covenant with Jacob,... with Isaac, and... with Abraham' (Lev. 26:42). It is on this basis, He reminds the nation, that in spite of all they have done, 'neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God' (Lev. 26:44). Exactly the same idea is expressed by Ezekiel in his reference to the New Covenant: Although the nation had broken the Mosaic covenant, 'Nevertheless,' God says, 'I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant' (Ezek. 16:59-60). The expression 'days of thy youth' fixes definitely the reference to the earlier covenant" (*ibid.*, p. 158). "Within the original Abrahamic Covenant were promises concerning *land*, *seed*, and *blessings*. The Palestinian Covenant developed the *land* promises; the Davidic covenant furthers the *seed* promises. Now it is the New Covenant that develops and guarantees the *blessing* promises of the original Abrahamic Covenant" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 169). "The new covenant is new in relation to the time-bound Mosaic covenant, which it replaced, but it gives no implication of annulling the unconditional, timeless Abrahamic and Davidic covenants" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:469).

It is *unconditional*. "Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, pp. 118-119] then discusses the 'Character of the New Covenant.' As with the preceding three covenants, the New Covenant is also viewed as 'a literal and unconditional

covenant,' and Pentecost presents three reasons for this view. First, it is called an 'eternal' covenant, and for that to be true it must be unconditional. Second, the only condition spelled out is the 'I will' of God, so the fulfillment is entirely dependent upon God and not man. Third, this covenant elaborates on the 'blessing' aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant, and that one is unconditional; therefore, 'this covenant must be also.' Fourth, this covenant is primarily concerned with the issue of salvation, which 'is solely the work of God.' A covenant that 'guarantees salvation to the nation Israel must be apart from all human agency and therefore unconditional'" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 365). "Even when the Mosaic Covenant predicted Israel's future salvation and restoration, this basis was not 'any surviving rights in the broken covenant of Sinai,' but even the Law of Moses states the basis to be the Abrahamic Covenant in Leviticus 26:40-44 ['And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; **then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.** The land also shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, while it lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they rejected mine ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, **I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them;** for I am Jehovah their God']. Fifth, the New Covenant, is as sure as 'the very order and stability of the created universe' according to Jeremiah 31:35-37. This shows that it is unconditional and 'rests on what God is and does'" [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 157-159] (*ibid.*, p. 369).

It is *confirmed in the New Testament*. "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as **He is also the mediator of a better covenant**, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. For finding fault with them, He says, '**Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers On the day when I took them by the hand To lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they**

did not continue in My covenant, And I did not care for them, says the Lord. For this is **the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, And I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, And **they shall be My people**. And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, And everyone his brother, saying, “Know the Lord,” For all shall know Me, From the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more.’ When He said, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear” (Heb. 8:6-13). “And for this reason **He is the mediator of a new covenant**, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15).

It is *still in effect*. “The New Covenant, being an unconditional covenant, is still very much in effect” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 587).

It is *now having partial fulfillment in the church*. “And for this reason **He is the mediator of a new covenant**, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15). “The blood of the covenant, i.e. the blood or sacrifice pertaining to or sealing the covenant, brings us, if received by faith, into covenant relationship” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:333). “Scofield... according to this view, there is one new covenant with a two-fold application; one to Israel in the future and one to the church now... This view places the church under the new covenant, and views the relationship as a partial fulfillment of the covenant... Any application of it to the church, as the Scofield position holds, does not nullify the primary application to Israel” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 123). “The church is never promised inheritance in a land, material blessings on the earth, and rest from oppression, which were parts of the promise to Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 127). “Since the church receives blessings of the Abrahamic covenant (Gal. 3:14; 4:22-31) by faith without being under or fulfilling that covenant, so the church may receive blessings from the new covenant without being under or fulfilling that new covenant” (*ibid.*). “The church cannot now be fulfilling this covenant, though it is obviously partaking of some of its blessings” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 174). “While it is true that by the blood of the New Covenant believers in the church today receive benefits from that blood (such as the forgiveness of sins, the impartation of the Holy Spirit as God’s gift), it certainly does *not* mean that the church is fulfilling the New Covenant” (*ibid.*). “Let’s not for-

get that the original Abrahamic Covenant promised, 'All peoples on earth will be blessed through you' (Gen. 12:3)... 'This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins' (Matt. 26:28). We can logically and consistently conclude, then, that this [New] covenant is Israel's covenant; but on the basis of the blood of the covenant, those outside that nation likewise may experience the removal of guilt and the forgiveness of sins" (*ibid.*, p. 175). "As for Hebrews 9:15, the point of this passage is only that the Messiah is the Mediator of the New Covenant and this would be true 'both for a covenant with the church and a covenant with Israel'" [quoting Walvoord, *Premillennial Faith*, pp. 215-218] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 358). "The New Covenant was instituted by the death of Christ and the shedding of Messiah's blood; however, 'its benefits will not be received by Israel until the second advent' [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 119-127]. Pentecost's approach is the best in explaining how the Church relates to the New Covenant" (*ibid.*, p. 368). "While the Church is promised the spiritual blessings such as 'salvation, the forgiveness of sin, the ministry of the Holy Spirit,' the Church is never promised the physical blessings such as 'inheritance in a land, material blessings on the earth, and rest from oppression, which were parts of the promise to Israel'" [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 119-127] (*ibid.*). "In relationship to the Church, the New Covenant is the basis for the Dispensation of Grace. In relationship to Israel, it will be the basis for the Dispensation of the Kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 587). "The fact that today every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit is also due to the present outworking of the New Covenant" (*ibid.*, p. 633). "The Law of Moses taught: do, in order to be blessed. The Law of Christ teaches: you are blessed; therefore, do. The present obligation to obey the Law of Christ is due to the present outworking of the New Covenant" (*ibid.*, p. 634). "Gentiles today are *partakers* of Jewish spiritual blessings; they are *not* taker-overs" (*ibid.*, p. 635). "The relationship of the Church to the New Covenant is the same as the Church's relationship to the Abrahamic, the Palestinian, and the Davidic covenants. The physical promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, as amplified by the Palestinian and Davidic covenants, were promised exclusively to Israel. However, the blessing aspect amplified by the New Covenant was to include the Gentiles. The Church is enjoying the spiritual blessings of these covenants, not the material and physical benefits" (*ibid.*). "That the church is also the beneficiary of the new covenant does not mean there will not also be a literal fulfillment of it in national Israel. Applying the benefits to one group does not mean they are thereby cancelled for the other; it means that the same thing literally promised for Israel (to be fulfilled in the future) is also presently true of

New Testament believers” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:445). “While the covenant was *made* with Israel, it is also appropriately *applied* to the church ([Heb.] 8:7-13); the benefits of Christ’s death were intended by God from the very beginning for both. The New Testament is *not* spiritualizing a promise that will not be literally fulfilled” (*ibid.*). “It’s not that the new covenant was made with Israel and fulfilled in the church; it was made with Israel and also *applied* to the church” (*ibid.*, p. 588). “According to Romans 11, the Church is incorporated into the new covenant that God made with Israel” (Horner, *FI*, p. 368).

It is *to have future fulfillment in Israel*. “Jer. 31:31... the context in which the passage stands in Jeremiah—preceded, followed, and connected with a literal restoration of the Jewish nation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:322) “Since the disciples would certainly have understood any reference to the New Covenant as referring to Israel’s anticipated covenant recorded in Jeremiah, it seems certain that the Lord was stating that that very covenant was being instituted with His death, and that they (the disciples) were ministers of the blood (the soteriological aspects) of that covenant (2 Cor. 3:6). But those to whom it was primarily and originally made (Israel as a nation) will not receive its fulfillment or its blessings until the second advent of Christ, when ‘all Israel shall be saved... and this is My covenant with them when I take away their sin’ (Rom. 11:26-27)... In other words, *there is a marked and critical difference between the institution of the covenant and the realization of its benefits*. By His death, Christ laid the foundation for Israel’s New Covenant—but its benefits will not be received by Israel until the second advent of Messiah” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 173). “The prophetic implications of the New Covenant are very significant, and show just how extensive a prophetic program awaits fulfillment. According to this covenant, Israel must be restored to the land of Palestine, which they will possess as their own. This also entails the preservation of the nation. Israel must experience a national conversion, be regenerated, and receive the forgiveness of sins and the implantation of a new heart—which will take place following the return of Messiah to the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 175). “Not one of the seven features, nor the added ones from related passages, are now being fulfilled in Israel or for Israel or by Israel” [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, p. 208] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 361) “A favorite passage used by Covenant Theology is Hebrews eight which quotes the entire New Covenant as found in Jeremiah 31:34 which they claim proves the New Covenant is being fulfilled in the Church. Walvoord [in *The Millennial Kingdom*, p.p 215-218], however, denies that this is the point of Hebrews eight. On the contrary, what Hebrews eight is trying to prove is that the Mosaic Covenant was temporary

and that ‘Christ is the Mediator of a better covenant than Moses, established upon better promises.’ Since ‘the Mosaic covenant was not faultless,’ it was ‘never intended to be an everlasting covenant.’ The reason for the quotation of the Jeremiah passage was not to show that it was now being fulfilled, because the writer of Hebrews never states that this is the case. The purpose was to show ‘that the Old Testament itself anticipated the end of the Mosaic law in that a new covenant is predicted to supplant it’” (*ibid.*). “It should again be noted that in Dispensationalism it is possible to believe in only one New Covenant, already ratified by the blood of the Messiah with the spiritual blessings available to Jewish and Gentile believers today, but with the national, material and spiritual blessings for Israel still awaiting a future fulfillment. As with the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, not all provisions of each covenant go immediately into effect upon ratification” (*ibid.*, p. 363). “The New Covenant is an unconditional covenant, ‘but it has never been received by Israel as a nation’” [quoting Feinberg, *Israel*, pp. 117-126] (*ibid.*, p. 506). “There will be an ultimate fulfillment of the new covenant after Israel has been resurrected and returned to the Holy Land (Ezek. 37)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:523).

And it is *eternal*. “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make **a new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth **the sun** for a light by day, and the ordinances of **the moon** and of **the stars** for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: **If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah**” (Jer. 31:31-37). “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of **the eternal covenant**, even

Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21). “Ryrie’s own summary [in *Premillennial Faith*, p. 114] is... the covenant... continuing throughout all eternity” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 358). “(Jer. 31:35-37)... The creation and preservation of order in the universe are matters wholly beyond the control of men, depending on God alone. Even so, the New Covenant rests on what God is and does” (McClain, *GK*, p. 159). “...Hebrews... 13:20-21... the eternal covenant... the New Covenant... That covenant is referred to here as an ‘eternal covenant.’ This New Covenant is in contrast to the Mosaic Covenant which, as the writer of Hebrews has already shown, was viewed even during its time of operation as a temporary covenant” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 288).

Chapter 13: The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy

In Hebrew prophecy God's theocratic Kingdom program is laid out both in broad outline and in remarkably fine detail. To acquire an accurate (and awe-inspiring) picture of the Bible's eschatological Kingdom, the Bible student has therefore only to read the Hebrew prophets with an open mind, an eye toward the future and a willingness to receive the prophets' messages as written. When the Hebrew prophets are read without preconception and without prejudice, their overall Kingdom program is unmistakable: After being scattered throughout the world for "many days," Israel is to be regathered back to her land, reconstituted as a nation, threatened by her surrounding nations, purged, defended by Messiah, regenerated, ruled by Messiah, and greatly blessed, both spiritually and materially. Concurrently, the Gentile nations are to be dealt with by God on the basis of their treatment of Israel. "The prophets all uniformly predict the temporal depressed condition of the nation, and in the same connection a glorious temporal deliverance" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:273). "The prophetic message in its essence is *an unfolding of the divine plan concerning the times of the Gentiles, the coming Messiah, the restoration of Israel, the millennial blessings, and all details that are part of these themes*" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 179). "There is a perfect continuity among the prophets from the time of Saul, through the Exile, and down to Malachi. After this final 'Old Testament prophet,' there was a time lapse until John the Baptist—but in reality John the Baptist picked up exactly where the post-exilic prophets left off. Again, there is a perfect, logical, literal, historical continuity among all of God's prophets" (*ibid.*, p. 180). "Much of the message of the prophets was devoted to contemporary issues and contained messages to their own people. However, much was also devoted to the prophetic program. And it is in the prophetic aspect of the writing prophets that we find God's outline for the program concerning His kingdom. In the pages of the prophets, we can readily find the message of the prophets concerning the King, the kingdom, the nature of the kingdom, and the program leading up to its initiation. Because this is true, our understanding of biblical prophecy and end time events should be basically built not on the New Testament, but rather on the Old Testament. Except for the church—which is revealed in the New Testament—everything else in God's prophetic program is revealed in the Old Testament. Many people have problems with eschatology (the doctrine of 'last things,' or biblical prophecy) because they've never examined the teaching of the prophets as a systematic, unified whole, particularly in light of God's kingdom program... we strongly encourage the reader to take the

time to examine the logical, systematic consistency of God's message through His prophets, and the way that message is continually moving toward literal, historical fulfillment" (*ibid.*, p. 183). "Premillennialism is founded principally on interpretation of the Old Testament. If interpreted literally, the Old Testament gives a clear picture of the prophetic expectation of Israel... All the major prophets and practically all the minor prophets have Messianic sections picturing the restoration and glory of Israel in this future kingdom. This is so clear to competent students of the Old Testament that it is conceded by practically all parties that the Old Testament presents premillennial doctrine if interpreted literally. The premillennial interpretation offers the only possible literal fulfillment for the hundreds of verses of prophetic testimony" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 114). "Floyd Hamilton, who attacks premillennialism, concedes [in *The Basis of the Millennial Faith*, p. 38], 'Now we must frankly admit that a literal interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies gives us just such a picture of an earthly reign of the Messiah as the premillennialist pictures. That was the kind of a Messianic kingdom that the Jews of the time of Christ were looking for, on the basis of a literal interpretation of the Old Testament'" (*ibid.*). "Wilkinson [Samuel Hinds Wilkinson, *The Israel Promises and the Fulfillment*, pp. 56-57]... '...The O.T. promises are all as certain of fulfillment in their O.T. sense and meaning and purpose to Israel, as are the N.T. promises certain of fulfillment to the Church'" (*ibid.*, p. 202). "Old Testament prophecy knows no other subjects of discourse than these, Israel, Messiah, and the nations" (*ibid.*, p. 264).

Hebrew prophecy is *important*; its Kingdom message is not something to be taken lightly. "Surely it is no small matter to have the prophets, all testifying to this Kingdom, in our hands; and God justly holds us accountable for the manner in which we receive and understand them" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:240).

And, contrary to much popular opinion, Hebrew prophecy is *not hard to understand*. How many who claim that prophecy is hard to understand have actually *read* the prophetic books? Armed with the novel idea that the prophecies just might happen to mean precisely what they say, to the same people group to whom they were originally given (i.e. to Israel; not to the church, and not to Jehovah's Witnesses), these prophecies provide *light* to anyone seeking to understand the Bible's message correctly, not *darkness*.

Taking the prophetic books at face value, it should become obvious that the Hebrew prophets prophesy a *future, literal, earthly, Jewish Kingdom*. "The Old Testament taken alone would never have suggested the spiritualized interpretation adopted by the amillenarians" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 213).

“The prophecies of the Old Testament give adequate basis for the doctrine that Israel has an earthly hope... the hundreds of prophecies that have to do with Israel’s hope in the millennial kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 325).

The Kingdom is Promised

The Kingdom is promised in the historical books, in the Psalms and in the prophets. In this section, I’ll be simply presenting several hundred passages from the Old Testament which I’ve collected in my own personal Bible reading, in my effort to obtain for myself an accurate and impartial picture of the future Kingdom. It would be my first choice for the reader to make his or her own similar personal collection of Bible verses pertaining to the Kingdom, via his or her own personal Bible reading. This way, from reading *all* the passages in these books, the reader would, I believe, arrive at his or her own conclusion, as I have, that the verses that I’ve (and he/she will have) collected are indeed (almost exhaustively) representative of the Old Testament’s Kingdom message, and that there are in fact no contrary passages in these books that this writer has purposefully ignored or omitted. But to save time, the reader may of course prefer to simply read the verses that I’ve collected here, with my personal assurance that I have not intentionally left out any passages related to the biblical Kingdom that apparently contradict the premillennial view. To date I have in fact not become aware of any such passages.

With this introduction, I will now present my collection of passages with a bare minimum of commentary. It is my hope that the reader will quickly and easily see that these passages, especially when all considered together, are self-explanatory. Some of these passages will already be at least somewhat familiar to the reader, from our preceding study of the covenants, etc., and some will be new.

The Kingdom is Promised in the Historical Books

2 Samuel

“When thy [**David’s**] days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And **thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.** According to

all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am *I*, O Lord Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord Jehovah; but **thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come**; and this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah" (2 Sam. 7:12-19)!

"And **what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, and to make him a name, and to do great things for you, and terrible things for thy land, before thy people, whom thou redeemest to thee out of Egypt, from the nations and their gods? And thou didst establish to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever; and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God. And now, O Jehovah God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, confirm thou it for ever, and do as thou hast spoken.** And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, Jehovah of hosts is God over Israel; and **the house of thy servant David shall be established before thee.** For thou, O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, **I will build thee a house:** therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O Lord Jehovah, thou art God, and thy words are truth, and **thou hast promised this good thing unto thy servant:** now therefore **let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee; for thou, O Lord Jehovah, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever**" (2 Sam. 7:23-29).

1 Chronicles

"And it shall come to pass, when thy days are fulfilled that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that **I will set up thy [David's] seed after thee, who shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever.** I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my lovingkindness away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee; but **I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever.** According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then David the king went in, and sat before Jehovah; and he said, Who am *I*, O Jehovah God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; but **thou hast spoken of thy**

servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Jehovah God. What can David say yet more unto thee concerning the honor which is done to thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant. O Jehovah, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou wrought all this greatness, to make known all these great things. O Jehovah, there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And **what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem unto himself for a people, to make thee a name by great and terrible things, in driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou redeemest out of Egypt? For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, Jehovah, becamest their God. And now, O Jehovah, let the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast spoken.** And let thy name be established and magnified for ever, saying, **Jehovah of hosts is the God of Israel**, even a God to Israel: and **the house of David thy servant is established before thee**. For thou, O my God, hast revealed to thy servant that **thou wilt build him a house**: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray before thee. And now, O Jehovah, thou art God, and hast promised this good thing unto thy servant: and now **it hath pleased thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Jehovah, hast blessed, and it is blessed for ever**" (1 Chron. 17:11-27).

2Chronicles

"Now therefore, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant **David** my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, **There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel**, if only thy children take heed to their way, to walk in my law as thou hast walked before me" (2 Chron. 6:16).

The Kingdom is Promised in the Psalms

It is this writer's expectation that with the background material that we've already covered in this book, the reader will now already be better-equipped to understand the messianic Psalms than was even Martin Luther. "Luther, who (Michelet's *Life of*, p. 272) professes: 'I candidly avow my ignorance as to whether I rightly understand the Psalms in their legitimate sense,' and adds: 'Others who come after me will, I am aware, perceive much that has escaped me,' etc." (Peters, *TTK*, 3:390).

Psalm 2

“Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure: Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion. I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him” (Ps. 2:1-12).

Psalm 22

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning” (Ps. 22:1)?

“For dogs have compassed me: A company of evil-doers have inclosed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. I may count all my bones; They look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, And upon my vesture do they cast lots. But be not thou far off, O Jehovah: O thou my succor, haste thee to help me. Deliver my soul from the sword, My darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion’s mouth; Yea, from the horns of the wild-oxen thou hast answered me. **I will declare thy name unto my brethren: In the midst of the assembly will I praise thee.** Ye that fear Jehovah, praise him; **All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; And stand in awe of him, all ye the seed of Israel.** For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Neither hath he hid his face from him; But when he cried unto him, he heard. Of thee cometh my praise in the great assembly: I will pay my vows before them that fear him. The meek shall eat and be satisfied; They shall praise Jehovah that seek after him: Let your heart live for ever. **All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Jehovah; And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before**

thee. For the kingdom is Jehovah's; And he is the ruler over the nations" (Ps. 22:16-28).

Psalm 24

"A Psalm of David. The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the floods. **Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in his holy place?** He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood, And hath not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek after him, That seek thy face, even Jacob. Selah. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors: And **the King of glory will come in. Who is the King of glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle.** Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors: And **the King of glory will come in. Who is this King of glory? Jehovah of hosts, He is the King of glory.** Selah" (Ps. 24:0-10)

Psalm 25

"What man is he that feareth Jehovah? Him shall he instruct in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease; And **his seed shall inherit the land.** The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear him; And he will show them **his covenant.** Mine eyes are ever toward Jehovah; For he will pluck my feet out of the net. Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; For I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged: Oh bring thou me out of my distresses. Consider mine affliction and my travail; And forgive all my sins. Consider mine enemies, for they are many; And they hate me with cruel hatred. Oh keep my soul, and deliver me: Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, For **I wait for thee. Redeem Israel, O God, Out all of his troubles"** (Ps. 25:12-22).

Psalm 37

"**A Psalm of David.** Fret not thyself because of **evil-doers,** Neither be thou envious against **them that work unrighteousness.** For **they shall soon be cut down like the grass,** And wither as the green herb. Trust in Jehovah, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on his faithfulness. Delight thyself also in Jehovah; And he will give thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto Jehovah; Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass. And he will make thy righteousness to go forth as the light, And thy justice as the noon-day. **Rest in Jehovah, and wait patiently for him:**

Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: Fret not thyself, it tendeth only to evil-doing. For **evil-doers shall be cut off; But those that wait for Jehovah, they shall inherit the land. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the land, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.** The wicked plotteth against the just, And gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord will laugh at him; For he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay such as are upright in the way. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, And their bows shall be broken. Better is a little that the righteous hath Than the abundance of many wicked. For **the arms of the wicked shall be broken;** But Jehovah upholdeth the righteous. **Jehovah knoweth the days of the perfect; And their inheritance shall be for ever.** They shall not be put to shame in the time of evil; And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But **the wicked shall perish,** And the enemies of Jehovah shall be as the fat of lambs: They shall consume; In smoke shall they consume away. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; But the righteous dealeth graciously, and giveth. For **such as are blessed of him shall inherit the land;** And they that are cursed of him shall be cut off. A man's goings are established of Jehovah; And he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For Jehovah upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his seed begging bread. All the day long he dealeth graciously, and lendeth; And his seed is blessed. Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell for evermore. For Jehovah loveth justice, And forsaketh not his saints; They are preserved for ever: But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. **The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell therein for ever.** The mouth of the righteous talketh of wisdom, And his tongue speaketh justice. The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide. The wicked watcheth the righteous, And seeketh to slay him. Jehovah will not leave him in his hand, Nor condemn him when he is judged. **Wait for Jehovah, and keep his way, And he will exalt thee to inherit the land: When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.** I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a green tree in its native soil. But one passed by, and, lo, he was not: Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; For there is a happy end to the man of peace. As for **transgressors, they shall be destroyed**

together; The end of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is of Jehovah; He is their stronghold in the time of trouble. And Jehovah helpeth them, and rescueth them; He rescueth them from the wicked, and saveth them, Because they have taken refuge in him” (Ps. 37:0–40).

Psalm 45

“For the Chief Musician; set to Shoshannim. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. Maschil. A Song of loves. My heart overfloweth with a goodly matter; **I speak the things which I have made touching the king:** My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men; Grace is poured into thy lips: Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. **Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty one,** Thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride on prosperously, Because of truth and meekness and righteousness: And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. **Thine arrows are sharp; The peoples fall under thee; They are in the heart of the king’s enemies. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: A sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness: Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee With the oil of gladness above thy fellows.** All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia; Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made thee glad. Kings’ daughters are among thy honorable women: **At thy right hand doth stand the queen** in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house: So will the king desire thy beauty; For he is thy lord; And reverence thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; The rich among the people shall entreat thy favor. The king’s daughter within the palace is all glorious: Her clothing is inwrought with gold. She shall be led unto the king in brodered work: The virgins her companions that follow her Shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be led: They shall enter into the king’s palace. **Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, Whom thou shalt make princes in all the earth.** I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: Therefore **shall the peoples give thee thanks for ever and ever**” (Ps. 45:0–17).

Psalm 46

“The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered his voice, the earth melted. Jehovah of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah Come, behold the works of Jehovah, What desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to

cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariots in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Ps. 46:6-10).

Psalm 48

“Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised, In **the city of our God, in his holy mountain.** Beautiful in elevation, **the joy of the whole earth, Is mount Zion,** on the sides of the north, **The city of the great King.** God hath made himself known in her palaces for a refuge. For, lo, **the kings assembled themselves, They passed by together. They saw it, then were they amazed; They were dismayed, they hasted away. Trembling took hold of them there, Pain, as of a woman in travail.** With the east wind Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish. As we have heard, so have we seen In **the city of Jehovah of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever.** Selah. We have thought on thy lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of thy temple. As is thy name, O God, So is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: Thy right hand is full of righteousness. **Let mount Zion be glad, Let the daughters of Judah rejoice, Because of thy judgments.** Walk about Zion, and go round about her; Number the towers thereof; Mark ye well her bulwarks; Consider her palaces: That ye may tell it to the generation following. For this **God is our God for ever** and ever: He will be our guide even unto death” (Ps. 48:1-14).

Psalm 67

“**God** be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known **upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations.** Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee. Oh **let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, And govern the nations upon earth.** Selah. Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee. The earth hath yielded its increase: God, even our own God, will bless us. God will bless us; And **all the ends of the earth shall fear him”** (Ps. 67:1-7).

Psalm 72

“Give the king thy judgments, O God, And **thy righteousness unto the king’s son. He will judge thy people with righteousness,** And thy poor with justice. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness. **He will judge** the poor of the people, **He will save** the children of the needy, And **will break in pieces the oppres-**

sor. They shall fear thee while the sun endureth, And so long as the moon, throughout all generations. He will come down like rain upon the mown grass, As showers that water the earth. **In his days shall the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace, till the moon be no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River unto the ends of the earth.** They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; And **his enemies shall lick the dust.** The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute: The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, **all kings shall fall down before him; All nations shall serve him.** For he will deliver the needy when he crieth, And the poor, that hath no helper. He will have pity on the poor and needy, And the souls of the needy he will save. He will redeem their soul from oppression and violence; And precious will their blood be in his sight: And they shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: And men shall pray for him continually; They shall bless him all the day long. **There shall be abundance of grain in the earth** upon the top of the mountains; The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. **His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: And men shall be blessed in him; All nations shall call him happy.** Blessed be **Jehovah God, the God of Israel**, Who only doeth wondrous things: And blessed be his glorious name for ever; And **let the whole earth be filled with his glory.** Amen, and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended” (Ps. 72:1-20).

Psalm 83

“A Song, a Psalm of Asaph. O God, **keep not thou silence: Hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.** For, lo, **thine enemies** make a tumult; And they that hate thee have lifted up the head. **They take crafty counsel against thy people, And consult together** against thy hidden ones. **They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; That the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.** For **they have consulted together with one consent; Against thee do they make a covenant:** The tents of **Edom** and the **Ishmaelites; Moab**, and the **Hagarenes; Gebal**, and **Ammon**, and **Amalek; Philistia** with the inhabitants of **Tyre: Assyria** also is joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot. Selah. Do thou unto them as unto Midian, As to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the river Kishon; Who perished at Endor, Who became as dung for the earth. Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb; Yea, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna; **Who said, Let us take to ourselves in possession The habitations of God.** O my God, make them like the whirling dust; As stubble before the wind. **As the**

fire that burneth the forest, And as the flame that setteth the mountains on fire, So pursue them with thy tempest, And terrify them with thy storm. Fill their faces with confusion, That they may seek thy name, O Jehovah. **Let them be put to shame and dismayed for ever; Yea, let them be confounded and perish; That they may know that thou alone, whose name is Jehovah, Art the Most High over all the earth”** (Ps. 83:0-18).

Psalm 89

“I will sing of the lovingkindness of Jehovah for ever: With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever; Thy faithfulness wilt thou establish in the very heavens. **I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, And build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.”** (Ps. 89:1-4)

“**My lovingkindness will I keep for him for evermore; And my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, And his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, And walk not in mine ordinances; If they break my statutes, And keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. But my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky. Selah.”** (Ps. 89:28-37).

“**How long, O Jehovah? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? How long shall thy wrath burn like fire? Oh remember how short my time is: For what vanity hast thou created all the children of men! What man is he that shall live and not see death, That shall deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? Selah Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, Which thou swarest unto David in thy faithfulness”** (Ps. 89:46-49)?

Psalm 96

“**Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song: Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth.** Sing unto Jehovah, bless his name; Show forth his salvation from day to day. **Declare his glory among the nations, His marvellous works among all the peoples.** For great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are

idols; But Jehovah made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him: Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye kindreds of the peoples, Ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength. Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name: Bring an offering, and come into his courts. Oh worship Jehovah in holy array: **Tremble before him, all the earth. Say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth: The world also is established that it cannot be moved: He will judge the peoples with equity.** Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; Let the field exult, and all that is therein; Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy Before Jehovah; For he cometh, For **he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with his truth**" (Ps. 96:1-13).

Psalm 98

"Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song; For he hath done marvellous things: His right hand, and his holy arm, hath wrought salvation for him. **Jehovah hath made known his salvation: His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the nations. He hath remembered his lovingkindness and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.** Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, **all the earth:** Break forth and sing for joy, yea, sing praises. Sing praises unto Jehovah with the harp; With the harp and the voice of melody. With trumpets and sound of cornet Make a joyful noise before **the King, Jehovah.** Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein; Let the floods clap their hands; Let the hills sing for joy together Before Jehovah; For **he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with equity**" (Ps. 98:1-9).

Psalm 110

"**A Psalm of David. Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.** Thy people offer themselves willingly In the day of thy power, in holy array: Out of the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. **The Lord at thy right hand Will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill the places with dead bodies; He will strike through the head in many countries.** He will drink of the brook in the way: Therefore will he lift up the head" (Ps. 110:0-7).

Psalm 118

“Out of my distress I called upon Jehovah: Jehovah answered me and set me in a large place. Jehovah is on my side; I will not fear: What can man do unto me? Jehovah is on my side among them that help me: Therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me. **It is better to take refuge in Jehovah Than to put confidence in man.** It is better to take refuge in Jehovah Than to put confidence in princes. **All nations compassed me about: In the name of Jehovah I will cut them off. They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: In the name of Jehovah I will cut them off**” (Ps. 118:5-11).

“**The stone which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner.** This is Jehovah’s doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which Jehovah hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, we beseech thee, O Jehovah: O Jehovah, we beseech thee, send now prosperity. **Blessed be he that cometh in the name of Jehovah:** We have blessed you out of the house of Jehovah” (Ps. 118:22-26).

Psalm 132

“**Jehovah hath sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.** If thy children will keep my covenant And my testimony that I shall teach them, Their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore. For **Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation. This is my resting-place for ever: Here will I dwell; For I have desired it.** I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. Her priests also will I clothe with salvation; And her saints shall shout aloud for joy. **There will I make the horn of David to bud:** I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. **His enemies will I clothe with shame; But upon himself shall his crown flourish**” (Ps. 132:11-18).

The Kingdom is Promised in the Old Testament Prophets

“It is significant that the Old Testament prophets spoke, in the main, in one comparatively brief period. This was the time in which Israel was approaching and entering her national dispersion under the chastening hand of God. It was in the darkest hour of their history that these seers, as by contrast, set forth the unprecedented light of the nation’s coming glory. This consensus of prophetic vision has never had a semblance of fulfillment; yet the nation is still divinely preserved, and that, evidently, with this consummation in view (Jer. 31:35-37; Mt. 24:31-34)” (Chafer, *KHP*, 14%). “In tracing these passages scarcely a comment is necessary if the statements are taken in their plain and obvious meaning” (*ibid.*). “Practically every one

of the Major and Minor Prophets mention in some form the hope of future possession of the land” [quoting Walvoord, *Millennial Kingdom*, p. 175] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 521).

The Major Prophets

Isaiah

“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw **concerning Judah and Jerusalem**, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah” (Isa. 1:1).

“Therefore saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies; and **I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy tin; and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called The city of righteousness, a faithful town. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her converts with righteousness**” (Isa. 1:24-27).

“The word that the son of Amoz saw **concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more**” (Isa. 2:1-4).

“**In that day shall the branch of Jehovah be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of justice, and by the spirit of burning. And Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day,**

and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be spread a covering” (Isa. 4:2-5).

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called **Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this**” (Isa. 9:6-7). *Compare:* “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee. But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and **bring forth a son**, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be **great**, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him **the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end**” (Luke 1:26–33).

“And **there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots** shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but **with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.** And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins. And **the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall**

be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. And they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines on the west; together shall they despoil the children of the east: they shall put forth their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And **Jehovah** will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his scorching wind **will he wave his hand over the River, and will smite it into seven streams, and cause men to march over dryshod. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria; like as there was for Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt**" (Isa. 11:1-16).

"Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for **Jehovah of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem;** and before his elders shall be glory" (Isa. 24:23).

"**Thou hast increased the nation, O Jehovah, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land**" (Isa. 26:15).

"**In days to come shall Jacob take root; Israel shall blossom and bud; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit**" (Isa. 27:6).

"And it shall come to pass **in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem**" (Isa. 27:12-13).

“And therefore will Jehovah wait, that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for Jehovah is a God of justice; blessed are all they that wait for him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; thou shalt weep no more; he will surely be gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear, he will answer thee” (Isa. 30:18-19).

“Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fertile field And the fertile field is considered as a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, And righteousness will abide in the fertile field. And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever” (Isa. 32:15-17).

“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken” (Isa. 33:20).

“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:1-10).

“But thou, **Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend, thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called from the corners thereof,** and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, **I have chosen thee and not cast thee away;** Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, **all they that are incensed against thee shall be put to shame and confounded: they that strive with thee shall be as nothing, and shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contend with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.** For *I, Jehovah thy God,* will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm **Jacob,** and ye men of **Israel; I will help thee, saith Jehovah,** and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, **I have made thee to be a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.** Thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in Jehovah, thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. **The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I, Jehovah,** will answer them, *I, the God of Israel,* will not forsake them. **I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it”** (Isa. 41:8-20).

“But now thus saith **Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel:** Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, **thou art mine.** When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For **I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour;** I have given Egypt as thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in thy stead. Since thou hast been precious in my sight, and honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men in thy stead, and peoples instead of thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee: **I will bring thy**

seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth; every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made. Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. **Let all the nations be gathered together**, and let the peoples be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, It is truth. **Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me**, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Isa. 43:1-10).

“And **the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away**” (Isa. 51:11).

“For thy Maker is thy husband; **Jehovah** of hosts is his name: and **the Holy One of Israel** is thy Redeemer; **the God of the whole earth shall he be called**. For **Jehovah hath called thee as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even a wife of youth**, when she is cast off, saith thy God. **For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee**” (Isa. 54:5-7).

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, **darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee**. And **nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising**. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: **they all gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms**. Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, **the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee**. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar; and **I will glorify the house of my glory**. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships

of Tarshish first, to **bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them**, for the name of **Jehovah** thy God, and for **the Holy One of Israel**, because **he hath glorified thee**. And **foreigners shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee**: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. **Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations, and their kings led captive. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.** The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and **I will make the place of my feet glorious**. And **the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel**. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, **I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, desolation nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but Jehovah will be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation; I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time”** (Isa. 60:1-22).

“The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that

mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified. And **they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.** And **strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Instead of your shame ye shall have double; and instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be unto them.** For *I, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity; and I will give them their recompense in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah hath blessed. I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with a garland, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations*" (Isa. 61:1-11).

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah; for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers,

take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he **make Jerusalem a praise in the earth**. Jehovah hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy grain to be food for thine enemies; and foreigners shall not drink thy new wine, for which thou hast labored: but they that have garnered it shall eat it, and praise Jehovah; and they that have gathered it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up an ensign for the peoples. Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth, Say ye to the daughter of **Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh**; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. And **they shall call them The holy people, The redeemed of Jehovah: and thou shalt be called Sought out, A city not forsaken**" (Isa. 62:1-12).

"And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there" (Isa. 65:9).

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create **Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.** They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of **my people**, and **my chosen** shall long enjoy the work of **their hands**. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah, and **their offspring** with them. And it shall come to pass that, **before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah**" (Isa. 65:17-25).

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn over her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her

glory. For thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream: and ye shall suck thereof; ye shall be borne upon the side, and shall be dandled upon the knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And ye shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like the tender grass: and the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants; and he will have indignation against his enemies. For, behold, Jehovah will come with fire, and his chariots shall be like the whirlwind; to render his anger with fierceness, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will Jehovah execute judgment, and by his sword, upon all flesh; and the slain of Jehovah shall be many. They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves to go unto the gardens, behind one in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, they shall come to an end together, saith Jehovah. For I know their works and their thoughts: **the time cometh, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And of them also will I take for priests and for Levites, saith Jehovah. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah. And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh"** (Isa. 66:10-24).

“This doctrine of the Kingdom confirms the already overpowering reasons given for the retention and inspiration of the later prophecies of Isa-

iah, seeing that they form a consistent outgrowth of covenant and promise incorporating precisely that which is requisite to carry out the Theocratic ordering in the Redemption of the world” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:405). “The prophecy of Isaiah is largely applied to the Church, whereas the very first verse declares that it is—“Concerning JUDAH and JERUSALEM”” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 19).

Jeremiah

“Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. **Israel was holiness unto Jehovah, the first-fruits of his increase: all that devour him shall be held guilty; evil shall come upon them,** saith Jehovah” (Jer. 2:2-3).

“Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and **I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.** And it shall come to pass, **when ye are multiplied and increased in the land,** in those days, saith Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. **At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers**” (Jer. 3:14-18).

“Therefore, behold, **the days come, saith Jehovah, that it shall no more be said, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them. And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers**” (Jer. 16:14-15).

“**And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and multiply. And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, saith Je-**

hovah. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that they shall no more say, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land**" (Jer. 23:3-8).

"And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which **Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall make bondmen of them, even of them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their hands. For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, unto me: take this cup of the wine of wrath at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and reel to and fro, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them**" (Jer. 25:13-16).

"For, lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name; and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished; for **I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Jehovah of hosts.** Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, Jehovah will roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he will mightily roar against his fold; he will give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, **against all the inhabitants of the earth.** A noise shall come even to the end of the earth; for **Jehovah hath a controversy with the nations; he will enter into judgment with all flesh: as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword, saith Jehovah.** Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. And **the slain of Jehovah shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth:** they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the face of the ground" (Jer. 25:29-33).

"and give them a charge unto their masters, saying, **Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel,** Thus shall ye say unto your masters: **I have made the earth, the men and the beasts that are upon the**

face of the earth, by my great power and by my outstretched arm; and I give it unto whom it seemeth right unto me” (Jer. 27:4-5).

“The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For, lo, **the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will turn again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith Jehovah; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.** And these are the words that Jehovah spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith Jehovah: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for **that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.** And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds; and strangers shall no more make him their bondman; but they shall serve Jehovah their God, and **David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.** Therefore fear thou not, O **Jacob my servant,** saith Jehovah; neither be dismayed, O **Israel:** for, lo, **I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return,** and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to save thee: for **I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure,** and will in no wise leave thee unpunished. For thus saith Jehovah, Thy hurt is incurable, and thy wound grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not: for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the greatness of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased. Why criest thou for thy hurt? thy pain is incurable: for the greatness of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee. Therefore **all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that despoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.** For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith Jehovah; because they have called thee an outcast, saying, It is **Zion,** whom no man seeketh after. Thus saith Jehovah: Behold, **I will turn again the captivity of Jacob’s tents, and have compassion on his dwelling-**

places; and the city shall be builded upon its own hill, and the palace shall be inhabited after its own manner. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and **I will multiply them**, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. **Their children also shall be as aforetime**, and their congregation shall be established before me; and **I will punish all that oppress them**. And **their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them**; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is he that hath had boldness to approach unto me? saith Jehovah. And **ye shall be my people, and I will be your God**. **Behold, the tempest of Jehovah, even his wrath, is gone forth, a sweeping tempest: it shall burst upon the head of the wicked. The fierce anger of Jehovah shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall understand it**" (Jer. 30:1-24).

"At that time [see Jer. 30], saith Jehovah, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:1).

"Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall they return hither. They shall come with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born. Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as shepherd doth his flock. For Jehovah hath ransomed Jacob, and redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow unto the goodness of Jehovah, to the grain, and to the new wine, and to the oil, and to the young of the flock and of the herd: and **their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all**" (Jer. 31:8-12).

"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass that, like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down and to overthrow and to destroy and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 31:27-28).

“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:31-37).

“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the city shall be built to Jehovah from the tower of Hananel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall go out further straight onward unto the hill Gareb, and shall turn about unto Goah. And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto Jehovah; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever” (Jer. 31:38-40).

“Behold, I will gather them out of all the countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them again unto this place [Jerusalem, vs. 36], and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this

land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul” (Jer. 32:37-41).

“And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me. And this city shall be to me for a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it. Thus saith Jehovah: Yet again there shall be heard in this place, whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and without beast, even **in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem**, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, **the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride**, the voice of them that say, Give thanks to Jehovah of hosts, for Jehovah is good, for his lovingkindness endureth for ever; and of **them that bring sacrifices of thanksgiving into the house of Jehovah**. For **I will cause the captivity of the land to return as at the first**, saith Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **Yet again shall there be in this place**, which is waste, without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, a habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down. **In the cities of the hill-country, in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah**, shall the flocks again pass under the hands of him that numbereth them, saith Jehovah. **Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform that good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus saith Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.** And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: **If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant**

of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. And the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which Jehovah did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith Jehovah: **If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them**" (Jer. 33:7-26).

"Fear not thou, O **Jacob** my servant, saith Jehovah; for I am with thee: for **I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure,** and will in no wise leave thee unpunished" (Jer. 46:28).

Ezekiel

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.** And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And **I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.** But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 11:17-21).

"Nevertheless **I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.** Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder sisters and thy younger; and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And **I will establish my covenant with thee;** and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah" (Ezek. 16:60-62)

“As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely **with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me; but my holy name shall ye no more profane with your gifts, and with your idols. For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I swear to give unto your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed”** (Ezek. 20:33-43).

“And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the **prince of Israel**, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Remove the mitre, and take off **the crown**; this shall be no more the same; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: **this also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him”** (Ezek. 21:25-27).

“Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my ser-**

vant Jacob. And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely, when I have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God” (Ezek. 28:25-26).

“For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I myself, even I, will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture; and upon the mountains of the height of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie down in a good fold; and on fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord Jehovah. I will seek that which was lost, and will bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but the fat and the strong I will destroy; I will feed them in justice. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I judge between sheep and sheep, the rams and the he-goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have fed upon the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture? and to have drunk of the clear waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my sheep, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet, and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto them: Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because ye thrust with side and with shoulder, and push all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the

woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the hand of those that made bondmen of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up unto them a plantation for renown, and they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land, neither bear the shame of the nations any more. And they shall know that *I, Jehovah, their God am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord Jehovah. And ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord Jehovah*" (Ezek. 34:11-31).

"And thou, son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of Jehovah. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha! and, The ancient high places are ours in possession; therefore prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because, even because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the nations, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and the evil report of the people; therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the cities that are forsaken, which are become a prey and derision to the residue of the nations that are round about; therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the nations, and against all Edom, that have appointed my land unto themselves for a possession with the joy of all their heart, with despite of soul, to cast it out for a prey. Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my wrath, because ye have borne the shame of the nations: therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I have sworn, saying, Surely the nations that are round about you, they

shall bear their shame. But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn into you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because they say unto you, Thou land art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nation; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nation any more, saith the Lord Jehovah; neither will I let thee hear any more the shame of the nations, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nation to stumble any more, saith the Lord Jehovah. Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their way and by their doings: their way before me was as the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity. Wherefore I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood which they had poured out upon the land, and because they had defiled it with their idols; and I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they came unto the nations, whither they went, they profaned my holy name; in that men said of them, These are the people of Jehovah, and are gone forth out of his land. But I had regard for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, saith the Lord Jehovah, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will**

sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the grain, and will multiply it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye may receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations. Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. **Nor for your sake do I this, saith the Lord Jehovah, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded. And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, whereas it was a desolation in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited. Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I, Jehovah, have builded the ruined places, and planted that which was desolate: I, Jehovah, have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: For this, moreover, will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: I will increase them with men like a flock. As the flock for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am Jehovah”** (Ezek. 36:1-38).

“The hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of Jehovah, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. And he caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord Jehovah, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy over these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah. **Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to**

enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and, behold, an earthquake; and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, **these bones are the whole house of Israel:** behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off. Therefore prophecy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, **I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land:** and ye shall know that *I*, Jehovah, have spoken it and performed it, saith Jehovah. The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them for thee one to another into one stick, that they may become one in thy hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and **the tribes of Israel** his companions; **and** I will put them with it, even with the stick of **Judah**, and make them one stick, and **they shall be one** in my hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thy hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, **I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all;** and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any

more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and **will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.** And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore" (Ezek. 37:1-28).

"And I will set my glory among the nations; and **all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed,** and my hand that I have laid upon them. So **the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God, from that day and forward.** And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; when I have brought them back from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah"** (Ezek. 39:21-29).

“It shall be eighteen thousand reeds round about: and **the name of the city [Jerusalem] from that day shall be, Jehovah is there**” (Ezek. 48:35).

Daniel

“answered and said, Blessed be the name of **God** for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons; **he removeth kings, and setteth up kings**; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding” (Dan. 2:20-21)

“And **in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever**. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. 2:44-45).

“The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that **the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men**” (Dan. 4:17).

“that thou [Nebuchadnezzar] shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee; till thou know that **the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will**” (Dan. 4:25).

“And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed **the Most High**, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever; for **his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou**” (Dan. 4:34-35)?

“I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, **there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his do-**

minion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14).

“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. But **the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever”** (Dan. 7:17-18).

“And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall **wear out the saints of the Most High**; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and **they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time**. But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And **the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him”** (Dan. 7:25-27).

“Now I am come to make thee understand **what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days”** (Dan. 10:14)

“And **the king** shall do according to his will; and **he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods**; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for **he shall magnify himself above all”** (Dan. 11:36-37)

“And **at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased”** (Dan. 12:1-4)

“And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for **the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do**

wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:9-10)

“But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days” (Dan. 12:13).

The Minor Prophets

Hosea

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me Ishi [my husband], and shalt call me no more Baali [my owner]. For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, saith Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall answer Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God” (Hos. 2:14-23).

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days” (Hos. 3:4-5).

“Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we

shall live before him. And let us know, let us follow on to know **Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth**" (Hos. 6:1-3).

"They shall walk after Jehovah, who will roar like a lion; for he will roar, and the children shall come trembling from the west. They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah" (Hos. 11:10-11).

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found" (Hos. 14:4-8).

Joel

"Yet even now, saith Jehovah, turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth whether he will not turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meal-offering and a drink-offering unto Jehovah your God? Blow the trumpet in **Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the assembly, assemble the old men, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of Jehovah, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, **O Jehovah**, and **give not thy heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them:** wherefore should they say among the peoples, Where is their God? **Then was Jehovah jealous for his land, and had pity on his people. And Jehovah answered and said unto his people, Behold, I will send you grain, and new wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations; but I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive it into a land barren and desolate, its forepart into the eastern sea, and its hinder****

part into the western sea; and its stench shall come up, and its ill savor shall come up, because it hath done great things. **Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for Jehovah hath done great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field; for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth its fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for he giveth you the former rain in just measure, and he causeth to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and shall praise the name of Jehovah your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be put to shame. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be put to shame. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:12-32).**

“For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land, and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. Yea, and what are ye to me, O Tyre, and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? will ye render me a recompense? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense upon

your own head. Forasmuch as ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly precious things, and have sold the children of Judah and the children of Jerusalem unto the sons of the Grecians, that ye may remove them far from their border; behold, **I will stir them up out of the place whither ye have sold them**, and will return your recompense upon your own head; and I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the men of Sheba, to a nation far off: for Jehovah hath spoken it. **Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah, and shall water the valley of Shittim. Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. But Judah shall abide for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. And I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed: for Jehovah dwelleth in Zion”** (Joel 3:1-21).

Amos

“Behold, the eyes of the Lord Jehovah are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; save that **I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith Jehovah.** For, lo, I will com-

mand, and **I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations, like as grain is sifted in a sieve**, yet shall not the least kernel fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, who say, The evil shall not overtake nor meet us. **In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God”** (Amos 9:8-15).

Micah

“I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat; and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them” (Mic. 2:12-13).

“But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of Jehovah of hosts hath spoken it. For all the peoples walk

every one in the name of his god; and we will walk in the name of Jehovah our God for ever and ever. **In that day, saith Jehovah, will I assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, yea, the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.** Now why dost thou cry out aloud? Is there no king in thee, is thy counsellor perished, that pangs have taken hold of thee as of a woman in travail? Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and shalt dwell in the field, and shalt come even unto Babylon: there shalt thou be rescued; there will Jehovah redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. **And now many nations are assembled against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah, neither understand they his counsel; for he hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples:** and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth” (Mic. 4:1-13).

“Now shalt thou gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou, **Beth-lehem** Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, **out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel;** whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth: then **the residue of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.** And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God: and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. **And this man shall be our peace.** When the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our border. And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as

dew from Jehovah, as showers upon the grass, that tarry not for man, nor wait for the sons of men. And **the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and there is none to deliver.** Let thy hand be lifted up above thine adversaries, and let all thine enemies be cut off. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and will destroy thy chariots: and I will cut off the cities of thy land, and will throw down all thy strongholds. And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: and I will cut off thy graven images and thy pillars out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thy hands; and I will pluck up thine Asherim out of the midst of thee; and I will destroy thy cities. And **I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations which have hearkened not**" (Mic. 5:1-15).

"As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto them marvellous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; like crawling things of the earth they shall come trembling out of their close places; they shall come with fear unto Jehovah our God, and shall be afraid because of thee. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? **he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in lovingkindness. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the lovingkindness to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old**" (Mic. 7:15-20).

Habakkuk

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Zephaniah

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that hath no shame; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah's anger come upon you. Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek

of the earth, that have kept his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger**" (Zeph. 2:1-3).

"For then will I turn to the peoples of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of **my dispersed**, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for then **I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting ones**, and thou shalt no more be haughty in my holy mountain. But **I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people**, and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah. **The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;** for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. **Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing. I will gather them that sorrow for the solemn assembly, who were of thee; to whom the burden upon her was a reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee; and I will save that which is lame, and gather that which was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth. At that time I will bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah"** (Zeph. 3:9-20).

Haggai

"For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater

than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Hag. 2:6-9).

Zechariah

“and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, **Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her. Ho, ho, flee from the land of the north, saith Jehovah; for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, saith Jehovah**” (Zech. 2:4-6).

“For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: After glory hath he sent me unto **the nations which plundered you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall be a spoil to those that served them; and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah. And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee. And Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem. Be silent, all flesh, before Jehovah; for he is waked up out of his holy habitation**” (Zech. 2:8-13).

“**In that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, shall ye invite every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig-tree**” (Zech. 3:10).

“and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, **the man whose name is the Branch:** and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even **he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.** And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. **And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple** of Jehovah; and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God” (Zech. 6:12-15).

“And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. **Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem**

shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.** Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith Jehovah of hosts. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Behold, **I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.** Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets that were in the day that the foundation of the house of Jehovah of hosts was laid, even the temple, that it might be built. For before those days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in, because of the adversary: for I set all men every one against his neighbor. But now I will not be unto the remnant of this people as in the former days, saith Jehovah of hosts. For **there shall be the seed of peace; the vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things. And it shall come to pass that, as ye were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.** Fear not, but let your hands be strong. For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: As I thought to do evil unto you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith Jehovah of hosts, and I repented not; so again have **I thought in these days to do good unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.** These are the things that ye shall do: speak ye every man the truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; and let none of you devise evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith Jehovah. And the word of Jehovah of hosts came unto me, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love truth and peace. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that **there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jeho-**

vah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:1-23).

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth” (Zech. 9:9-10).

“Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats; for Jehovah of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as his goodly horse in the battle. From him shall come forth the corner-stone, from him the nail, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together. And they shall be as mighty men, treading down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they shall fight, because Jehovah is with them; and the riders on horses shall be confounded. And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them back; for I have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am Jehovah their God, and I will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine; yea, their children shall see it, and rejoice; their heart shall be glad in Jehovah. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the peoples; and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and shall return. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And he will pass through the sea of affliction, and will smite the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart. And I will strengthen them in Jehovah; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith Jehovah” (Zech. 10:3-12).

“The burden of **the word of Jehovah concerning Israel**. Thus saith Jehovah, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: behold, **I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about**, and upon Judah also shall it be in the siege against Jerusalem. And **it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it**. In that day, saith Jehovah, I will smite every horse with terror, and his rider with madness; and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in Jehovah of hosts their God. **In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem. Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah. In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; **all the families that remain**, every family apart, and their wives apart” (Zech. 12:1-14).**

“**In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness**” (Zech. 13:1).

“And it shall come to pass, that **in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God**” (Zech. 13:8-9).

“Behold, **a day of Jehovah cometh**, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For **I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle**; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations**, as when he fought in the day of battle. And **his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives**, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and **Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee**. And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light; the bright ones shall withdraw themselves: but it shall be one day which is known unto Jehovah; not day, and not night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening time there shall be light. And it shall come to pass in that day, that **living waters shall go out from Jerusalem**; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And **Jehovah shall be King over all the earth**: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. **All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place**, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king’s wine-presses. And **men shall dwell therein, and there shall be no more curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely. And this shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of**

his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as that plague. And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.** And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth **goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts,** upon them there shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. **In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLY UNTO JEHOVAH; and the pots in Jehovah's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto Jehovah of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil therein: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts**" (Zech. 14:1-21). "This chapter [14] of Zech. gives such a remarkable order of the events, and insists so pointedly on the exaltation of the Jews, that our opponents find it the most difficult of all passages to spiritualize" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:686).

Malachi

"I have loved you, saith Jehovah. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? **Was not Esau Jacob's brother, saith Jehovah: yet I loved Jacob**" (Mal. 1:2)

"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning **the covenant of our fathers**" (Mal. 2:10)?

"Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and **the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple;** and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts. But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and **he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness. Then shall**

the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and **I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress** the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts. For **I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed**" (Mal. 3:1-6).

"And all nations shall call you happy; for ye shall be a delightful-land, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Mal. 3:12).

"For, behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. **But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings;** and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall. And ye **shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I make, saith Jehovah of hosts.** Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and ordinances. Behold, **I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.** (Mal. 4:1-6).

Conclusion

When taken at face value, Hebrew prophecy clearly and consistently promises a future, theocratic, Davidic, Jewish Kingdom. Major components of this prophesied Kingdom include a global regathering of the scattered Jewish people back to the land of Palestine, all nations of the world gathered for war against Israel, Israel's defeat of these nations (with supernatural and spectacular help from above), the purging and spiritual regeneration of the Jews, judgments of both Jews and Gentiles, resurrection of David, Daniel and "many" others, and Messiah's reign over Israel and the world from David's throne in Jerusalem. Concurrently, the Gentile nations are also to experience purging and blessing. (And noteworthy, especially in light of Jesus' (Matt. 13) and Paul's (Eph. 3) "mystery" teachings, the Christian church is not at all identifiable in any of these Hebrew prophecies.)

Really, is it any wonder the first-century Jews had the Kingdom expectations that they did?

Chapter 14: First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom

As we summarized briefly in our chapter *Five Views of the Kingdom*, differing schools of theology have differing definitions and understandings of the Kingdom of God. As we continue our pursuit of a correct understanding of the biblical Kingdom of God, it will now be helpful for us to take a thoughtful look at the understandings and expectations of the first-century Jews regarding the Kingdom.

First-Century Jewish Understanding of the Kingdom

If we are to make proper sense of the opening chapters of the New Testament, wherein we find John the Baptist and Jesus declaring publicly to the Jewish nation that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” it is essential that we first understand the then-prevailing Jewish understanding and expectation of the Kingdom. What was the Jewish mindset at that time? What did the first-century Jews understand the Kingdom of God to be? And therefore, what kind of Kingdom were they expecting?

The Jewish Mindset

In contrast with the more abstract and metaphysical spiritualities of much of pagan religion, the Jewish mindset, both ancient and modern, is more concrete than abstract. This is due largely to the simple fact that the spirituality of the Jewish Bible (the Old Testament) is more concrete than abstract. The Bible is a written record of a literal history of a literal people; a history consisting of concrete events in real time such as the Jewish God Jehovah’s creation of the material world, the literal Garden of Eden, the Flood, Abraham and his literal seed, the exodus from Egypt, the tablets of stone, the wilderness wandering, conquest of the promised land, Judea, Jerusalem, the temple, the Davidic throne, the Babylonian captivity, etc. Therefore, a spiritual-only kingdom, as exemplified in pagan spiritualities, such as transcendentalism, Platonic dualism and Gnosticism, divorced from the physical world, would not have been expected or even envisioned by a first-century Bible-believing Jew. “It is well known from a study of the Old Testament that the Semitic frame of mind emphasizes the concrete rather than the abstract” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 266).

The Jewish Understanding of the Kingdom

The first-century Jews understood the Kingdom exactly as covenanted and promised to them in their Hebrew Scriptures.

They understood the Kingdom as *covenanted*: literal and earthly. “Here is where many Theological writings make the fatal mistake: they are willing to receive the Abrahamic covenant as a perpetual one, but not the Davidic, when the same perpetuity is asserted of both; they are agreed to receive part of the Abrahamic, or part of the Davidic covenant, but not all that is written. No wonder that a diversity is thus produced, and an antagonism to the Old Test. The Jews and the Primitive Church were far more logical and scriptural when they cordially received those covenants and believed in God’s statements concerning them. The trouble at present is, that the church, with all her professions, has too little faith” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:286). “Language could not possibly make it any plainer or stronger. The sun may refuse to shine, the moon and the stars may depart, the sea may no longer war with its waves, day and night may not alternate in their season, the ordinances of heaven and earth may be repealed (comp. e.g. Jer. 33:17-26, Isa. 54:9, Jer. 31:35, 36, Ps. 89:36, 37, etc.), but the promises of God shall not fail in restoring the overthrown Davidic Kingdom; God will perform the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the Prophets, respecting the Jewish nation. Men may foolishly ridicule and sneer at these things because still unrealized, calling them ‘Jewish notions, fables, and prejudices,’ but God’s word stands pledged, as solemnly and sacredly as word can be substantiated, for their fulfillment. It is idle, it is folly—yea more, it is sinful to censure the Jews for a belief so clearly founded and so unmistakably encouraged” (*ibid.*, p. 287). “Let the reader place himself in the period before the First Advent, with the Old Test. in his hands. Now what would be his belief in the Kingdom, with those covenants and prophecies, confirmed by oath and most expressive assurances? Surely it would be identical with that of the Jews themselves; it could not be otherwise, if there was faith in God’s Word and God’s oath. Can we believe that the First Advent of the Messiah obliterated this belief, destroyed the nature of the Kingdom, erased the grammatical sense of covenant and prophecy, and cancelled the oath of the Unchangeable? Multitudes do this, but we cannot, dare not follow the multitude in this matter. God’s assurances are too weighty, His Word is too pure, to allow of such a destructive process” (*ibid.*). “Hence, so long as the early Church received the covenants as the Jews themselves believed and taught, they could the more easily find access to Jewish minds and hearts, but just so soon as the Church departed from this view of the covenants (making the land heaven, etc.), then the Jew was the more difficult to reach, seeing that the Old Test. language and promise, upon which he relied as plain and indisputable, was changed and transformed into something else. This substitution made it more troublesome to

prove the Messiahship of Jesus, for he naturally and inevitably became more distrustful of a Messiah who was not to fulfill the covenant promises as they were written... Saving in the acknowledgment of Jesus as Messiah, they are more in darkness than the Jew whom they pity or despise” (*ibid.*, p. 308). “The words and sentences [of the Davidic Covenant] in their plain grammatical acceptation, do expressly teach their belief. This is denied by no one, not even by those who then proceed to spiritualize the language. Therefore already the Jews are excusable in believing what God so definitely declares” (*ibid.*). “It [the Davidic Covenant] was confirmed by oath (Ps. 132:11, and 89:3, 4, 33-37), thus giving the strongest possible assurance of its ample fulfillment. Could the Jews do less than trust in language thus confirmed” (*ibid.*)? “Our doctrine is the only one which preserves a consistency in the Old Test. idea of the Kingdom as held by the pious Jews, as preached by John and the Disciples, as covenanted, and which does not degrade the ancient worthies into an ignorant or mistaken people; interpreting as it does the Biblical view of the Kingdom in accordance with the ancient language, expectations, covenant, preaching, etc., and not with the Origenistic ideas and more modern modes of thought and spiritualizing” (*ibid.*, p. 620). “Jewish eschatology recognized two ages: The first was this present age, the age in which Israel was waiting for the coming of the Messiah; and the second was the age to come, the age in which all of Israel’s covenants would be fulfilled and Israel would enter into her promised blessings as a result of the Messiah’s coming” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 248). We described in detail the Kingdom as *covenanted* in our chapter *Covenants of The Kingdom*.

They also understood the Kingdom as *promised*: literal and earthly. “It is universally admitted by writers of prominence (e.g. Neander, Ilagenbach, Schaff, Kurtz, etc.), whatever their respective views concerning the Kingdom itself, that the Jews, including the pious, held to a personal coming of the Messiah, the literal restoration of the Davidic throne and kingdom, the personal reign of Messiah on David’s throne, the resultant exaltation of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, and the fulfillment of the Millennial descriptions in that reign. It is also acknowledged that the utterances of Luke 1:71; Acts 1:6; Luke 2:26, 30, etc., include the above belief, and that down, at least to the day of Pentecost, the Jews, the disciples, and even the apostles held to such a view. It is not denied, by able Protestant or Romanist, Christian or Unbeliever, that they regarded the prophecies and covenanted promises as literal (i.e. in their naked grammatical sense); and, believing in their fulfillment, looked for such a restoration of the Davidic Kingdom under the Messiah, with an increased power and glory befitting the majesty of

the predicted King; and also that the pious of former ages would be raised up from the dead to enjoy the same” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:183). “The grammatical sense was the only one then used in relation to the Kingdom, producing unity of belief in a restored Davidic Kingdom. Even the Rabbins, who had already largely perverted Scripture by allegorical and mystical interpretations, still clung with unswerving faith to the plain grammatical sense when it related to the Kingdom. The testimony on this point is overwhelming” (*ibid.*, p. 260). “...the plain covenant and prophetic language which locates the Kingdom, not in heaven but on the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 284) “Among the Jews the representation was current that Messiah would reign a thousand years on earth... this notion was derived from Ps. 90:4 [“For a **thousand years** in thy sight Are but as yesterday when it is past, And as a watch in the night.”], the symbolical character of the six days of Creation, and the seventh being a Sabbath” (*ibid.*, p. 458). We described in detail the Kingdom as *promised* in our previous chapter *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*.

The first-century Jews did *not* understand the Kingdom to be a *spiritual-only* kingdom. “...taking a modern spiritualistic conception of the Kingdom and fastening it upon the Jews, who never thus entertained it... All Jews held to the Messiah’s Kingdom in the same way, viz.: as the re-establishment of the Theocracy, allied with the Davidic throne and kingdom...” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:185) “Nowhere is a particle of evidence that any Jew—much less ‘some’—had the slightest idea of a ‘purely spiritual’ Kingdom” (*ibid.*). “...valid reasons, found in the conduct of the nation itself, why this ‘prejudice’ remained unrealized. When Fuller (*Strictures on Robinson’s Sentiments*, Let. 2) says of the disciples, ‘Their foolish minds were so dazzled with the false ideas of a temporal Kingdom that they were blinded to the true end of Christ’s coming and to all that the prophets declared concerning it,’ we, on the other hand, think that it is Fuller’s mind that is ‘so dazzled with the false ideas of a spiritual kingdom’ that it is ‘blinded,’ etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 267). “Why are the Jews condemned for not seeing and acknowledging a Kingdom, which is not, in any shape or form, contained in the Davidic Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 269)?

Now, as we approach our study of the Kingdom in the New Testament, it is important for us to understand that the Theocratic Kingdom, dependent as it was on the Davidic kingship, *was not in existence in the first century*. As we studied at some length in our chapter *The Fall of the Kingdom*, with the Babylonian captivity of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., which commenced the times of the Gentiles, the theocratic, Davidic Kingdom had gone into remission. Subsequently, Daniel’s first sixty-nine weeks (Dan. 9:25), which

commenced at the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 B.C., and which were to run for six hundred eighty-three years, ending with the arrival of “Messiah the prince” (Dan. 9:25, KJV), would be in effect until Messiah’s formal presentation of Himself to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in the year 32 B.C. Consequently, *the restored Theocratic Kingdom had not been offered by God to the Jewish nation prior to the first century*. “This Kingdom was not preached to the people immediately before John the Baptist came. Luke (16:16) says that Jesus declared: ‘The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached.’ In whatever way this is explained (see Judge Jones’s *Notes*, p. 110, etc., and *Com. on Matt.* 11:12, 13), it certainly implies a period of time preceding when the Kingdom was not directly offered for acceptance. The legitimate inference follows, that it was not in existence. It was, indeed, predicted, promised, believed in, and expected, but it was not authoritatively offered for present acceptance and realization, as was done by John and those following him” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:252).

First-Century Jewish Expectation of the Kingdom

Regarding Christ’s First Advent and the Jewish expectations associated with it, two things should be kept in mind:

First, *relatively few Old Testament prophets refer to the First Advent of Christ*. “Only a few of the Prophets refer to the First Advent and its mournful particulars, as if conscious (which is strongly intimated) of the rejection of the Messiah and the long-continued downfall of the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:249)

Second, *the first-century Jews did not know that Christ would have two advents*. “The Prophets describe this restored Kingdom, its extension, glory, etc., without distinguishing between the First and Second Advents” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:242). “Upon the horizon of their outlook there loomed large the two advents of the King; the one for the purpose of suffering for the sin of the world, and the other for the purpose of reigning as the Son of David upon His throne. Any intervening period was foreign to them, because it had not been revealed by God” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 149). “It is highly doubtful whether anyone, having only the Old Testament writings and with no knowledge of Christian history, could or ever did arrive at a correct solution of the problem; that is, not two Messiahs, but one Messiah with two comings separated by a vast gulf in time” (McClain, *GK*, p. 168). “If this time relationship was ever revealed exactly to the prophets, Old Testament Scripture is wholly silent as to any such revelation... a silence designed by inspi-

ration” (*ibid.*). “The full disclosure of a second advent did not come until after the crisis of Jewish rejection” (*ibid.*, p. 335).

So then, just what were the first-century Jews expecting? Obviously, they were expecting the Kingdom as they understood it, which was the Kingdom covenanted and promised to them: a literal, earthly, Jewish theocracy. “And they brought the colt to Jesus and put their garments on it; and He sat upon it. And many spread their garments in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And **those who went before, and those who followed after, were crying out, ‘Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!’ And He entered Jerusalem** and came into the temple; and after looking all around, He departed for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late” (Mark 11:7–11). “**Joseph of Arimathea** came, a prominent member of the Council, **who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God**; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus” (Mark 15:43). “**Salvation from our enemies, And from the hand of all who hate us**” (Luke 1:71) “And it had been revealed to him [Simeon] by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, ‘Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; For **my eyes have seen Thy salvation**’” (Luke 2:26-30) “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel**’” (Acts 1:6)? “At the introduction of Christianity the great, leading subject with the Jews was that of the Messianic Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:131). “The prophecies of the Kingdom, interpreted literally, sustain the expectations and hopes of the pious Jews. This is universally admitted, even by those who contend that the same prophecies are susceptible of a different interpretation” (*ibid.*, p. 190). “This sense obviously contained in the Scriptures formed the scripturally derived basis of the Jewish hopes” (*ibid.*, p. 191). “Joseph of Arimathea (Mark 15:43), ‘also waited for the Kingdom of God’” (*ibid.*, p. 367) “The Jews, influenced by the plain language of Covenant and prophecy, universally held that the Messianic Kingdom was to be accompanied by a complete restoration of the nation; both ideas were inseparably united, the one being regarded an impossibility without the other. So wedded were they to this view, that they objected to Jesus being the Messiah because it was not realized at the First Advent (the early Chris-

tians answered by locating the fulfillment at the Second Advent of this Jesus)” (*ibid.*, 2:50). “...the extensive holding of a Pre-Mill. Advent as evidenced in the Apocryphal books, Oracles of the Sybils, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 191). “Mains believes that premillennialism slights the present spiritual order in maintaining that Christ’s reign will be effectively established on earth only after His glorious return. For them, he alleges, the present age of the church is but a twilight preparation as compared with the glory that shall come to the world in the millennial age. He admits that the Jews of old always thought of the Messianic reign as being realized upon the earth itself. That it would be a heavenly and spiritual kingdom apart from the earth never suggested itself to Israel. He does not explain that strange phenomenon” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 251).

Even today many religious Jews are *still* expecting a literal, earthly, Jewish Kingdom. “...e.g. the objection urged by Rabbi Crool (*Restoration of Israel*), against Jesus as the Messiah, is, that He did not sit on David’s throne or set up the Davidic Kingdom as it was predicted by the prophets and as covenanted; and also, that the Jews, instead of the promised peace, joy, exaltation, etc., under the Messianic Kingdom (if it really commenced at or immediately after the First Advent), found trouble, suffering, dispersion, etc. Now to such objections, the postponement, with the Scripturally given reasons for its occurrence, affords the only satisfactory reply, seeing that we leave the covenanted Kingdom intact, the covenants and predictions just as they are written, and the promises to the Jewish nation, in its covenanted relationship, to be yet fulfilled in all their greatness and glory” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:625). “...a vague and invisible fulfillment so exceedingly unsatisfactory to a Jewish mind. We do not take the promises expressly given to the Jewish nation and heap them, without regard to their connection, upon the Gentiles... our showing a postponement to the Second Advent of predictions especially near and dear to the Jewish heart, must necessarily be more acceptable to Jewish faith than the wholesale disclaimers of popular systems” (*ibid.*). “The Jews are, indeed, mistaken in their rejection of the Messiah, but not in the Messianic Kingdom and their connection with it” (*ibid.*, 2:73). “The Jews... from their prayer-books... Such prayers evince such faith in God’s simple word as contained in the Old Test., that they put to shame the faith of many Gentiles, who have become ‘high-minded’ through a spiritualizing and appropriating the promises of God to this nation” (*ibid.*, p. 90). “To give an idea of the more modern Jewish view, several quotations from the prayer books (*Art. Jews*, in the *Galaxy*, Jan., 1872) will suffice: ‘Oh, return with mercy to Jerusalem, Thy city, and reign therein as Thou hast promised to do; rebuild it soon, during our existence, to re-

main imperishable, and speedily re-establish in it the throne of David. Praised be Thou, O Eternal! who buildest up Jerusalem! 'Fill us with rejoicing, O Eternal, through Elijah the prophet, Thy servant, and through the royal house of David, Thy anointed; may He soon come and gladden our heart. Upon His throne let no stranger sit; no others take unto themselves His glory; for by Thy holy name hast Thou sworn unto Him, that His light shall never be extinguished in all eternity. Praised be Thou, O Eternal! the shield of David'" (*ibid.*, p. 199). "Rabbi Bechai says, God granted four special honors to Israel, viz., (1) the land of Canaan; (2) the law; (3) prophecy; (4) the resurrection of the dead" (*ibid.*, p. 312). "The Orthodox Jews... still fondly anticipate a further fulfillment of the same Word... The Reformed or Rationalistic class, have given up the hope of a Messiah as predicted" (*ibid.*, 3:410). "Alas! how true it is to-day of many a Jew, that—as Dorner remarked of Philo—the Messianic idea has become in him a burnt-out cinder" (*ibid.*, p. 411). "The Reformed Jews (art. 'Messiah' in M'Clintock and Strong's *Cyclop.*) in 1840, at Frankfort, declared that 'a Messiah who is to lead back to Palestine is neither expected nor desired'... On the other hand, the Orthodox Jews cleave to the prophecies and the Messianic idea and Kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 412). "Orthodox Judaism (which still awaits its Messiah, and which regards the Old Testament alone as Holy Scripture) denies that the kingdom-predictions have been fulfilled" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:477).

So, it is our contention that, contrary to much popular opinion, *the first-century Jews were not mistaken in their understanding of the Kingdom and in their Kingdom expectations.* "But the question is, were they mistaken? This is too much taken for granted, and upon its assumption a huge superstructure arises. Briefly and anticipatorily: the non-fulfillment thus far is no evidence against the faith, for there are valid and satisfactory reasons given in the New Test. why it should not down to the present time be realized. This is far from saying that it never will be attained" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:186). "every Jew... his ancestors were not a set of blind, deluded believers" (*ibid.*, 3:413) It is a noteworthy fact that, at least in the biblical record, neither John the Baptist nor Jesus nor the apostles ever corrected the prevailing Jewish expectation of the Kingdom. We'll have more to say on this in our next chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom.* The first-century Jews may not have placed the emphasis on the prerequisite humiliation and suffering of Christ that they should have (i.e. as prophesied in Isaiah chapter 53), but it does not logically follow from that that they were therefore entirely mistaken on the nature of the eschatological Kingdom.

On the contrary, we contend that *this Jewish understanding of the Kingdom is assumed in the New Testament*, and that without acknowledging this assumption, the New Testament, and particularly the message preached in its opening chapters by John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy in the synoptic gospels, namely, that ‘the kingdom of heaven is at hand,’ cannot be understood correctly or satisfactorily. “The doctrine of the kingdom is first taught by covenant, theocratic ordering, and prophecy in the Old Testament, and it is *taken for granted* in the New Testament as a subject derived from the Old Testament and *well understood*; for the kingdom is preached without any appended explanation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:157). “...the extraordinary manner in which the New Test., opens, taking, as it does, a previous knowledge of the Kingdom for granted. If they did make a mistake in their absorbing contemplation of the glorious Kingdom of the Messiah so as to overlook the antecedent humiliation, suffering, and death of the King, let not the man accuse them of ignorance concerning the Kingdom, which led to such a restraint of prediction, when he to-day reverses their conduct by confining himself so much to the sacrifice that he overlooks the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 188). “...the early preaching of ‘the Gospel of the Kingdom.’ What Kingdom is taken for granted as known? Evidently the one predicted in the older Scriptures, and hence, without an investigation of the Old Test., from whence the Jews and the first Christians obtained their views and expectations, it is simply impossible to obtain a correct idea of the Kingdom” (*ibid.*).

Chapter 15: Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom

Early in the first century, at a time when faithful Jewish believers were anticipating a restoration of the Davidic Kingdom (see our previous chapter, *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*), John the Baptist and Jesus arrived on the scene preaching to Israel, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Introductory Biblical Considerations

Before getting into the details of the content of the message preached by John the Baptist and Jesus, it will be helpful for us to first review some relevant introductory considerations concerning our written Bible.

The Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments

Concerning the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, it is important for us to recognize the continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament, and to notice that the New Testament confirms, rather than defines the biblical Kingdom.

We should recognize the *continuity* between the Old Testament and the Gospels. “Chronologically speaking, there is a 400-year gap between Malachi and Matthew. Logically and thematically, however, there is no gap at all. The New Testament immediately takes up where the Old Testament prophets left off. In fact, technically the ‘New’ Testament does not begin with Matthew, but with the Book of Acts. The Gospels demonstrate that God’s program still continued with the nation Israel. Israel was still under the Law, and everything continued as it had during the prophetic period. The message was directed to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:6) [‘but rather **go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel**’] and excluded the Gentiles. The Law, in fact, was not abolished at the birth of Christ, but rather at His death; and the message of the Gospels concerns the fulfillment of all that the prophets predicted. Thus there is an unbroken continuity between the prophets and the Gospels” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 184).

And, we should observe that the New Testament does not so much *define* the Kingdom as it does *confirm* it. “The bulk and content of the coming kingdom is given so largely in the Old Testament that the New Testament confines itself for the most part to confirmation” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 186).

We discussed these two points in some detail in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.

The Purposes of the Four Gospels

As we study the Kingdom in the four gospels, it will be helpful for us to keep in mind *each book's unique purpose*. "It has been objected to the gospels that they are greatly composed of detached, fragmentary parts strung together without unity of design, presenting varied, and, in a measure, contradictory, sketches of the life of Jesus. This is effectually disproven by looking at the gospels from the Kingdom standpoint; for then it appears that each writer had a definite object in view, viz., to evince unity and a consistent development of Divine Purpose in a pre-determined Plan corresponding with the covenants and prophecies relating to the Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:349). "In order to ascertain the design of the gospels and to comprehend the unity therein, the student must place himself, not in the modern position of thought, but in the posture of those to whom these gospels were first presented. Then, all who read the Old Test. entertained the Theocratic-Davidic idea of the Messiah and Kingdom; all believed that a descendant of David, specially related (Theocratically) to God, would appear, who would restore the throne and Kingdom of David and reign majestically as the prophets predicted. Now, in the very nature of the case, writing for such persons who received the covenants and prophecies in their grammatical construction, it was requisite, in view of what actually occurred, to show that Jesus was a descendant of David; that He was related to and acknowledged by God; that He was the powerful Messiah; that the Kingdom was tendered to the elect nation; that the nation, through its representative men, rejected the Messiah and Kingdom; that this Messiah, foreseeing His rejection and death, must give assurances indicative of the postponement of the Kingdom; and that, notwithstanding His death, He is able to re-establish the Kingdom. Now, these are precisely the points that are fully presented in the gospels; thus most admirably adapted to meet the objections that in the quite early age would be urged against the claims of Jesus to be 'the Christ.'... The more the gospels are contemplated in the light of the covenants and of the facts as they existed at the First Advent, the more logically consistent, the more connected and admirably adapted to secure the design intended, will they appear" (*ibid.*). "We only now refer to the fact, as corroborative, that no controversy was raised between the early Christians and the Jews respecting the meaning, etc., of the Christ (for the controverted point between them was whether Jesus was the Messiah or not), and that many Jews, even priests, with their intense devotion to the covenanted and predicted Messiah, cordially received Jesus as the same, fully believing that at His Second Coming the postponed Kingdom and glory would be realized. It is painfully sad to find how this simple scripturally-

founded belief was soon overwhelmed by a mass of rubbish, which the wisdom of the world conceived to be better adapted to subserve the truth and God's praise" (*ibid.*, p. 350). "The very form in which the Gospels are given indicates an early origin; for the design manifested in answering certain objections shows that it meets the only objections that were current immediately after the death of Jesus and opposed to His claims of Messiahship" (*ibid.*, p. 358). "The defence of the Messiahship of Jesus in the Gospels is based upon two facts, constantly appealed to, viz., that Jesus in His manifestation, etc., fulfilled the prophets, and that by a certain determinate fulfillment He gives us sufficient evidence that the remainder will be fulfilled at the period of time designated" (*ibid.*, p. 360). "The Gospels were not written 'to teach Christianity,' but to reveal Christ in the different aspects of His person and work as Israel's Messiah, Jehovah's servant, Son of Man and Son of God. No one of them is 'complete in itself'; and the Fourth alone expressly professes to teach the way of salvation (John xx. 31)" (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 54).

Matthew's purpose is to confirm *Jesus' messianic credentials* to a Jewish readership. "Briefly consider Matthew's statements to vindicate the claims of a crucified Jesus to the Messiahship as covenanted... The promised Messiah is one who must, in order to fulfill the covenants and promises as given, be able to exert supernatural power; and hence this power, as an earnest, is exhibited... a single fact, briefly stated, sufficiently comprehensive in itself to vindicate the ability of Jesus Christ to fulfill the covenants at His Second Advent, viz., His resurrection... Matthew, as well as the other evangelists, takes it for granted that the reader of the Gospel is previously well posted in covenant and prophecy, and hence writes for such persons. Therefore, a simple statement of facts, as they occurred, is all that is required to lead a believer in covenant and prophecy to acknowledge Jesus as 'the Christ,' who will yet fulfill them, as claimed, at His Second Coming. This was the universal belief of those Christians who first received and perpetuated the Gospel, thus verifying, in the reception of it, our doctrinal position" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:350). "Matthew contains not a single sentence which is foreign to the purpose for which it was written, as presenting Israel's Messiah, the 'son of David, the son of Abraham'" (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 51). "the Sermon on the Mount'... Our Lord was there unfolding the principles of the promised kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 178) "Of the four gospels, the first, Matthew, was written to the Jews. It presents Jesus as the Messianic King of the Jews and develops the kingdom program" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 763).

Mark's purpose is to confirm Jesus as *Jehovah's servant*; as the One with sufficient power and ability to fulfill His will. "...the resurrection

([Mark] ch. 16), which insures the continued Messiahship of Jesus and His ability, at the appointed time, to fulfill all that is written” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:352).

Luke presents Jesus as *the Son of Man* Who is destined to fulfill the covenants. “Luke, writing at the time he did, must also follow the same course, viz., to meet the objections that might be alleged against a crucified Messiah and the non-appearance of the Messianic Kingdom. In the first and second chapters he shows, by the birth and office of John, and by the birth and announcements respecting Jesus, that He is the destined Theocratic King, who, while son of David, is also (v. 32, 33) ‘the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end—’ and this, too, is done in view of (v. 72 and 73) ‘His holy covenant,’ etc. Having thus exhibited in the introduction full faith in the covenants, and that Jesus was the One through whom they were to be realized, he now proceeds in a narrative which shows why they were not then fulfilled, and why we should continue to exercise faith in Jesus that they will yet be verified” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:353).

John presents Jesus as *the Son of God*: the rejected, crucified and resurrected Savior of the world. “**He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him**” (John 1:11). “The Gospel of John exhibits one trait differing from the preceding gospels (yet also mentioned by them) which gives it a remarkable complexion, viz., it commences at once with His rejection and death, with the implied postponement of the Kingdom, and call of the Gentiles” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:355). “The sacrifice of Himself was necessary to make Him the immortal Son of David and to give Him the power to raise up His own at the last day” (*ibid.*). “The true key to the proper comprehension of John’s Gospel is to notice the first point of contact between it and the previously given Gospels, viz., that the God-given Divine Messiah was rejected by His own elect nation, and consequently the implication (afterward enforced) that the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom (as covenanted and predicted) are delayed until He is again manifested at ‘the last day’” (*ibid.*, p. 356).

The Kingdom is Announced and Offered

The New Testament opens with the announcement that “*the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” “**Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’**” (Matt. 3:1–2). “**From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven**

is at hand” (Matt. 4:17). “The Kingdom... Jesus, the disciples, and the seventy announced it, not as actually present but as still future” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:263) “...the Kingdom as originally preached and believed” (*ibid.*, p. 665)

Before getting into the details of John the Baptist’s and Jesus’ announcement and offer of the Kingdom to Israel, it is interesting for us to note first that while John the Baptist was announcing the Kingdom to Israel, and immediately before Jesus also began to announce and offer it to Israel, *the kingdom of the world was offered by Satan to Jesus*. “Again, **the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; and he said to Him, ‘All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me’**” (Matt. 4:8-9). “And **the devil** said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone.” And he led Him up and **showed Him all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time. And **the devil said to Him, ‘I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours’**” (Luke 4:3-7). “Now judgment is upon this world; now **the ruler of this world** shall be cast out” (John 12:31). “...the third temptation, having no point or force if it had not, like the others, been based on the promises of God in that direction” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:698) “In the first temptation Jesus does not deny that He is hungry and able to make bread; in the second, He does not deny that He is the Son of God, and under special protection; and in the third, He does not deny the Kingdom or dominion which is to be given to Him, but only rejects the mode by which it is to be obtained... Satan’s temptation embraced a condition that was derogatory to God’s honor; it embraced a right in bestowal which only belongs to God; and it overlooked the time and manner when the predicted Theocracy should be restored” (*ibid.*, p. 700). “The second test involved a short cut, apart from sacrifice, to the possession of the kingdoms of this world” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:52). “It is significant that Christ did not challenge Satan’s right to make the offer to surrender these Kingdoms. He viewed them as in Satan’s domain, so that Satan had the right to do with them as he willed” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 432). “In His divinely ordained experience of temptation, the kingdoms offered Him were existing political realms—‘the kingdoms of the world’ (Matt. 4:8-9)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 294).

And, it is a deeply meaningful introductory fact that the Kingdom of God was announced and offered *only to Israel*. “These twelve Jesus sent

out after instructing them, saying, **‘Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand”’** (Matt. 10:5-7). “But He answered and said, **‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel’**” (Matt. 15:24). “And from there He arose and went away to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know of it; yet He could not escape notice. But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, immediately came and fell at His feet. Now **the woman was a Gentile**, of the Syrophoenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And He was saying to her, **‘Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.’** But she answered and said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs.’ And He said to her, ‘Because of this answer go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.’ And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having departed” (Mark 7:24-30). “And **when they had approached Jerusalem** and had come to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find **a donkey** tied there and a colt with her; untie them, and bring them to Me. And if anyone says something to you, you shall say, **“The Lord has need of them,”** and immediately he will send them.’ Now **this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘Say to the daughter of Zion, “Behold your King is coming to you, Gentle, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”’** And the disciples went and did just as Jesus had directed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid on them their garments, on which He sat. And most of the multitude spread their garments in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees, and spreading them in the road. And **the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!’** And when **He had entered Jerusalem**, all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ And the multitudes were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee’” (Matt. 21:1-11) “And **Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost’**” (Luke 19:9-10). “He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive

Him” (John 1:11). “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. You worship that which you do not know; **we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews**” (John 4:21-22). “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are **restoring the kingdom to Israel?**’ He said to them, ‘**It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed** by His own authority” (Acts 1:6-7) “**It is you [Men of Israel] who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers,** saying to Abraham, “And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” **For you first,** God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways” (Acts 3:25-26). “He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, **to grant repentance to Israel,** and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). “For I say that **Christ has become a servant to the circumcision** on behalf of the truth of God **to confirm the promises given to the fathers**” (Rom. 15:8) “Why *forbid* the first preachers of the Gospel of the Kingdom to go to the Gentiles, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:211)? “Why did Christ and the apostles at first confine themselves to the Jewish nation, if the Kingdom was not national” (*ibid.*, p. 339)? “This procedure of John, Jesus, and the disciples, in accordance with sacred covenanted relationship (but the subject of ignorant and unbelieving ridicule), teaches a fixed, fundamental truth, which must by no means be overlooked, viz.: that the regular lineal believing descendants of Abraham—the nationality of David—with those adopted by them, were entitled, by covenant, to this Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 356). “...the disciples... ‘the Kingdom of heaven is at hand’ was not addressed by them to any Gentile. The same is true of John, and also of Jesus, who carefully avoided it in His address to Gentiles” (*ibid.*, p. 361). “When He offered Himself as King, it was to Israel that He did so (Matt. 21:1-11)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 255). “Until nine years after Pentecost the Church was exclusively Jewish” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:418). “The Lord’s earthly ministry, from the time of His presentation by John until His rejection by the nation, was confirmed to that nation alone. The kingdom offered by John, by Christ, by the twelve, and by the seventy witnesses sent out by Him was to Israel only. The principle must be observed that God was dealing throughout Christ’s earthly life with the remnant that existed then” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 293). “...to the Seventy... ‘into every city and place, whither he himself would come’ (Luke 10:1)... ‘I am not sent,’ He says, ‘but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel’ (Matt. 15:24). This dictum of Christ, which has so troubled some commentators... David Smith says [in

In the Days of His Flesh, p. 248], ‘There is no incident in our Lord’s earthly ministry more puzzling than this’... we have here something extraordinary, quite different from the usual program of evangelism in the Christian Church” (McClain, *GK*, p. 305).

The Kingdom is Announced

The Kingdom was *announced* to Israel in a number of different ways by a number of different people.

The Kingdom was announced by *Jesus’ First Advent*. “Jesus is represented as personally coming (just as God personally came at the establishment of the theocracy at Mt. Sinai)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:93).

The Kingdom was announced by *Jesus’ genealogy*. “**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples**” (Gen. 49:10). “**For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this**” (Isa. 9:6–7). “As I live, saith Jehovah, though **Coniah** the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them of whom thou art afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans... Thus saith Jehovah, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for **no more shall a man of his seed prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling in Judah**” (Jer. 22:24–30). “Coniah... ‘No man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the “Throne of David” and ruling any more in Judah.’ So we see that Joseph could not be the ‘natural’ father of Jesus, for no descendant of his could sit on the Throne of David and ‘prosper.’ This forever sets at rest the claim that Joseph was the ‘natural’ father of Jesus, and establishes the fact of His ‘Virgin Birth.’ The marriage of Joseph and Mary made Jesus the adopted son and ‘legal heir’ of Joseph. The title, unaffected by the curse pronounced upon Coniah, was thus conveyed to Jesus, in whom there centres, through both Nathan and Solomon, exclusive right to the “Throne of David”” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 83). “The book of **the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham**” (Matt. 1:1). “and to Jesse was born **David the king**. And to

David was born Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah” (Matt. 1:6) “and to Jacob was born **Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ**” (Matt. 1:16). “But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘**Joseph, son of David**, do not be afraid to take **Mary** as your wife; for **that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit**” (Matt. 1:20). “And Jesus went away from there, and withdrew into the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from that region, and began to cry out, saying, ‘Have mercy on me, **O Lord, Son of David**; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed” (Matt. 15:21-22). “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was **Joseph, of the descendants of David**; and the virgin’s name was **Mary**” (Luke 1:26-27). “Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all were proceeding to **register for the census**, everyone to his own city. And **Joseph also went up** from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, **to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David**, in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child” (Luke 2:1-5). “That there might be no question as to Joseph’s and Mary’s ancestors, God, when the time came for Jesus to be born, put it into the heart of the Roman Emperor, Caesar Augustus, to call for an enrollment, and this required that every Jewish citizen should be enrolled in the city where his family had lived, and as Joseph was of the ‘House and Lineage of David’ (Luke 2:1-5), this required him to go to Bethlehem to be enrolled. And as Mary was of the same family, Joseph took her with him. They could not have been enrolled unless their names were on the Register, and that they were enrolled proves that they could at that time trace their ancestry back to King David. It was doubtless from this register that Matthew and Luke got their genealogy” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 84). “And when He began His ministry, **Jesus** Himself was about thirty years of age, being **supposedly the son of Joseph**, the son of Eli... **the son of Nathan, the son of David**, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon... the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God” (Luke 3:23-38). “**Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was**” (John 7:42)? “For it is evident that **our Lord was descended from Judah**, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests” (Heb. 7:14). “**The scep-**

tre shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh come: And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be" (Gen. 49:10). "A throne and a kingdom is to be given to a promised son of David, a regular descendant of Abraham's. It is his by right of inheritance. He is the royal Theocratic heir. Hence without such a genealogy something essential would be lacking in the chain of evidence" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:352). "...Matthew commencing his table by asserting that Jesus was 'the Son of David, the Son of Abraham,' i.e. both covenants, the Abrahamic and Davidic, were thus realized in the person of Jesus Christ. Also in designating 'David the King,' and omitting it in the descendants" (*ibid.*) "If the Saviour was merely to descend from David, to take human nature in that line for the purpose of redemptive work at the First Advent, and then that was to be the finale of the matter, why lay so much stress on descent from the royal line" (*ibid.*)? "What difference, on the latter supposition, was it then, whether Jesus was, or was not, the legitimate Heir to David's throne, if He was never to occupy it? Why should special stress be laid on that which, if we are to credit the multitude, God never intended to fulfill? We, therefore, hold that there is a solid, sublime reason why those tables, so uninteresting to many, are given, viz.: not merely to identify Jesus as the Saviour, but to identify Him as the One, the Messiah, who has the lawful right to David's Theocratic throne. The throne is not typical, not representative, not symbolical, but actually and really covenanted to this Heir, and hence the tables truthfully and actually show how by course of descent He is the rightful Heir" (*ibid.*, p. 353). "...the main object of Matthew... Jesus was the lawful heir and successor to whom the royalty of David belonged" (*ibid.*) "Matthew, writing of Christ as the rightful heir to Abraham's land and David's throne, very properly reproduced the lineage of Joseph, the lawful husband of Mary, while Luke, in portraying His history as the seed of the woman, traces the genealogy of His mother not merely to Abraham, but to the first human pair" (*ibid.*). "The genealogies of both Joseph and Mary unite in David" (*ibid.*). "Now, seeing that the promise has been so literally fulfilled in Christ's descent, in His being the legal Heir to the throne and Kingdom, we hold that such a fulfillment gives us the strongest assurance that the remainder of the promise will likewise, in God's ordering and time, be realized" (*ibid.*). "...the Primitive Church... they clearly and distinctly announced their faith and hope in the promises made to the Son of Man, and hence in David's Son as the promised Theocratic King. It was later, under Alexandrian and Popish influence, that the Humanity was ignored in a great measure for the Divine" (*ibid.*). "Up to the time of Jesus' rejection as King, all genealogical records were preserved in the Temple, and easily

accessible to all the people, but when Titus in A. D. 70 destroyed the city and the Temple those records were all destroyed, and since that day the genealogical tables of Matthew and Luke alone remain to give us the lineal descent of Jesus from King David. Therefore the only living man who today can establish an unbroken genealogy directly and incontrovertibly from King David, is the MAN Christ Jesus, (1 Tim. 2:5), born ‘King of the Jews,’ (Matt. 2:2), crucified ‘King of the Jews,’ (John 19:19), and to come again ‘King of the Jews’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 84). “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**” (1 Tim. 2:5) “Where is **He who has been born King of the Jews?** For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him” (Matt. 2:2). “And Pilate wrote an inscription also, and put it on the cross. And it was written, ‘JESUS THE NAZARENE, **THE KING OF THE JEWS**’” (John 19:19). “Mary descended from another son of David entirely, Nathan—by curious coincidence the same name as the prophet’s who gave the Davidic covenant, through undoubtedly two different individuals... while the legal lineage came to Christ through Joseph, his legal father and a descendant of Solomon and his heirs, the actual seed of David was transmitted through Nathan and Mary” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 201). “In the destruction of Jerusalem, the genealogies were destroyed and it would be impossible for Jews of today to trace their lineage back to the line of David” (*ibid.*). We covered the Davidic Covenant in detail in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.

The Kingdom was announced at *Jesus’ birth*. “But thou, **Beth-lehem Ephrathah**, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, **out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel;** whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth: then **the residue of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God: and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be our peace**” (Mic. 5:2-5). “And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name **Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins**” (Matt. 1:21). “Matt 1:21: *...thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins... his people...* is mostly a reference to Jewish people, the Jewish nation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 850). “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is **He who has been born King of the Jews?** For we

saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him.’ And **when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled**, and all Jerusalem with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born. And they said to him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet, “And you, **Bethlehem**, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For **out of you shall come forth a Ruler, Who will shepherd My people Israel**”’ (Matt. 2:1-6). “And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear gripped him. But the angel said to him, ‘Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name **John**. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother’s womb. And **he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God**. And it is **he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah**, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord**’” (Luke 1:12-17). “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was **Joseph, of the descendants of David**; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, ‘Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, **Mary**; for you have found favor with God. And behold, **you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**’” (Luke 1:26-33). “For unto us **a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom**, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even **for ever**. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “There are 7 of God’s ‘shalls’ in this passage [Luke 1:26-33]. Four of them have been fulfilled, for Mary did bring forth a ‘son,’ He was called ‘Jesus,’ He was ‘great,’ and was called the ‘Son of the Highest;’ the other three

must and will be fulfilled” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 92). “The second example is Gabriel’s message to Mary: that her Son would sit upon the throne of His father David and will have ‘rulership over Israel forever.’ This is in keeping with a literal understanding of the Davidic Covenant and Gabriel made no effort to correct a supposed Jewish misunderstanding of the nature of the kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 348). “The word of the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary is that her Son ‘shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end’ (Luke 1:32, 33)... ‘their natural and literal sense... Mary could have understood these expressions in no other way” [quoting F. Godet, *Commentary on Luke*] (McClain, *GK*, p. 282). “Did Mary for one moment hold the amillenarian view? Would she spiritualize this passage—the throne of David is God’s throne in heaven; the kingdom is a spiritual kingdom; Israel is synonymous with the church? Certainly not! It was totally foreign to her thinking. If the amillenarians are right, Mary was sadly deceived. The prophecy of the angel could hardly have been better worded to confirm the ordinary Jewish hope as well as the exact essentials of the premillennial position—the literal and earthly fulfillment of the Davidic covenant” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 117). “The force of the prophecy to Mary is a precise and dramatic confirmation of the promise to David in spite of Israel’s centuries of wandering, captivities, and sin” (*ibid.*, p. 200). “**For the Mighty One** has done great things for me [Mary]; And holy is His name. And His mercy is upon generation after generation Toward those who fear Him. He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. **He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble.** He has filled the hungry with good things; And sent away the rich empty-handed. **He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his offspring forever**” (Luke 1:49-55). “And his father **Zacharias** was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: ‘**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant — As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old — Salvation from our enemies, And from the hand of all who hate us; To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might**

serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days” (Luke 1:67-75). “And the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for **today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord**” (Luke 2:10-11). “And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was **Simeon**; and **this man was** righteous and devout, **looking for the consolation of Israel**; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen **the Lord’s Christ**. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, ‘Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thy word; For my eyes have seen Thy salvation, Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, **A light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Thy people Israel.**’ And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, **this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel**, and for a sign to be opposed —” (Luke 2:25-34) “And there was a prophetess, **Anna** the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. And she never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. And at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for **the redemption of Jerusalem**” (Luke 2:36-38). “Luke 1:32, 33, 55, 72, 73, where we have undoubted allusions to previously obtained covenants, in ‘the mercy promised to the fathers,’ in ‘the holy covenant’ confirmed by oath ‘to our father Abraham,’ and in ‘the throne of his father David” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:285).

The Kingdom was announced by *John the Baptist*. “Now in those days **John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’**” (Matt. 3:1-2). “This [**John the Baptist**] is the one about whom it is written, “Behold, **I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You**”” (Matt. 11:10). “**Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her**, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received of Jehovah’s hand double for all her sins. The voice of one that crieth, **Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah**; make level in the desert a highway for our God” (Isa. 40:2-3) “Behold, **I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way be-**

fore me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and **the messenger of the covenant**, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts. But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and **he will purify the sons of Levi**, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness. Then shall the offering of **Judah and Jerusalem** be pleasant unto Jehovah, **as in the days of old, and as in ancient years**" (Mal. 3:1-4). "**And if you care to accept it, he [John the Baptist] himself is Elijah, who was to come**" (Matt. 11:14). "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb **for all Israel**, even statutes and ordinances. Behold, **I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come**" (Mal. 4:3-5). "If literal Elijah must appear Christ could not be making a bona fide offer of the kingdom, inasmuch as literal Elijah had to come and John could not have fulfilled that requirement. But if one coming in Elijah's spirit and power fulfills the requirements, then a genuine offer of the kingdom could be made. On the basis of the Lord's words it is concluded that Elijah personally need not appear, although one will come to fulfill this ministry (Matt 17:12)" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 312). "And He answered and said, '**Elijah is coming and will restore all things; but I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him**, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands'" (Matt. 17:11-12). "**The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached**, and everyone is forcing his way into it. But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail" (Luke 16:16-17). "The next day **he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!** This is He on behalf of whom I said, "After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than *I*, for He existed before me." And I did not recognize Him, but **in order that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing** in water'" (John 1:29-31). "John the Baptist preached that this Kingdom, predicted by the Prophets, was 'nigh at hand.' This Kingdom was to be offered to the Jewish nation, and John's mission was to prepare the nation for its acceptance. However men may explain the Kingdom itself, the fact stated is not disputed" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:253). "Matt. 11:11 and Luke 7:28: 'Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the King-

dom of heaven is greater than he.’ Our Saviour, undoubtedly, refers to the Kingdom of heaven as it will be established at His Second Advent... for the church is only preparative to that still future, coming Kingdom, in which the least that inherits is greater in official standing, more highly honored, than John was in his official position... who will then be greater than John in every respect, while John, also, in that Kingdom will occupy a still higher position than the one sustained at the First Advent” (*ibid.*). “John preached ‘the gospel of the Kingdom,’ just as Jesus, the twelve, and the seventy afterward preached it. Attention is simply directed to this, because some assert that there is no preaching of the Gospel unless a crucified Redeemer is proclaimed. But we have here and previous to the death of Jesus the gospel of the Kingdom proclaimed to the nation” (*ibid.*). “The preaching of John, giving no explanation of the Kingdom” (*ibid.*) “This satisfactorily answers the question, why John continued his ministry after the public appearance of Christ. The solution is found in John baptizing not only in view of a Messiah to come, but of a Kingdom to come” (*ibid.*, p. 263). “When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, he said: ‘Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matt. 3:1-2). No explanation is offered as to the meaning of the ‘kingdom’ in his message, for the people knew what was implied by his words. After a study of the Old Testament prophetic Scriptures, what else could one expect him to say? There was no need to describe the conditions and characteristics of the kingdom, for that had been done so repeatedly and minutely” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 131). “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matt. 3:1-2). This, too, was the early message of Christ (Matt 4:17; cf. Rom. 15:8), and of His disciples (Matt 10:6-7). The message announced what was then a new project, anticipated indeed by the whole nation, but without precedent in previous times. It called for the long foretold repentance which the nation will yet experience (cf. Deut. 4:29-30; 30:1-3, Isa. 61:2-3; Hos. 3:4-5; 14:7; Zech. 12:10-13:1; Mal. 3:7; Matt 24:30)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:294). “In calling the nation to repentance, then, John was functioning as an Old Testament prophet” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 196). “‘The kingdom of heaven is near’ (Matt. 3:2). ‘Near’ meant that the only thing preventing the institution of the kingdom announced by John was the repentance of the nation” (*ibid.*). “Ryrie [in *Basic Theology*, pp. 459-460] first gives the example of the preaching of John the Baptist. He simply proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven is at hand without trying to explain the nature of the kingdom. If the nature was to be different from the common Jewish expectation, then certainly John should have made that plain. John simply expected his audience to know

what he meant by the kingdom of heaven and, from the Old Testament, they did. All John emphasized was ‘repentance and not on describing the kingdom’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 348). “The common understanding that ‘all Israel has a share in the age to come’ was an incorrect one and so both John and Jesus proclaimed that the need to repent for righteousness was the means of entering the kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 615).

It is our belief that *John the Baptist was not mistaken, but rather that he had a correct conception of the Kingdom.* “John the Baptist was not ignorant of the Kingdom that he preached. The prevailing view, indorsed by a multitude of eminent theologians, is that John was ignorant of, i.e., did not understand the nature of, the Kingdom he proclaimed. Numerous works proceed to tell us how ‘low’ and ‘carnal’ John’s ideas were, without perceiving the fatal flaw introduced; without realizing that they are actually sapping the very foundations of inspiration, and giving to infidelity its strongest weapons against the divine origin of Christianity” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:256). “Any theory of the Kingdom which makes the first great preacher of the Kingdom—a preacher specially prepared, sent, and inspired—ignorant of the leading subject that he was delegated, specifically commissioned to announce, is not only open to the gravest suspicion, but ought to be rejected as unworthy of God” (*ibid.*). “What was John’s conception of the Messiah’s Kingdom? Let those who consider John to be mistaken inform us, and let the reader judge for himself whether it is not the very idea of the Kingdom embraced in the grammatical sense of the prophets, and in a restored Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom. Thus e.g. Neander (*Life of Christ*, ch. 2, s. 40) truthfully admits that ‘he expects this Kingdom to be visible,’ ‘existing in communion with the divine life, with the Messiah as its visible King; so that, what had not been the case before, the idea of the Theocracy and its manifestation should precisely correspond to each other,’ and ‘his expectations of a visible realization of the Theocracy shows him as yet upon Old Test. ground.’ That is, John expected the restoration of the Theocracy in an exalted manner under the Messiah, just as the prophets plainly predicted. Was he mistaken in this conception? Many say that he was, simply because such a conception was not realized at the First Advent, and down to the present day no such Kingdom has existed, and, therefore, take it for granted, that he misapprehended the nature of the Kingdom; that the church must be the Kingdom intended; that the prophecies pertaining to the restored Theocracy must be spiritualized to suit the present church, etc., thus overlooking the fact, clearly given, that for certain reasons (which will hereafter be given in detail) the very Kingdom preached and anticipated by John was postponed. Instead of allowing God’s Word to speak, and having

faith in it that it will yet be fulfilled as written, this lack of faith, based on a supposed never to be realized fulfillment, is made the measure of John's preaching and of God's Divine Purpose. Is it wise or prudent" (*ibid.*)? "If John is specially called to preach this Kingdom, and yet labors under delusion, gross error respecting its nature, we ask, Whom, then, can we trust? Let the reader ponder these facts: that this John was consecrated to the ministerial office from the womb (Luke 1:15); that for this purpose he was brought forth beyond the ordinary course of nature (Luke 1:18); that he was under such Divine guidance as (Luke 1:15, etc.) to be 'filled with the Holy Ghost'; constituted 'the prophet of the Highest'; 'to give knowledge of salvation'; and (John 1:7) to be 'a witness of the light';—and then is it credible, even supposable, that such a Prophet and Witness, thus filled with the Spirit, should grossly blunder in declaring the leading subject of his preaching, the Kingdom of heaven? Yet such is the opinion of multitudes, learned and unlearned, while infidels laugh and sneer at this practically acknowledged lowering of a divinely commissioned preacher of the Kingdom. Surely, if this is so, viz., that he misapprehended the Kingdom, then upon what does his credibility as a prophet depend? If mistaken in the most vital part of his mission, why was he not in error concerning the rest? Now, against all such dishonoring theories, we take the ground, sustained both by Scripture and the Primitive Church view, that he was not mistaken in his preaching; that he knew full well what Kingdom he was to tender to the Jewish nation, far better than the multitude which denies its correctness; and that if such a Kingdom, as he believed in and proclaimed, was not realized, we must allow the Scriptures themselves to assign the reasons for such a delay" (*ibid.*, p. 257). "Fairness to John requires that we should accept of his preaching until it is proven to be erroneous" (*ibid.*). "John the Baptist, who proclaimed the kingdom of heaven at hand, knew nothing of the mystery form of that kingdom, for it was not revealed by our Lord Jesus until after the death of John" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 269). "John, in prison, inquires, 'Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?' (Matt. 11:3). This may have been no more than an inquiry why that which he himself had been sent to announce did not materialize" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:293). "'The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire' ([Matt. 3] v. 10). This was entirely consistent with the Old Testament revelation that the Messiah would come as a Judge and remove sinners from His kingdom" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 197).

The Kingdom was announced by *Jesus' baptism*. "This baptism was designed to indicate that the person receiving it was prepared or qualified for

the Kingdom, yielding himself to the supreme will of God, hence David's Son could properly receive it" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:264).

The Kingdom was announced by *Jesus*. We'll cover Jesus' announcement of the Kingdom below, in our section *The Kingdom was Announced and Offered*.

The Kingdom was announced by *others*. It was announced by *two blind men*, "And as **Jesus** passed on from there, **two blind men followed Him, crying out, and saying**, 'Have mercy on us, **Son of David!**'" (Matt. 9:27) by *a blind beggar*, "And they came to Jericho. And as He was going out from Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, '**Jesus, Son of David**, have mercy on me!' And many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, '**Son of David**, have mercy on me!'" (Mark 10:46-48) "And he [the blind man] called out, saying, '**Jesus, Son of David**, have mercy on me!' And those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, '**Son of David**, have mercy on me'" (Luke 18:38-39)! by *Philip and Nathanael*, "The next day He purposed to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, 'Follow Me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. **Philip** found Nathanael and **said** to him, '**We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote**, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' And Nathanael said to him, 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, 'Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!' Nathanael said to Him, 'How do You know me?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.' **Nathanael answered Him**, 'Rabbi, You are the Son of God; **You are the King of Israel.**' **Jesus answered** and said to him, 'Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do **you believe?** You shall see greater things than these'" (John 1:43-50). by *Peter*, "He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said, '**Thou art the Christ**, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven'" (Matt. 16:15-17). "When Peter, therefore, made this confession he believed as fundamental to it, that 'the Christ' was the kingly title of Jesus, that which indicated Him as 'the anointed' One, coming as the King to restore the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:441). "When we see that Peter's conceptions of 'the Christ'—as

shown to exist—were approved by Jesus Himself, who shall dare to decry them as ‘ignorant’ and ‘antiquated’” (*ibid.*). (See also our discussion of the title “Christ” in the section *Titles of the King* in our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.) by *those who wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him king*, “Jesus therefore perceiving that **they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king**, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone” (John 6:15). by *another two blind men*, “And as they were going out from Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. And behold, **two blind men** sitting by the road, hearing that **Jesus** was passing by, **cried out, saying, ‘Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!’** And the multitude sternly told them to be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, **‘Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David’**” (Matt. 20:29-31)! and by *children in the temple*. “But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the **children who were crying out in the temple and saying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David,’** they became indignant” (Matt. 21:15)

The Kingdom was announced by *Jesus’ transfiguration*. “Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they **see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.**’ And **six days later** Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And **He was transfigured** before them; and **His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.** And behold, **Moses and Elijah appeared** to them, talking with Him” (Matt. 16:28–17:3). “The disciples saw Jesus, but not as ‘the Coming One’ in His Kingdom; they only saw Him in His state of humiliation; but the former is a reality as well as the latter, and the confession of the former having been elicited, Jesus now graciously proceeds to verify the former, so that hereafter, when withdrawn for a time, the apostles may proclaim the glorious truth that He is indeed ‘The Christ’— ‘The King of Israel.’... The trial of the nation being ended by the death of John the Baptist, and by the conspiracy against the life of Jesus, and now the trial of the Son of man and that of His devoted followers coming on, in this extremity something extraordinary—something out of the usual course of events—is needed to indicate the truth which the approaching death seems to crush, and that need is supplied in the wonderful transfiguration” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:557). “It was a temporary display, an outward manifestation or revealing of the majesty and glory that belongs to Jesus when He comes at the Second Advent in His Kingdom with His saints to reign over the nations” (*ibid.*, p. 560). “...the saints, glorified... at His Second Advent these are made up of two parties, viz., the dead saints and the

living saints translated, these two, Moses and Elias, are purposely chosen as a correct exhibition of the two parties—forming one class—who shall then appear ‘in glory’ with Christ” (*ibid.*). “Moses... for aught we know, he may have had a resurrection body... Kurtz (*His. Old Cov.*, vol. 3, p. 495), when answering the question, ‘Why should Jehovah Himself bury Moses?’ says: ‘It is true that Moses was not saved from death in the same manner as Enoch and Elijah; he really died and his body was really buried—this is expressly stated in the Bible history—but we may assume, with the greatest probability, that, like them, he was saved from corruption... A resurrection similar to Christ’s, without seeing corruption, would suit this typical character” (*ibid.*, p. 562). “Moses had been resurrected, and Elijah had never died, and the Transfiguration scene is a foreview of the condition of the dead after the FIRST RESURRECTION, when those who are with Christ shall return to the region of the air to reign with Christ over the earth” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 102). “Why did Michael the Archangel contend with the Devil over the ‘body’ of Moses, if Moses had no further need of it? Did not he and Elijah have use for their bodies when they appeared on the Mt. of Transfiguration with Jesus? And if they were ‘the’ two men that stood by in ‘white apparel’ when Jesus ascended (Acts 1:9-11), and are to be the ‘Two Witnesses’ of Rev. 11:3-6, we see, that as they are the ‘type’ of the Resurrected and Translated saints, that the Saints at the Rapture will have ‘bodies’ like Moses and Elijah now have” (*ibid.*, p. 107).

And, the Kingdom was announced and foreshadowed by *Jesus’ miracles*. “After these things **Jesus** went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). And **a great multitude was following Him**, because they were seeing the signs which He was performing on those who were sick... So the men sat down, in number **about five thousand**. **Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted**. And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, ‘Gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost.’ And so they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten. When therefore **the people** saw the sign which He had performed, they said, ‘This is of a truth the Prophet who is to come into the world.’ **Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone**” (John 6:1–15). “The fact that after the miracle of the ‘Loaves and Fishes’ the multitude was desirous to take Jesus by force and make Him a KING (John 6:15), reveals what they understood by the

preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven being AT HAND. That Jesus prevented their doing so by escaping to a mountain is no evidence that He repudiated the idea of Kingship over a visible earthly Kingdom, but that to have received the Kingdom from them would have been wrong, for He is to receive the Kingdom from the FATHER, and not from men. Dan. 7:13-14” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 86). “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14). “Indeed there is scarcely a feature of this kingdom foretold which is to be formed by the special work of the Divine, that is not also confirmed to us by some glimpses of the Power that shall bring them forth” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:90). “The miracles, therefore, are not types of something else, but signs, real earnest, inchoate foretastes, of something in the same line, greater, in the future” (*ibid.*, p. 91). “Designed as the miracles (wrought by some, perhaps all) were to foreshadow the power to be experienced in the Kingdom itself, they were also, at the same time, a witness to the veracity of the preachers themselves” (*ibid.*, p. 276). “Jesus... His ‘works’ and ‘signs’ evidenced His ability to verify Covenant and prophecy” (*ibid.*, 2:152). “The works they were to perform were ‘Kingdom SIGNS,’ and had no reference to the salvation of the soul” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 86). “...the patent but sometimes overlooked fact that what is termed miracle in the New Testament is essentially a phenomenon which always occurs in the *physical* area of the world” (McClain, *GK*, p. 298). “If the Kingdom announced by the Lord was thus narrowly spiritual, why all these physical miracles so great in both kind and number during the ministry of Christ on earth? But, on the other hand, if such miracles properly belong to a spiritual kingdom, allegedly established at His first coming, why then are they not present today? They are not less needed than nineteen centuries ago” (*ibid.*, p. 302). “The miracles were not performed to attract attention, to create interest, or to draw a crowd (although they did all those things). They were performed first of all to authenticate His person. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and His miracles gave proof to that claim. In addition they proved the genuineness of His offer of Himself as Israel’s Messiah/King and of His offer of the covenanted kingdom” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 207). “The miracles reveal the conditions that will prevail in His kingdom when He reigns. It will be a kingdom in which there is no sickness, no hunger, no sin [eventually—*ed.*], no death [eventually—*ed.*]. All creation

will be under His control. These same conditions were predicted by the prophets in their descriptions of the messianic kingdom” (*ibid.*). “In brief, Christ did not ask the nation to accept Him on His Word alone, but authenticated that word by a multitude of signs. The nation was responsible then to make a response to that authenticated offer” (*ibid.*). “Jesus validated His offer of Himself as the Messiah by the miracles which He performed” (*ibid.*, p. 214). “...through His miracles He had given Israel a foretaste of the miraculous powers by which the Messiah would usher in the theocratic kingdom” (Showers, *M*, p. 237). “...all the miracles in His life being in the physical world” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:479) (See also our description of the miraculous nature of the Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom.*)

The Kingdom is Announced and Offered

The Kingdom was not only *announced*; it was also *offered to Israel*.

The Kingdom was announced and offered by *Jesus*. “The third example is the preaching of Jesus Himself. Like John the Baptist, He simply proclaimed the kingdom to be *at hand* without describing it or correcting a supposed Jewish misunderstanding of the nature of the kingdom. He obviously expected His Jewish audience to know what He was talking about, and they did. It is true that ‘as His message continued to be rejected by the people, and especially by their leaders,’ Jesus then introduced a new facet of God’s kingdom program, the Mystery Kingdom, describing ‘what form the kingdom would take between the first and second advents of Christ.’ However, this does not validate the claim of so many Covenant Theologians that this new facet of the kingdom program replaces the Davidic Kingdom or that ‘the Davidic kingdom would take a new form with the church fulfilling the promise made to David.’ This is evident from the fact that Christ ‘continued to speak of the Davidic kingdom to the end of his earthly life.’ Even after the resurrection, in answer to the Apostles’ question about restoring the kingdom to Israel, Jesus ‘did not tell them that the kingdom had been changed to the church.’ He simply told them that the timing of that restoration is not for them to know. The introduction of the Mystery Kingdom in the present age did ‘not change or abrogate the promises of the Davidic Covenant concerning the future, earthly kingdom.’ Ryrie’s conclusion is: ‘the teaching of the New Testament confirms the Davidic Covenant’” [quoting from Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, pp. 459-460] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 348).

The Kingdom was announced and offered both by Jesus’ Person and by His preaching.

The Kingdom was announced and offered *by Jesus’ Person*:

Jesus came, not to write theology, but to fulfill Scripture. “Do not think that **I came** to abolish **the Law or the Prophets**; I did not come to abolish, but **to fulfill**” (Matt. 5:17). “He is not come to write, but to fulfill that which is written; hence a systematic arrangement of Divinity, a Theological system or summary of Doctrine, would have been out of place... Christ honors the prophetic record, honors the oath-confirmed covenant, and, by the fulfillment of His own birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, words respecting the Jewish nation, Gentiles, Church etc., reconfirms in the most powerful manner—ininitely superior to mere writing—the testimony concerning Himself and the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:272). “Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets” (*ibid.*, p. 362)

The Kingdom was offered to Israel in the Person of Jesus. “Toussaint [in Toussaint and Dyer, *Pentecost Essays*, p. 22] has stated the dispensational viewpoint quite well: ‘Very often the dispensationalist school of interpretation will refer to “the offer of the kingdom” to Israel. By this is meant the contingency of the coming of the kingdom to Israel in the first century based on Israel’s acceptance of Jesus as its Messiah. This concept is clearly found in the New Testament. For instance, Peter openly states the coming of the Messiah rests on Israel’s repentance (Acts 3:19-21). The Lord Himself said that John the Baptist could have been the fulfillment of the Elijah prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6 if Israel had repented (Matt. 11:14)... However, dispensationalists may want to clarify their terminology. The New Testament does teach the contingency of the coming of the kingdom premised on the response of the Jews. But every Israelite wanted the kingdom to come. To say Christ offered the kingdom to Israel is true, but it leaves the impression the Jews did not want the kingdom to come. It would be far better to say Jesus offered Himself as Israel’s Messiah and the coming of the kingdom was contingent on their acceptance or rejection of Him’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 615). “The long-awaited messianic kingdom promised to David has arrived in the person of Jesus. It was ‘at hand’ (‘near’); all Israel needed to do was repent of their sins and accept their Messiah-King ([Matt. 3] v. 2)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:482).

Jesus presented Himself as King of Israel to Jerusalem. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of **Zion**; shout, O daughter of **Jerusalem**: behold, **thy king cometh unto thee**; he is just, and having salvation; **lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass**” (Zech. 9:9). “And **when they had approached Jerusalem** and had come to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find **a donkey** tied there and a colt with her; untie them, and bring them to Me.

And if anyone says something to you, you shall say, “The Lord has need of them,” and immediately he will send them.’ Now **this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, “BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.”’** And **the disciples** went and did just as Jesus had directed them, and **brought the donkey and the colt**, and laid on them their garments, **on which He sat**. And most of the multitude spread their garments in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees, and spreading them in the road. And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, **‘Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!’** And when **He had entered Jerusalem**, all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ And the multitudes were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee’” (Matt. 21:1–11). “And **as they approached Jerusalem**, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, and said to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find **a colt** tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. And if anyone says to you, “Why are you doing this?” you say, “The Lord has need of it”; and immediately he will send it back here.’ And they went away and found a colt tied at the door outside in the street; and they untied it. And some of the bystanders were saying to them, ‘What are you doing, untying the colt?’ And they spoke to them just as Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission. And they brought the colt to **Jesus** and put their garments on it; and **He sat upon it**. And many spread their garments in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And those who went before, and those who followed after, were crying out, ‘Hosanna! **Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest**’” (Mark 11:1–10)! “And **as He was now approaching**, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, saying, ‘**Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest**’” (Luke 19:37–38)! “On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that **Jesus was coming to Jerusalem**, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, ‘**Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King**

of Israel.' And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, 'Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt'" (John 12:12-15). "The entry into Jerusalem by which as many admit 'the Saviour appears to have awakened and nourished those earthly Messianic hopes' (Olahausen, *Com.*, vol. 2, p. 142) is only reconcilable with our view of this Coming and Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:195). "That Jesus did not deny His Kingship of an outward and visible earthly Kingdom is clear from the fact that He accepted the 'Hosannahs' of the multitude when he rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy of Zech. 9:9. John 12:12-15" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 86). "If Christ did not mean to set up an earthly kingdom, then his triumphal entry into Jerusalem is inexplicable" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 256). "Now, while the civil and religious leaders of Israel had already made known their rejection of His claims, and in terms which could not be misunderstood (Matt. 12:24; Mark 3:22), there had been as yet no official decision on the part of the nation. And to secure such a decision, our Lord now sets His face toward Jerusalem, there to make the official offer" (McClain, *GK*, p. 344). "The triumphal entry, celebrated by Christendom for the most part with little understanding of its relation to the history of the Kingdom of God, was an event of tremendous import" (*ibid.*, p. 346). "There is deep significance in the very language with which the multitude expressed their joy. As reported by the four gospel writers, they cried, 'Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest' (Matt. 21:9). 'Blessed be the Kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord' (Mark 11:10). 'Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest' (Luke 19:38). 'Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord' (John 12:13). All these joyous cries, it is evident, arose out of the 118th Psalm which was recognized by the ancient Jewish Rabbins and early Christian writers as one of the greatest of all the Messianic Psalms" (*ibid.*, p. 348). "**The stone which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner.** This is Jehovah's doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. **This is the day which Jehovah hath made;** We will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, we beseech thee, O Jehovah: O Jehovah, we beseech thee, send now prosperity. **Blessed be he that cometh in the name of Jehovah:** We have blessed you out of the house of Jehovah" (Ps. 118:22-26). "'Master, rebuke thy disciples' (Luke 19:39). By the commentators in general, almost no attention has been given to the implications of this Pharisaic protest... They must have known that upon former occasions our Lord had strictly enjoined silence upon His disciples with reference to

public acclamation of His regal claims (Matt. 16:20; Luke 9:21)... But now, as He rides into the city, they hear the shouts of the people acclaiming Him openly as the ‘King of Israel’; and they must have wondered that there was no rebuke from the lips of Jesus as previously” (McClain, *GK*, p. 349). “Thousands of Jews cried, Hosanna, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord, which in its Jewish frame of reference is an official messianic greeting, based upon the messianic context of Psalm 118:26” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 301). “When Jesus was heralded at His triumphal entry, the Jerusalem crowd shouted, ‘Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!’ and ‘Hosanna in the highest!’ (Mark 11:10) and ‘Hosanna to the Son of David’ (Matt. 21:9). They were expecting the start of the promised messianic kingdom” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:467).

And, the Kingdom was announced and offered *by Jesus’ preaching*:

Again, Jesus preached *only to Israel*. “But He answered and said, **‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel’**” (Matt. 15:24). “And from there He arose and went away to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know of it; yet He could not escape notice. But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, immediately came and fell at His feet. Now **the woman was a Gentile**, of the Syrophenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And **He was saying to her, ‘Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.’** But she answered and said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs.’ And He said to her, ‘Because of this answer go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.’ And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having departed” (Mark 7:24-30).

And, as to the *content* of His preaching, Jesus preached *the Kingdom*:

He preached *the same Kingdom message that John the Baptist had preached*. “**From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’**” (Matt. 4:17). “**And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel’**” (Mark 1:14–15). “**And it came about soon afterwards, that He began going about from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with Him**” (Luke 8:1) “When John’s ministry ended by his imprisonment, it is said (Matt. 4:17): ‘From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ (Comp. Mark 1:14, 15, Luke 4:23, and

8:1.)... Jesus preached the Kingdom of God in the same manner that John the Baptist did” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:266).

He preached, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*” and that “*the time is fulfilled.*” “From that time **Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’**” (Matt. 4:17) “And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, **‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel’**” (Mark 1:14-15). “‘the time is fulfilled.’... In this, as numerous writers have noticed, there is an evident allusion to the seventy weeks of Daniel (ch. 9:20-27)” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 390).

He preached *the gospel of the Kingdom*. “And **Jesus was going about in all Galilee**, teaching in their synagogues, and **proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people” (Matt. 4:23). “And **Jesus was** going about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and **proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness” (Matt. 9:35).

He preached *the Kingdom of God*. “But He said to them, **‘I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose’**” (Luke 4:43). “But **the multitudes** were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, **He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God** and curing those who had need of healing” (Luke 9:11).

He preached that *the Kingdom of God was in their midst*. “nor will they say, “Look, here it is!” or, “There it is!” For behold, **the kingdom of God is in your midst**” (Luke 17:21). “The kingdom was offered in the person of the king. The Lord’s statement is: ‘Behold, the kingdom of God is within you’ (Luke 17:21). The Lord is not asserting that His kingdom was to be a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men. Such is contrary to the entire tenor of the Word of God. He is asserting that the kingdom to which they were looking was already ‘at hand’ in the person of the king. The rightful king was present and all that was required was repentance on the part of the nation and a reception of Christ as the theocratic Messiah” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 452). “As to the personal presence of its *King*, the Kingdom was actually ‘in the midst’ of men... The King James rendering, by ‘*within*,’ cannot be true; for surely in no sense could the Kingdom of God have been ‘within’ the hearts of the Pharisees to whom our Lord was speaking, and who had charged blasphemously that His miracles were being accomplished through the power of the devil (Matt. 12:24). But in the Person of its divinely ap-

pointed King, visibly present in incarnate form on earth where He must eventually reign, the Kingdom was in that sense already ‘in the midst of men regardless of their attitude, whether for or against Him... That Christ so regarded the historical situation is strongly supported by His words to the disciples which immediately follow: ‘The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it’ (Luke 17:22)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 272). “The Greek adverb *entos* may be translated either ‘within’ or ‘among’ in the sense of ‘in the midst of.’ But the context of Luke 17:21 is decisively against ‘within.’ As Dean Alford has said, ‘The misunderstanding which rendered these words “*within you*” meaning this in a spiritual sense, “*in your hearts*,” should have been prevented by reflecting that they are addressed to the *Pharisees*, in whose hearts it [the Kingdom] certainly *was not*’ (*New Testament for English Readers* on Luke 17:21). With this opinion H.A.W. Meyer agrees, adding that the entire idea of a kingdom existing in the heart or soul of man is ‘*modern*, not *historico-biblical*’ (*Commentary on the New Testament*, Luke 17:21)” (*ibid.*).

He preached that *He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets*. “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or **the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill**. For truly I say to you, **until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished**” (Matt. 5:17-18). “Jesus and the apostles constantly appeal to this: that the Scriptures testified concerning Him, and that their testimony was true, being verified. Precisely so with this Kingdom; for it is the great theme of the prophets, and we can only know that it has really come when the predictions relating to it are realized” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:163). “Christ Himself never hesitated to measure His life and mission by the Old Testament (John 5). Why should the kingdom be different” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 275)? “The very fact that Messiah came to fulfill those covenants proves that Israel’s disobedience had not disqualified them or nullified their place in the plan of God” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 191). “In affirming the precise identification of Christ’s announced Kingdom with that predicted in the Prophets, it should be explained that, while our Lord always follows closely the Old Testament prophetic pattern, there is never any mere slavish repetition of words, phrases, and texts. Rather He unfolds and interprets the utterances of the prophets, so that meanings become deeper and richer. ‘In His doctrine of the righteousness of the kingdom, Jesus declares that He is not introducing anything absolutely new, but only unfolding the deepest spirit and teaching of law and the prophets’” [quoting Ernest F. Scott, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 186] (McClain, *GK*, p. 303). “Jesus

never intimated that His kingdom was any different than what the Old Testament presented” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:478)

He taught that *Jerusalem is the city of the great king*. “Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, “You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.” But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by **Jerusalem**, for **it is the city of the great King**” (Matt. 5:33-35). “Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, **Is mount Zion**, on the sides of the north, **The city of the great King**” (Ps. 48:2).

He taught His followers to *pray for the Kingdom to come*. “**Pray, then, in this way:** “Our **Father** who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.** Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors”” (Matt. 6:9-12). “And He said to them, ‘**When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come”**” (Luke 11:2). “‘Thy Kingdom come’ cannot be prayed for by those who already possess it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:643). “The prayer is given, without explanation, in view of a well-known covenanted Kingdom, generally anticipated” (*ibid.*). “Jesus, in teaching His disciples to pray for a future, coming Kingdom, undoubtedly taught them to pray for the same Kingdom covenanted, predicted, and which they preached” (*ibid.*, p. 689). “They prayed for the Theocratic Kingdom to come” (*ibid.*). “The ‘will’ of God respecting the earth is easily read if we but direct the eye of faith either to the past or to the future, as given in the Word; in the past it is reflected before the fall, and in the future, it shines forth in the renewed earth” (*ibid.*, p. 690). “Barnes... says... the Rabbins declared, “That prayer in which there is no mention made of the Kingdom of heaven is not a prayer”” (*ibid.*, p. 691). “Tertullian (*De Oratione*) makes this prayer to be one for the coming of the Kingdom at the Advent still future, and thus urges this petition to be used: ‘Wherefore, if the appearing of God’s Kingdom belongs to the will of God and to our earnest expectation, how can some pray for a lengthening out of the age, when the Kingdom of God, for which we pray that it may come, tends to the consummation of the age? We wish to reign earlier, and not to serve longer. Even if it were not prescribed in the prayer, about praying for the coming of the Kingdom, we should, of our own accord, offer that petition, hastening to the fruition of our hope... Yes, Lord, let Thy Kingdom come with the utmost speed! The wish of Christians, the confusion of the heathen, the joy of angels, for which we struggle; yea, more, for which we pray’” (*ibid.*). “...denoting as it does” a well-defined (“Thy”) Kingdom, which

the Father has promised most solemnly under oath, and which David's Son receives from the Ancient of Days at the allotted period" (*ibid.*, p. 695) "Take the 'Lord's Prayer,' (Matt. 6:9-13), which is a part of the 'Sermon on the Mount.' It asks that— 'The Kingdom' may come, not that the 'Church' may increase and prosper. There is no petition for 'Salvation from sin' in it. It asks that 'God's will may be done in earth, as it is done in heaven.' It is a prayer for those who shall be living in the 'Tribulation Period' who in their persecutions will long for the return of the King, that the Kingdom may be set up, and God's will be done, as it will be done then, on earth as it is done in Heaven. At that time the 'Beast' (Antichrist) will be in power and no one shall be able to 'buy' or 'sell' except he that hath the 'Mark of the Beast,' and this explains the petition—'Give us this day our DAILY BREAD,' for unless food is supplied miraculously they will perish. And it will be a time when they shall particularly need to be delivered, not from evil, but the EVIL ONE—Satan, who will tempt them to recant and worship the Beast" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 87). "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' It is probable that of the many who repeat these words but few have pondered their far-reaching significance. Not every mind can grasp so vast a theme" (Chafer, *ST*, 5:108). "This Universal Kingdom is not exactly identical with that Kingdom for which our Lord taught His disciples to pray... In its universal and providential sense, the Kingdom of God had already come, and the will of God was being done, in every place including even the earth" (McClain, *GK*, p. 34). "On the basis of mediatorial redemption it must 'come' to put down at last all rebellion with its train of evil results, thus finally bringing the Kingdom and will of God *on* earth as it is in heaven. When this purpose has been fully accomplished, the mediatorial phase of the Kingdom will disappear as a separate entity, being merged with the Universal Kingdom of God" (*ibid.*, p. 35). "Those who pray intelligently, 'Thy kingdom come,' are those who will also speak a great deal about its future glories and benefits" (*ibid.*, p. 426).

He taught His followers to *seek first the Kingdom*. "But **seek first His kingdom** and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33). "But **seek for His kingdom**, and these things shall be added to you" (Luke 12:31).

He taught that *one must be born spiritually to enter the Kingdom*. "Jesus answered and said to him [Nicodemus], **Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?' Jesus answered, **Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water**

and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:3-5). “Jesus answered and said to him, **“Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things”** (John 3:10)? “When Nicodemus is perplexed about the way of entrance into the Kingdom, the reply of Jesus is not a definition but a rebuke: ‘Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?’ (John 3:10, ASV). This rebuke makes no sense at all apart from the assumption that the Kingdom announced by our Lord was in all respects the Kingdom of Old Testament Prophecy; and consequently Nicodemus, by virtue of his position as an authorized teacher in Israel, could properly be held fully responsible for understanding exactly the nature and various aspects of that Kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 277).

He taught that *Gentiles will participate in the Kingdom*. “And when He had entered Capernaum, **a centurion** came to Him, entreating Him, and saying, ‘Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering great pain.’ And He said to him, ‘I will come and heal him.’ But the centurion answered and said, ‘Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For *I*, too, am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, “Go!” and he goes, and to another, “Come!” and he comes, and to my slave, “Do this!” and he does it.’ Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled, and said to those who were following, “Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in **Israel**. And I say to you, that **many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness;** in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ And Jesus said to the centurion, ‘Go your way; let it be done to you as you have believed.’ And the servant was healed that very hour” (Matt. 8:5-13). We’ll discuss Gentile participation in the Kingdom in our chapters *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom*.

He taught that *a nobleman would travel far away to secure a Kingdom, then return*. “**And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, ‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return’**” (Luke 19:11-12) We’ll discuss this parable in detail in our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*.

He taught that *“this generation” would not pass away until all things take place*. “Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has

already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; even so you too, **when you see all these things**, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, **this generation will not pass away until all these things take place**” (Matt. 24:32–34). “Truly I say to you, **this generation will not pass away until all things take place**” (Luke 21:32). “[Many (i.e. preterists—*ed.*) claim that Matt. 24 was fulfilled in the first century] ...Because Christ ‘fixed the date of the events He referred to within that generation.’ But this is limiting the meaning of the word, and it is setting aside a vast array of scriptural testimony on the strength of a misconception of one passage. This is the slight foundation upon which a wonderful array of spiritualizing is then erected. Alas” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:164)! This writer suggests that “this generation” is the Tribulation generation, which will “see all these things” (Matt. 24:21, 32–34). We’ll have much more to say regarding the Tribulation period in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.

He taught that *in the regeneration, His disciples will sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel*. “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that **you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**’” (Matt. 19:28). “Christ talked about ‘the regeneration’ of the future (Mt. 19:28)... the word translated ‘regeneration’ could be translated ‘back to Genesis’ or ‘Genesis again’ and refers to a return to the original state that existed when the earth was born and is recorded in Genesis” (Showers, *M*, p. 86). “and **just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Luke 22:29–30). “If no earthly kingdom was in prospect, it seems strange also in view of the prevailing Jewish concept of an earthly kingdom that Christ should tell His disciples, ‘I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel’ (Luke 22:29–30)” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 38).

He taught that *there would be a wedding feast*. “And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to **a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast**, and they were unwilling to come. Again he sent out other slaves saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited, **Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all**

butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast”” (Matt. 22:1-4). While the wedding will be in heaven (i.e. Rev. 19), the wedding feast will be on earth, at the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. (See the *The Marriage Feast of the Lamb* section of our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

And, He confirmed that *the Christ is the son of David*. “Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, ‘What do you think about **the Christ, whose son is He?**’ They said to Him, **‘The son of David’**” (Matt. 22:41-42). “And He said to them, ‘How is it that they say **the Christ is David’s son**’” (Luke 20:41)? (See the *The Davidic Covenant* section of our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.)

The Kingdom was also announced and offered by *the twelve*. **“These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, ‘Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand””** (Matt. 10:5-7). “But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, **you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes**” (Matt. 10:23). “And it came about that when **Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples**, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities” (Matt. 11:1). “And **He appointed twelve**, that they might be with Him, and **that He might send them out to preach**” (Mark 3:14) “And **He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs**; and He was giving them authority over the unclean spirits; and He instructed them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belt; but to wear sandals; and He added, ‘Do not put on two tunics.’ And He said to them, ‘Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. And any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake off the dust from the soles of your feet for a testimony against them.’ And **they went out and preached that men should repent**. And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them” (Mark 6:7-13). “And He called **the twelve** together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases. And **He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God**, and to perform healing” (Luke 9:1-2). “...the kingdom ...its having been predicted, taught to the disciples and preached by them to the people... All this, in the nature of the case, presupposes a correct understanding of it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:142). “If the Kingdom, as multitudes maintain, was not thus known; if it is correct to as-

sert that the Jews and the disciples at first utterly misapprehended its meaning; if the announcement denoted one thing to the hearers and yet contained in itself a spiritual idea which the future was to develop—how comes it, then, that Christ could send out disciples to preach the Kingdom without previous instruction as to its real meaning; and even invite strangers (Luke 9:56, 57, 60) to ‘Go and preach the kingdom of God’” (*ibid.*, p. 182)? “‘for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.’ And **they went on to another village**. And **as they were going along the road**, someone said to Him, ‘I will follow You wherever You go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’ And He said to **another**, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Permit me first to go and bury my father.’ But **He said to him**, ‘Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, **go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God**’” (Luke 9:56-60). “The disciples sent forth by Jesus to preach this Kingdom were not ignorant of the meaning to be attached to the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 274). “Jesus instructed them, Jesus sent them, Jesus never contradicted their views of the Kingdom, Jesus approved of their preaching and rejoiced over it” (*ibid.*). “The request of the sons of Zebedee... such positions as they asked for are to be given to those by the Father, who have evidenced their fitness by humility and service... Luke 24:21 [‘But **we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel**. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened.’] teaches how these preachers understood their own message; so also Acts 1:6 [And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**’]; and Jesus, instead of telling them that they were mistaken, merely, leaving the notion of the Kingdom untouched, points to the future, the times of fulfillment being in the Father’s hands” (*ibid.*). “If Jesus did not tell the Jews and His disciples that they were in error respecting the Kingdom, and this already is presumptive evidence that they were correct in anticipating the Kingdom to be a restoration of the Davidic Kingdom, much more is this true, when He sends men, whom He knows to hold such a view, to preach it” (*ibid.*). “It is folly to suppose that we know the nature of that Kingdom better than they did, who were expressly commissioned to hold it forth as an inducement to repentance” (*ibid.*, p. 275). “It is freely admitted that there were many things that these disciples, when preaching the Kingdom, did not then know, but it was not requisite to know them for the simple reason that, before the decided postponement of the Kingdom, it was no part of their mission to preach them. Thus e.g. they did not know that the Jewish nation

would refuse to repent, that the representative men would conspire to put Jesus to death, that the Messiah would be crucified, that the Kingdom would be postponed to the Sec. Advent, that the Gentiles would be called, etc., and, more, all these things had nothing to do with their commission. They were not to preach the death of Jesus, or things then unknown to them; they were commissioned to preach the Kingdom conditioned by repentance—to offer it to the Jewish nation—and thus far they were instructed and had knowledge of the truth. This preaching of the Kingdom was necessary at that time, while a knowledge of the other things was not only unnecessary, but would have, if imparted, actually disqualified them for their important mission. This exquisite arrangement of truth in the mission of the first preachers is, to our mind, most forcible evidence of inspiration” (*ibid.*). “It is an unjust reflection upon these Jews and Jewish preachers to accuse them of ignorance, carnality, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 280) “Nast... he undertakes to correct the preachers that Jesus trained” (*ibid.*, p. 430) “He [Jesus] never had to explain the kingdom of heaven to the disciples, but He did explain at great length (Matthew 13) the meaning of the mystery parables” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 274). “It is most evident that they could not have preached a gospel based on Christ’s death and resurrection when they had no understanding of these oncoming events” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:304). “While every detail of the manner of their [the disciples’] journey was subject to the most careful instruction by the King, there is no record of their being given instruction on the meaning of this first, or kingdom, message committed to them” (*ibid.*, p. 342).

And, the Kingdom was announced and offered by *the seventy*. “Now after this **the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. And He was saying to them,** ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your ways; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. And whatever house you enter, first say, “Peace be to this house.” And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you. And stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house. And **whatever city you enter, and they receive you,** eat what is set before you; and heal those in it who are sick, and **say to them, “The kingdom of God has come near to you.” But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you,** go out into its streets and **say,** “Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet, we

wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that **the kingdom of God has come near.**" I say to you, **it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.** Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in **the judgment,** than for you" (Luke 10:1-14). "His advance upon Jerusalem, which will be circuitous, deliberate, and unhurried, possibly extending over a period of five months... 'After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come' (Luke 10:1). The ministry of the Seventy, therefore, was more narrowly limited than that of the Twelve who earlier had been sent to all 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matt. 10:6). The Seventy are sent only where the King Himself will come on the last journey to Jerusalem. Lightfoot makes the distinction as follows: 'The Twelve apostles were sent to declare the coming of the Kingdom, these (the Seventy) the coming of the King'" (McClain, *GK*, p. 344).

It is an interesting and relevant fact that *some caution was exercised in the preaching of the (political) Kingdom*, apparently so as not to stir up unnecessary trouble with the governing authorities. "The unity of agreement also accounts for so little descriptive of the Kingdom being given in detail in the New Test. It was fully known and described in the prophets; now to have entered into a detailed statement and particularized the restored Davidic Kingdom, would unnecessarily have excited the open hostility of the jealous and persecuting Roman Empire" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:260). "...conspirators against the authority of the Czesars... it was this accusation that influenced Pilate to give up Jesus to crucifixion, and led to the just superscription of the cross... the greatest prudence was exercised in this matter to avoid unnecessary persecution, and when it was finally known that the Kingdom was postponed to the Second Advent, to be introduced by the power of Jesus Christ, then, in view of the prophecies which foretold their continued existence down to the Advent, believers were taught that the existing governments were ordained or appointed of God—not that they were sacred (as claimed), but allowed as a necessary requirement, etc." (*ibid.*, p. 261). "...John doing his preaching in the wilderness—that is, east from Jerusalem in the open country, away from the large cities... large gatherings of Jews and the preaching of such a Kingdom would necessarily have excited inquiry and the pressure of Roman power. Hence (especially in view of the foreseen rejection) the utmost caution, consistent with John's mission, is observed. If the modern prevailing view of the Kingdom is the correct

one, no reason can be assigned for John's avoidance of the centres of influence, as e.g. Jerusalem" (*ibid.*). "Three things must evidently have weighed upon the mind of Jesus, and thus shaped His style of preaching the Kingdom. 1. The fact of the existence of the Roman Government over the Jewish nation, and its jealousy of power... It was the general, universal belief that when the Messiah came to establish the Kingdom, He would overthrow Gentile domination (as He will do at the Sec. Advent). 2. Knowing, as Jesus did... that the Kingdom itself would be postponed... What was needed in addition He gave to us through John (in Apoc.), and this also in a form that it might not unnecessarily excite opposition. Christ's preaching is influenced by foreknown results. 3. Foreknowing how the Kingdom would eventually, at His Sec. Advent be established, He could accordingly shape and adapt His language, introducing other matter... purposes of mercy toward the Gentiles... promises to be realized ultimately in the Kingdom... encouragements and cautions... new details, which can only be properly apprehended when taken in their connection with the whole" (*ibid.*, p. 270). "The peculiar surroundings required, in the nature of the case, great caution in proclaiming the Kingdom; and hence language was adopted toward the Jewish nation sufficiently precise and determinate for it, having the prophets to understand" (*ibid.*, p. 271). "Boyle, Whately, Rogers, and others have noticed the peculiarity of the Bible in presenting an unsystematic distribution of its contents, thus calling for comparison, study, etc. In the reasons assigned for this, they altogether overlook the fact that if a strictly logical arrangement had been made, so distinctively would this idea of the Kingdom have become that the Roman Power and other nations would have been extremely hostile to it" (*ibid.*). "Faith and hope is confirmed in the Kingdom preached by Jesus, in the assumption of Messianic Royalty, which, not discarding, was the ground of His execution. Faith and hope rejoices over the inscription: 'Jesus, the King of the Jews.' If there was nothing substantial in this Royalty, the very Royalty to which He was entitled as David's Son and Lord, why retain it down to the very last, and leave it still speaking, silently but impressively, over His dead body on the cross" (*ibid.*)? "The Apocalypse is given in symbolical language, and the apostles (as Paul in Thess.) are guarded in their expressions. After the reader has passed over our entire argument, the reader will find abundant reason why the Kingdom is mentioned in the Gospels and Epistles without entering into the specific details given by the prophets, and why the same is represented under symbolic forms in the Apocalypse. Taking into consideration the nature of the Kingdom, the restored Theocratic-Davidic throne and Kingdom, which necessarily embraces a restored Jewish nation, etc., a

more extended and detailed notice would unnecessarily (owing to this postponement) have excited the jealousy, hostility, and persecution of the Roman Empire” (*ibid.*, p. 626).

The Identity of the Kingdom Announced and Offered

So, exactly *what was this Kingdom* that was preached first by John the Baptist, then by Jesus, then by the twelve and the seventy?

It is a curious fact that the Kingdom preached was *never clearly defined by the preachers*. “Ponder the language of Jesus, and you will find no definition of the Kingdom in it, but simply a declaration and encouragement of worthiness—how attained—for the Kingdom. It only tells us who are fit for it, and who will ultimately receive it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:270). “John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Seventy, all proclaimed the kingdom in a way, without definition or explanation, that indicated that their hearers were acquainted with its meaning” (*ibid.*, p. 181). “There is no record that the messengers needed or received one moment of exposition on the meaning of the message relative to the gospel of the kingdom before they were sent forth to deliver it. It was evidently Israel’s hope” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:173). “The kingdom was the national hope and no other objective had been introduced. It was, therefore, most unlikely that some new, unannounced divine program should be the theme of this nation-wide preaching” (*ibid.*, p. 293). “But for all his repeated mention of the Kingdom of God, Jesus never once paused to define it. Nor did any hearer ever interrupt him to ask, ‘Master, what do these words, ‘Kingdom of God’, which you use so often, mean?’ On the contrary, Jesus used the term as if assured it would be understood, and indeed it was. The Kingdom of God lay within the vocabulary of every Jew. It was something they understood and longed for desperately” [quoting John Bright, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 17-18] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 447). “The absence of any formal definition of the Kingdom in its initial announcement indicates that the Jewish hearers were expected to know exactly what Kingdom was meant” (McClain, *GK*, p. 276). “In the gospel records, the announcement of the Kingdom is impressively abrupt” (*ibid.*). “When John and Jesus began preaching that the kingdom was *at hand*, they did not need to explain what they meant by that since the Jewish audience already knew from the Old Testament” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 364). “Dispensationalism strongly affirms that the kingdom Jesus offered and proclaimed as being *at hand* was the same one described by the Old Testament prophets and for that reason Jesus, or John the Baptist before Him, never needed to explain what they meant when they spoke of the kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 385). “The absence of any formal definition in its announcement assumes that

the Jewish hearers (readers of the Old Testament) were expected to know what it meant” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:478).

We contend that the Kingdom preached was *the covenanted, prophesied Jewish Kingdom*. “Look at the end contemplated, as predicted by the prophets (e.g. Zech. 14:9, etc.) [And **Jehovah shall be King over all the earth**: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one.], and given in the last testimony of Jesus (Apoc. 11:15, etc.) [And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.**’], and this is the grand position that the Kingdom of God is to attain: absolute control over all the kingdoms of the earth—such a world-wide dominion that all nations shall bend in joyful, blessed obedience to its behests. This was the Kingdom offered to the Jewish nation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:208). “We therefore hold, with the Primitive Church, until decided scriptural proof is offered to the contrary, that Jesus offered to the Jews the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom in its Civil and Religious combination, just as predicted by the prophets” (*ibid.*, p. 266). “Now, keeping in view the Jewish ideas of the Kingdom and the phrases in common usage expressive of the same, the promises pertaining to ‘the Kingdom of heaven,’ ‘the meek shall inherit the earth,’ ‘fulfilling the law and the prophets,’ ‘the least and great in the Kingdom of heaven,’ ‘Jerusalem the city of the great King,’ ‘thy Kingdom come,’ ‘the Kingdom of God’—these are all of a nature to impress the Jewish mind (as the result proves), that our Saviour alluded to the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom as covenanted to the nation. It was, under the circumstances, simply impossible for the Jews to entertain any other view” (*ibid.*, p. 364). “It can be shown that in all the preaching concerning the kingdom by John (Matt. 3:2), by Christ (Matt. 4:17), by the twelve (Matt. 10:5-7), by the seventy (Lk 10:1-12), not once is the kingdom offered to Israel anything but an earthly literal kingdom” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 109). “...the gospel records... no essential element of the Old Testament prophetic picture is missing” (McClain, *GK*, p. 286). “Most Dispensationalists (but not all) believe that Jesus did offer the Davidic or messianic or earthly kingdom to Israel. When Israel rejected the offer, the kingdom offer was rescinded (some Dispensationalists use the term ‘postponed’) for that generation of Israel to be reoffered to a later Jewish generation that will accept it, the Jewish generation of the Great Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 266). “...it was the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom that was offered to Israel...” (*ibid.*, p. 268)

It is revealing that *the Kingdom message preached by John the Baptist, Jesus and Jesus’ disciples stirred up no controversy with the Jews.*

“The unity of belief in the same restored Kingdom is evidenced by John’s preaching of the Kingdom raising up no disputation concerning it. Had he preached the modern view, it would inevitably have excited disputes and appeals to the prophets” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:260). “The preaching of the Kingdom, being in accordance with that of the predicted Kingdom, raised no controversy between the Jews and Jesus, or between the Jews and His disciples and apostles. We find no hint, not the slightest, that there was the least disagreement between the preachers of the kingdom and their hearers on the subject of the kingdom itself” (*ibid.*, p. 280). “Neither in the New Test. nor in any of the Patristic writings, do we find the least hint given that the doctrine of the Kingdom excited any controversy with the Jews; which it undoubtedly would have done if antagonistic to the Jewish view” (*ibid.*, p. 467). “Jews, indoctrinated into the covenants, were the first converts, and, with their faith, it would have been utterly impracticable to have influenced them to receive Jesus as ‘the Messiah,’ unless it was understood that these covenants were at some time in the future to be realized through Him” (*ibid.*). “Consider (1) how large numbers of the Jews were converted to Christianity, accepting of Jesus as ‘the Messiah,’ because of the fact that they were led to believe (a) that at the Sec. Advent the glorious predicted Messianic Kingdom would be established” (*ibid.*) “The early Jews, instead of accusing Christians of rejecting such a Kingdom, charged the primitive believers with entertaining such a view, and sought to bring them, on account of the same, into difficulties with the Roman Emperors” (*ibid.*, p. 468). “It is to be noted in all this controversy that there is just one essential question before the nation, ‘Is not this the son of David?’ ([Matt.] 12:23)” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 459)

And, it is a noteworthy fact that *the prevailing Jewish conception of the Kingdom* (see our previous chapter *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*) *was never “corrected” by John the Baptist, Jesus or the apostles.* “It is noticeable, that in all the rebukes given to the Jews by John the Baptist, by Jesus and the apostles, not one refers to their belief and expectations concerning the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:184). “A whole nation under a mistake respecting the Messiah’s Kingdom which the Apostles were specially commissioned to preach; and yet an error so fundamental is not directly corrected, but must be inferred or implied! Is it reasonable or credible? The truth is, that no such repudiation of error was needed” (*ibid.*, p. 641). “...the assurance is given that, strange and astonishing as it may seem to the world, He will do it... Hence Jesus, never in word or act, discounted in His followers His connection with David’s throne and Kingdom, and the necessary restoration of the nation” (*ibid.*, 2:77). “But it appears

never to have occurred to those who find fault with the disciples in their view of the kingdom, that Christ never once corrected the Jews for their belief in an earthly kingdom” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 133). “Our Lord never intimated that His conception of the Kingdom differed in any respect or degree from that presented by the Old Testament prophets” (McClain, *GK*, p. 277). “Instead of acquiescing in the errors of His contemporaries, Christ never hesitated to rebuke and correct them” (*ibid.*, p. 278). “If the amillennial viewpoint as held in modern times is correct, it would have called for extensive correction of the prevailing idea among the Jews that an earthly kingdom was their Messianic prospect” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 38). “The teaching of Christ never refutes the common expectation of the Jews and the apostles for literal fulfillment of the promises of an earthly kingdom for Israel, but rather confirms it” (*ibid.*, p. 187).

This Kingdom message was *not an accommodation to the Jews*. “It would, if the Jews were in error on so fundamental a point, be simply cruel to adopt their expressive language and thus confirm them in an alleged blunder, a vital mistake” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:196). “...an accommodation, on the ground that the Jews were not prepared for the real truth. For, receive this, and then it logically follows: (1) John, Jesus, and the disciples must have taught error, so far, at least, as the outward form and the Jews were concerned; how else, unless in their usual acceptance, could the Jews understand their words? (2) If the Jews misunderstood them, how could they be held accountable for it, when thus tempted to a misapprehension by the ambiguous use of current language? (3) The pure character of Jesus is presented to us in an invidious and disreputable light. So long as the theory is advanced, so long a dark flaw appears, and all the apologies annexed to it cannot sustain His spotless reputation” (*ibid.*, p. 199). “The ridicule heaped upon the Jewish faith, the early preaching of the Messianic Kingdom, the hopes entertained of the Coming again of Jesus to establish it, etc., is met, not by abject apologies or philosophical accommodation to human weakness, but by a straightforward, manly appeal to the Scriptures themselves, which give the reasons, as evidenced before us this day, why such faith has not yet been realized” (*ibid.*, 3:503).

The message was *not of a spiritual kingdom only*. “The spiritualized view is that Jesus adopted the spiritual elements of the Old Testament prophets, abandoning all the political and national aspects, and offered a spiritual kingdom to all who would believe. The literal view, supported by the study of the New Testament, is that the kingdom announced and offered by the Lord Jesus was the same theocratic kingdom foretold through the Old Testament prophets” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 447). “It would make no

sense for Jesus to offer Israel the Spiritual Kingdom because ‘such an announcement would have had no special significance whatever to Israel, for such a rule of God has *always* been recognized among the people of God” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 170-173] (Frucht-enbaum, *I*, p. 389). “The Spiritual Kingdom in which God rules in the heart of the believer has been around since Adam; it was not new, and hardly something to be announced as being *at hand*” (*ibid.*, p. 395).

The message was *both soteriological and eschatological*. “...the twofold work of Christ... The first work was to offer this Kingdom, on the condition of repentance, to the nation... His second work to accomplish the Redemption (by the shedding of His blood)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:368) “‘the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’ (John 1:29)... soteriological... eschatological... ‘The kingdom of heaven is near’ (Matt. 3:2)... *together* constituted ‘the Gospel of the kingdom’” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 194)

It was a *genuine offer* of the Kingdom to Israel. “What unspeakable honor, power, and glory would have resulted to the Jewish nation, if it had accepted the simple but necessary Theocratic condition of repentance annexed to the offer of the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:390). “Jesus, ‘the Christ,’ appeared and tendered the Kingdom to the elect nation which, if accepted (by a national repentance), would have broken the Roman Power with irresistible force” (*ibid.*, 2:777). “Christ was just as infallible in offering the kingdom to Israel as at hand, as was God the Father in setting the land of Canaan before Israel to go in and possess it” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 257). “...that Jesus offered Himself as the Messianic King of Israel, that the offer was genuine, and therefore the nation *should* have accepted Him” (McClain, *GK*, p. 333). “‘He was teaching daily in the temple’ (19:47)... healing... the children crying hosannas in the temple (Ps. 8:1-2). These were some of the things the nation might have had without limitation or interruption if she had known the ‘time’ of her ‘visitation’ and the hearts of her people had been opened to receive the King” (*ibid.*, p. 352). “Certainly, with His illimitable and resistless power, as already abundantly evidenced, He could have established a kingdom on earth which would have brought unimaginable blessing to the world: the abolition of war, the healing of physical diseases, the correction of social evils, the solution of economic problems. But with all these temporal blessings sinful men would have been left without eternal life; and of all the sons of men, only one, Himself ‘a Son of man’ (John 5:27, ASV), would abide. Without His death on the cross, He could indeed have set up a kingdom, but thus He would abide ‘alone,’ the *solitary man* in the glory of an eternal heaven. But if He dies, there can be ‘much fruit’ (John 12:24). He will bring ‘many sons unto glory’ (Heb. 2:10)” (*ibid.*). ““...it was

the day which decided whether Jerusalem would become the blessed centre of all nations, or the terrible monument of retributive justice” [quoting J. J. Van Oosterzee, *Lange’s Commentary on Luke*, p. 295] (*ibid.*, p. 354). “The tears of our Lord over the perverseness of Jerusalem are witnesses of the freedom of man’s will to resist the grace of God’ [quoting *Lange’s Commentary*, footnote on Matt. 23:37]... if Israel’s rejection of the King was morally genuine, so also must the offer have been” (*ibid.*, p. 361). “**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling**” (Matt. 23:37). “And when He approached, **He saw the city and wept over it**, saying, ‘**If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace!** But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not recognize the time of your visitation**” (Luke 19:41-44). “The only condition was their repentance in keeping with 2 Chronicles 7:14 [**if my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**]. Because all the prophesied prerequisites had been fulfilled, this was a genuine offer of the kingdom to the covenant people” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 204). “The Old Testament, however, did not reveal that the offer of the ‘age to come’ would terminate with Israel’s rejection rather than reception, nor did it disclose that it would be necessary for the King to postpone until a future advent the blessings of His reign” (*ibid.*, p. 219).

However, it was *subject to acceptance by the Jews*. “The phrase ‘nigh at hand’ is indicative of a tender, which, if necessary, can be withdrawn” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:363). “It was also in the Divine Purpose to bestow it upon ‘a willing people’” (*ibid.*, p. 357) “If you do not repent, the Kingdom will be far from you; now it is nigh, within reach; then it will be distant, removed, postponed. Alas! How fearfully true this became: nationally nigh, then nationally distant” (*ibid.*, p. 363). “God never violates moral freedom in His purposes relating to the nation” (*ibid.*). “Strange that so many theologians overlook the conditionality on which all hinges, and affirm (as Neander, etc.) that the Kingdom was established. The Primitive Church, taught by inspired men and their immediate successors, held to no such absurdity, but maintained in this matter a logical consistency. In view of this conditionality-

ty, Jesus comes in a state of poverty, in order that the moral appeal to repentance may be fairly tested. Had He come rich, loaded with honor, etc., the Jews would have been influenced by selfish, improper motives. Hence the Theocratic King, to test the nation, comes in humble circumstances” (*ibid.*). “The time selected for this preaching of national repentance was, humanly speaking, favorable, and the refusal to repent, under the circumstances, increases the guilt of the nation and evinces the power of depravity” (*ibid.*, p. 364). “It being predetermined as eminently suitable to tender this Kingdom at the First Advent of Jesus, the Messiah, and it being also foreknown that it would be rejected, the matter is so guardedly presented as not to interfere with the free moral agency of the nation, and as not to be opposed to foreknown fact” (*ibid.*, p. 365). “In view of this offer and rejection, the prophets pass on and describe more repeatedly and vividly the scenes connected with the Second Advent” (*ibid.*). “‘Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand,’ ...the non-fulfillment of the imposed condition ‘repent’” (*ibid.*, p. 557)

Chapter 16: Rejection of the King

As we saw at the end of our previous chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*, the reinstatement of the Davidic theocracy was (and is) contingent upon Israel's acceptance of Jesus as their theocratic King. Sadly, however, the first-century Jewish nation was morally unprepared for such an acceptance. So instead of accepting Him, the Jewish people, through their leaders, formally rejected Jesus' Kingship. This rejection put an end to Jesus' announcement and offer of the Kingdom and made necessary some major changes in His ministry.

A National Decision is Required

With Jesus on the scene, personally announcing and offering the Kingdom to Israel, *a decision was required on the part of the nation*. "And as these were going away, **Jesus began to speak to the multitudes about John**, 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' palaces. But why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet. **This is the one about whom it is written, "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU."** Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of **John the Baptist** until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And **if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come**. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. **But to what shall I compare this generation?** It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children, and say, "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn." For John came neither eating nor drinking, and **they say, "He has a demon!"** **The Son of Man** came eating and drinking, and **they say, "Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!"** Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds" (Matt. 11:7–19). "Then there was brought to Him **a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb**, and **He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?"** But when **the Pharisees** heard it, **they said, "This man casts out demons**

only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.' And knowing their thoughts He said to them, 'Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then **the kingdom of God has come upon you.** Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. **He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.** Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but **blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.** And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in the age to come. Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil. And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned" (Matt. 12:22–37). "And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and **you are unwilling to come to Me,** that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father's name, and **you do not receive Me;** if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words" (John 5:37–47)? "This widespread knowledge [of the preaching of John the Baptist, Jesus, the 12, and the 70, and of Christ's teaching and miracles, etc.] placed a responsibility on the nation to weigh the evidence and to make a decision about Jesus and His offer of His

kingdom” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 208). “Having been taught that they were sheep who should follow the shepherds, the people at large could not conceive of accepting Christ apart from the approval of the leaders” (*ibid.*, p. 209). “In [Matt. 12] verse 22, Jesus was able to exorcise a dumb demon. In verse 23, this caused the people to begin asking the question, ‘Can Jesus really be the Messiah?’ This was one of the key purposes of this miracle, to get them to see that He indeed was the *Son of David*. However, the people were not willing to come to a decision by themselves, but were looking to their religious leaders, the Pharisees, to reach a verdict for them. They were waiting for the Pharisees to conclude either that He was the Messiah or that He was not the Messiah. These were the only two options the Pharisees had... In verse 24, the Pharisees made their choice” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 295). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom was subject to acceptance by the Jews in our previous chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*.)

The Jews are Morally Unprepared

But alas, *the first-century Jews were morally unprepared to make the correct decision*. “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, **You brood of vipers**, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come” (Matt. 3:7)? “But to what shall I compare **this generation**? It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children, and say, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’ For **John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon!’ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners’**” (Matt. 11:16–19)! “**You brood of vipers**, how can you, **being evil**, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart” (Matt. 12:34). “And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and **they were unwilling to come**” (Matt. 22:3). “But **woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites**, because **you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in**. [Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites**, because you devour widows’ houses, even while for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you shall receive greater condemnation.] Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites**, because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. Woe to you, **blind guides**, who say, “Whoever

swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated.” You **fools** and **blind men**; which is more important, the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold? And, “Whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering upon it, he is obligated.” You **blind men**, which is more important, the offering or the altar that sanctifies the offering? Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and by everything on it. And he who swears by the temple, swears both by the temple and by Him who dwells within it. And he who swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. You **blind guides**, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but **inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence**. You **blind** Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you are like **whitewashed tombs** which on the outside appear beautiful, but **inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness**. Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly **you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness**. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, “If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.” Consequently you bear witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up then the measure of the guilt of your fathers. You **serpents**, you **brood of vipers**, how shall you escape the sentence of hell? Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them **you will kill and crucify**, and some of them **you will scourge** in your synagogues, and **persecute** from city to city, that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon **this generation**. O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling**. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me

until you say, “BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD”” (Matt. 23:13–39)! “He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, ‘**You brood of vipers**, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come’” (Luke 3:7)? “And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. And **you do not have His word abiding in you**, for **you do not believe Him whom He sent**. You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and **you are unwilling to come to Me**, that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; but I know you, that **you do not have the love of God in yourselves**. I have come in My Father’s name, and **you do not receive Me**; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him. How can you believe, when **you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God**? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed **Moses**, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if **you do not believe his writings**, how will you believe My words” (John 5:37–47)? “How utterly unprepared, morally, they were for a restored Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom under the Messiah” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:375). “An exaltation to such supremacy and honor, unless previously prepared for it, would only have excited the pride, the selfishness, the arrogance, and ambition of the Jewish nation” (*ibid.*). “The desire for salvation was only such as wicked men now possess, viz.: a willingness to be saved in, and not from, their sins” (*ibid.*, p. 377). “Time, regular descent, place, offices, preaching, works, public entry into the city, etc., are mingled with the price of betrayal, the spitting, reviling, vinegar and gall, unbroken bones, pierced side, dying with malefactors but honorable burial, etc... why, then, did not the nation that witnessed these coincidences receive Jesus as the Messiah... The ground of objection was the unpalatable doctrine of repentance by which the Kingdom was conditioned” (*ibid.*, 3:419). “The reason Israel did not accept Him was not because of their misunderstanding of the kind of kingdom He offered, but because they were unwilling to repent and believe (John 5:40)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 275). “The fact of the matter is that they who accepted Him had the same view of the kingdom as the multitude who refused and rejected Him” (*ibid.*, p. 276). “At heart, the common people were no more ready for the Kingdom of Christ than their rulers” (McClain, *GK*, p. 309).

The King is Rejected

Ultimately, *the nation chose to reject Jesus as King*. “And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but **the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness**; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 8:11-12). “But when **the Pharisees** heard it, they **said, ‘This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons’**” (Matt. 12:24). “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey. And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But **when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize his inheritance.’ And they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.** Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?’ They said to Him, ‘He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Did you never read in the Scriptures, **The stone which the builders rejected**, This became the chief corner stone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.’ And when **the chief priests and the Pharisees** heard His parables, **they understood that He was speaking about them.** And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet” (Matt. 21:33-46). “The *vineyard* is Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 822). “He sent three sets of servants: the pre-exilic prophets, the post-exilic prophets, and then John the Baptist and his disciples” (*ibid.*). “And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to **a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come.** Again he sent out other slaves saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened

livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast.” But **they paid no attention and went their way**, one to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. Then he said to his slaves, “The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy”” (Matt. 22:1-8). “And He began to speak to them [**the chief priests, and scribes, and elders**, Mark 11:27] in parables: ‘A man planted a vineyard, and put a wall around it, and dug a vat under the wine press, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. And at the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive some of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some, and killing others. He had one more to send, a beloved son; he sent him last of all to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But those vine-growers said to one another, “**This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!**” And **they took him, and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.** What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. Have you not even read this Scripture: “**The stone which the builders rejected**, This became the chief corner stone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes”?’ And **they were seeking to seize Him**; and yet they feared the multitude; for **they understood that He spoke the parable against them.** And so they left Him, and went away” (Mark 12:1-12). “And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, ‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.” But **his citizens hated him**, and sent a delegation after him, **saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.”** And it came about that when he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done. And the first appeared, saying, “Master, your mina has made ten minas more.” And he said to him, “Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.” And the

second came, saying, "Your mina, master, has made five minas." And he said to him also, "And you are to be over five cities." And another came, saying, "Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow." He said to him, "By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?" And he said to the bystanders, "Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas." And they said to him, "Master, he has ten minas already." I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. But **these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them**, bring them here and slay them in my presence" (Luke 19:11-27). "**He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone**" (Acts 4:11). "And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, 'It was necessary that **the word of God** should be spoken to you first; since **you repudiate it**, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles'" (Acts 13:46). "However excited in individuals, the nation by its sinfulness showed itself unworthy of it" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:223). "The Jews did not find fault with the Kingdom, but in *the King* as believed in by believing Jews and Gentiles" (*ibid.*, p. 281). "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven, but the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.' Thus predicting the rejection of His offer, and the subsequent call of the Gentiles" (*ibid.*, p. 357). "Nationally, through the nation's highest officials and council, the Kingdom was rejected on account of the imposed condition, repentance, although individual Jews repenting were received as believers" (*ibid.*, p. 375). "The Kingdom... it is conditioned only by a repentance of the nation, and this being rejected by the representative, ruling men of the nation, Jesus censures them and predicts their continued and increasing fall" (*ibid.*, p. 421) "The Stone appears, but we are taught is rejected by the very nation to whom the Kingdom appertains; but this same Stone thus rejected is the chosen one, held in abeyance until the period of its manifestation" (*ibid.*, p. 676). "Let it be considered that nowhere is it asserted in direct terms that the nation shall be driven from the land and scattered among the nations for the rejection of the Messiah, but this is directly predicted as a result of their rejection of God as their Ruler, etc... If the Jewish theory (or

rather Rabbinical) is correct, then the rejection of an alleged impostor ought to have brought them the favor and blessing of God, but instead of this the exact reverse—as predicted by this Messiah—has occurred. To what conclusion can we come excepting that in this Messiah they rejected God Himself, the Theocratic King” (*ibid.*, 3:417). “Never was there a clearer case of *national* guilt” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 74). “The fault of Israel is that of all unbelievers: They did not believe all God had said (Luke 24:25-26)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 267). “And He said to them, **‘O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory’**” (Luke 24:25-26)? “The crown of thorns had no significance in relation to His sacrificial death for sin: it was the emblem of the nation’s derision for His kingship claim” (Chafer, *G*, 39%). “The rulers of the nation who demanded His death were not personally rejecting a Saviour, as sinners are rejecting Him now; they were rejecting their King. They did not say, ‘We will not believe on the Saviour to the salvation of our souls’; they said, ‘We have no king but Caesar’” (*ibid.*). “The unbelieving rejection of her Messianic King by the authorized leaders of Israel—an infection which finally spread throughout the nation” (McClain, *GK*, p. 357) “It must be observed here that, if the teaching of [Matt. 23] verse 13 [‘But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because **you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.**’] were limited to the matter of personal salvation through Christ, it could hardly be true. For in this sense the Pharisees could shut no one out of the Kingdom of God. But they could and did, by their obstinate rejection of the Messianic King, shut both themselves and all the Israel of that generation out of His promised Kingdom, in the sense that its establishment is now, by the course of events, set at a second advent of the King” (*ibid.*, p. 358). “The answer of Ellicott [in C. J. Ellicott, *Commentary*] has merit: ‘Men make the guilt of past ages their own, reproduce its atrocities, identify themselves with it; and so, what seems at first an arbitrary decree, visiting upon the children the sin of the fathers, becomes in such cases a righteous judgment.’ But there is, I feel, a still more specific connection between crimes, such as the murder of Abel, and the responsibility of the generation which rejected the Messianic King. For the establishment of His Kingdom on earth would, according to Old Testament prophecy, put an end to all such crimes of violence and injustice. In that glad day the value of human life will have its long-delayed recognition: The King ‘shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight’ (Ps. 72:14). ‘They shall not hurt nor destroy in all

my holy mountain, saith the LORD' (Isa. 65:25). Viewed from this standpoint, Israel's sin in rejecting the Messianic King becomes a gigantic crime against all humanity, the cause celebre of the ages. For it was not only the crimes of the past (Matt. 23:35) ['that upon you may fall the guilt of **all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah**, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.'], but also the crimes of the future (vs. 34) ['Therefore, behold, **I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city**'], which Christ was now charging against the 'generation' which rejected His rule: 'All the righteous blood shed upon the earth' (vs. 35). What a fearful responsibility" (*ibid.*, p. 359)! "Matthew says that the chief priests and elders 'persuaded the multitude' to ask Pilate for the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus (27:20) [But **the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes to ask for Barabbas, and to put Jesus to death.**]... Does anyone suppose that the astute and highly intelligent Jewish leaders would fail to exploit the situation to their own advantage with the crowd? How easy now to point out the appalling incongruity before their eyes—the King of the Jews wearing a crown of thorns! Did the applause of the people, disappointed in their 'hero,' turn swiftly into vicious anger? If so, nothing could have been more plausible psychologically. History has shown more than once that the disappointment of the 'people' can easily become a very terrible and violent thing" (*ibid.*, p. 384). "The people professed a willingness to accept Christ if the leaders would also approve, but they felt they must reject Him since the leaders disapproved" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 209). "In an unthinkable mockery of God's perfect kingdom program, the religious leaders attributed the works of God's promised King to the ruler of the false kingdom of darkness, Satan. It was an explanation that not only revealed the religious leaders' unrepentant, darkened hearts, but one that also ultimately sealed the fate of that generation of Israel" (*ibid.*). "Chafer [in *Dispensationalism*, pp. 25-28] concludes that it was predicted that Israel would reject her Messiah and this rejection could not possibly be 'the personal rejection of a crucified and risen Savior' since these events had not yet happened when He was rejected. Jesus came to Israel as a nation and offered Himself to them as the 'Messiah King' and it is this that Israel rejected" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 386). "The kingdom that Jesus offered was the Messianic Kingdom which is a national issue and was something that could be nationally rejected" (*ibid.*, p.

847). "...national Israel, through a Sanhedrin vote, officially rejected their Messiah" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:508)

The Pharisees ascribed Jesus' powers to Satan; they sinned against the Holy Spirit. "Then **there was brought to Him a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw.** And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, 'This man cannot be **the Son of David**, can he?' But **when the Pharisees heard it, they said, 'This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.'** And knowing their thoughts He said to them, 'Any **kingdom** divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if **Satan** casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall **his kingdom** stand? And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then **the kingdom of God has come upon you.** Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but **blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.** And **whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in the age to come.** Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. **You brood of vipers**, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil. And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words **you shall be condemned.**' Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.' But He answered and said to them, '**An evil and adulterous generation** craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. **The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it** because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the

South shall rise up with **this generation** at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. Now when **the unclean spirit** goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it **says, “I will return to my house from which I came”**; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, **swept, and put in order. Then it goes, and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation”** (Matt. 12:22-45). “By means of the preaching of John [the Baptist], that generation was swept and garnished” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 299). “So, indeed, the last state of that generation became worse than the first. They went from bondage to worldwide dispersion” (*ibid.*). “And **the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, ‘He is possessed by Beelzebul,’ and ‘He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.’** And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, ‘How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a **kingdom** is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! But no one can enter the strong man’s house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house. Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but **whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin’ — because they were saying, ‘He has an unclean spirit”**” (Mark 3:22-30). “And **He was casting out a demon**, and it was dumb; and it came about that when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But **some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.’** And others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven. But He knew their thoughts, and said to them, ‘Any **kingdom** divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls. And if **Satan** also is divided against himself, how shall **his kingdom** stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then **the kingdom of God has come upon you.** When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed; but when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers

him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied, and distributes his plunder. **He who is not with Me is against Me**; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters. When **the unclean spirit** goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, "I will return to my house from which I came." And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and **takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first**" (Luke 11:14-26). "A form of unforgiven sin is seen in the case of the unpardonable sin, which was committed only when Christ was here on earth, and which sin is not now possible" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:269). "There cannot be an unpardonable sin and a whosoever-will gospel at the same time" (*ibid.*). "Since God the Father sent the Messiah to be 'the Saviour of men,' in the Messiah 'all sin can be forgiven without limitation.' On the other hand, 'outside of Him nothing can be forgiven.' Therefore, the 'sinful resistance to the Holy Spirit,' Who testifies as to Jesus' Messiahship, puts the rejecter outside the Messiah. Since it is 'morally impossible for God to forgive sin outside of Christ,' this rendered the sin unpardonable" [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, p. 313] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 407). "The purpose of His miracles and His whole ministry underwent a radical change in chapter 12. The rejection of His Messiahship occurred in Matthew 12:22-37" (*ibid.*, p. 616). "The people were not willing to come to a decision by themselves, but were looking to their religious leaders, the Pharisees, to reach a verdict for them. They were waiting for the Pharisees to conclude either that He was the Messiah or that He was not the Messiah. These were the only two options the Pharisees had: to accept Him or to reject Him. If they were to conclude that He was not the Messiah, the Pharisees would also have to be able to explain how Jesus was able to perform His many unique miracles" (*ibid.*). "This then became the basis of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus: He is not the Messiah on the grounds of being demon possessed. In verses 25-29, Christ responded by stating that this could not be true because it would mean a division in Satan's kingdom (vv. 25-26); they themselves long recognized that the gift of exorcism is a gift of the spirit and so this accusation makes them inconsistent with their own theology (v. 27)" (*ibid.*, p. 617). "That generation had committed the unpardonable sin: the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. The unpardonable sin was not an individual sin but a national sin. It was committed by that generation of Israel in Jesus' day and cannot be applied to subsequent Jewish generations. The content and definition of the unpardonable sin is the national rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus by Israel while He was physically present on the basis

that He was demon possessed. This sin was unpardonable, and judgment was set” (*ibid.*). “For that generation the sin was unpardonable. From this point on a special emphasis is placed on *this generation* in the gospels, for it was guilty of a very unique sin. At this point, His offer of the Messianic Kingdom was rescinded. It will not now be established in their day because of the unpardonableness of that sin” (*ibid.*). “When that generation began, it was under Roman domination and had to pay annual tribute to Rome... Indeed, the last state of that generation became worse than the first. They went from bondage to world-wide dispersion” (*ibid.*, p. 620). “The Pharisees are held accountable not only for their rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, but also for leading the nation to the same rejection as well” (*ibid.*, p. 623). “...thus ascribing wickedness to their own incarnate Messiah—this was something new and terrible among the many sins of the chosen nation. And the charge provoked from the Son of God an ultimatum of such unparalleled severity that it stands alone in the gospel records as an appropriate witness to the awful possibilities of human sin in the face of the light of God’s grace” (McClain, *GK*, p. 313). “Hemmed in by only two possible alternatives, either to accept Him as their King or to charge that His works were not of God, they chose the latter, saying that the miracle was done ‘by Beelzebub the prince of the demons’ (Matt. 12:24, ASV)” (*ibid.*, p. 314). “Thus the great miracles of our Lord, which attested to His person and Messiahship, were actually the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit... the speakers had identified the Third Person of the Godhead with Satan” (*ibid.*, p. 315) “The Pharisees rejected Christ as the Son of God, claiming that He was the son of Satan and that He got His power not from heaven but from hell. Christ warned that if they persisted in this belief that generation would be guilty of a sin for which there could be no forgiveness, and judgment would be inescapable... The form of that judgment was revealed in Luke 21:24 where Christ said, ‘Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled’” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 120). “Because that generation—through their leaders—finally rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah, judgment was certain” (*ibid.*, p. 121). “What is the blasphemy against the Spirit for which there is no forgiveness?... the word of His Father, who authenticated the person of Christ (John 14:10) [“Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? **The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.**”]. Christ’s works were the Father’s works, and these works supported the Father’s word given at Christ’s baptism that the Father was well pleased with the life of His Son... If, however, one rejected the word of Christ *and* the word of the Father, he might *still* be

brought to faith in the person of Christ by the witness of the Holy Spirit. *The miracles were the Spirit's witness to Christ.* The Spirit bore the final witness to both the person and word of Christ —and if one rejected this final witness, there was no further witness God had to offer... This sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit could only be committed while Christ was personally present on earth. The sin could only be committed when the nation was being given evidence concerning the person of Christ through the miracles which He performed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Those essential circumstances do not exist today; consequently, *this same sin simply cannot be committed today*” (*ibid.*, p. 211). “It is important to recognize that this sin of rejecting the covenanted Davidic king was not viewed as the sin of an individual, but rather as the sin of the nation. It was a sin that was committed by that generation of Israel through its religious leaders, thus bringing the whole generation under divine judgment” (*ibid.*, p. 212). “This generation of Israel through their rejection and crucifixion of Christ had committed that sin for which Christ said there would be no forgiveness ([Matt.12] v. 32). That generation consequently had come under a physical, temporal judgment that would eventually be carried out through Titus in his invasion and destruction of Jerusalem. But while the nation as a whole could not escape that judgment, individuals by faith in Jesus Christ could separate themselves from that nation and thus escape the judgment that had been pronounced on the nation... That’s why Peter exhorted them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation’ (Acts 2:40)” (*ibid.*, p. 273).

Jesus’ Ministry Changes

After His rejection, Jesus’ ministry changed in several ways.

First, *Jesus’ self-identification* changed. It changed from *Messiah* to *silence* (then later back to *Messiah*). “And the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for today **in the city of David** there has been **born** for you a Savior, who is **Christ** the Lord” (Luke 2:10–11). “He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘**We have found the Messiah**’ (**which translated means Christ**)” (John 1:41). “The woman said to Him, ‘I know that **Messiah** is coming (He who is called **Christ**); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.’ **Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’**” (John 4:25–26) “Then **He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ**” (Matt. 16:20). “And Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, ‘Who do people say that I am?’ And they told Him, saying, ‘John the Baptist; and

others say Elijah; but others, one of the prophets.’ And He continued by questioning them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ **Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Thou art the Christ.’ And He warned them to tell no one about Him...**” (Mark 8:27–30) “But He kept silent, and made no answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, ‘**Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?**’ And **Jesus said, ‘I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven’**” (Mark 14:61-62). “Another indication of coming change in Matthew 16 was Jesus’ charge to the apostles ‘that they should tell no man’ that He was the Messiah (v. 20). Earlier they had proclaimed Him to be the Messiah (Jn. 1:41), but now they were forbidden to do so” (Showers, *M*, p. 238).

Second, *the purpose of His miracles* changed. It changed from *authenticating His messiahship to training His apostles*. “Then there was brought to Him **a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, ‘This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?’**” (Matt. 12:22)? “But many of the multitude believed in Him; and they were saying, ‘**When the Christ shall come, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?**’” (John 7:31) “Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘**An evil and adulterous generation** craves for a sign; and yet **no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet**; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:38–40). “And the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Him asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. But He answered and said to them, ‘When it is evening, you say, “It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.” And in the morning, “There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.” Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times? **An evil and adulterous generation** seeks after a sign; and **a sign will not be given it**, except the sign of Jonah.’ And He left them, and went away” (Matt. 16:1-4). “But Peter said, ‘I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: **In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene — walk**’” (Acts 3:6)! “After the rejection in Matthew 12, because of the nature of the unpardonable sin, the ministry of Jesus changed radically in four areas. The first change was the purpose of His miracles in that they were no longer for the purpose of serving as signs of His Messiahship to Is-

rael, but were for the purpose of training the apostles for their ministry in the Book of Acts (Matt. 16:1-4)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 625). “Matthew 12:22-45... He performed many miracles, and the purpose of all His miracles between chapters four and twelve was to authenticate His Person (that He is the Messiah) and His message (the gospel of the Kingdom). These miracles were to serve as signs to the nation of Israel to force them to come to a decision about Him. But the purpose of His miracles and His whole ministry underwent a radical change in chapter twelve” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 294). “In [Matt. 12] verse 39, there is a change of policy regarding His signs. From now on, there would be no more signs for the nation except one... No longer were they for the purpose of authenticating His Person and His message to the nation in order to get the nation to come to a decision. That decision had now been made, and made irrevocably. Rather, His miracles would be for the purpose of training the Twelve Apostles for the new kind of ministry they would need to conduct as a result of the rejection of His Messiahship. It is the ministry the Apostles performed in the Book of Acts. For that generation there would be no sign but one: the sign of Jonah, which is the sign of resurrection. It is a sign that would come for Israel on three occasions: *first*, at the resurrection Lazarus; *second*, at Jesus’ own resurrection; and *third*, at the resurrection of the Two Witnesses in the Tribulation. The first two were rejected. The third will be accepted, for the resurrection of the Two Witnesses will lead to the salvation of the Jews of Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “...*the sign of Jonah*, which is the sign of resurrection... the resurrection of Lazarus... in [John 11] verses 45-46, there is the response of the Jews: *Many therefore of the Jews, who came to Mary and beheld that which he did, believed on him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done.* Some Jews responded correctly to this first sign of Jonah and believed that Jesus was Who He claimed to be. But the others still wanted some kind of word or judgment from their leaders, and so they reported to the Pharisees what Jesus had done. Since this was the sign Jesus had promised them, they responded to the challenge in verses 47-50 and 53: *The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council... they took counsel that they might put him to death.* The Pharisees responded in keeping with their original verdict of Matthew 12... The rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus that occurred in Matthew 12 culminated in John 11 with a decree of death hanging over the Person of Jesus. The first sign of Jonah, the resurrection of Lazarus, was rejected” (*ibid.*, p. 299).

Third, *the people for whom He performed His miracles* changed. They changed from *the masses* to *those with faith*. “And **there were five thou-**

sand men who ate the loaves...” (Mark 6:44) “**And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed**, and he began speaking plainly. And **He gave them orders not to tell anyone**; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it” (Mark 7:35-36). “**And her spirit returned**, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for something to be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed; but **He instructed them to tell no one what had happened**” (Luke 8:56). “The second change concerned the people for whom He performed these miracles. Until the events of Matthew 12, Jesus performed miracles for the benefit of the masses without requiring them to have faith first. After Matthew 12, He performed miracles only in response to needs of individuals and began requiring them to have faith first. Furthermore, before Matthew 12, those He healed were free to proclaim what had been done for them; but after Matthew 12, Jesus initiated a policy of silence and forbade those He healed to tell anyone about it (Mark 7:36; Luke 8:56; et al.)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 625)

Fourth, *the people whom He invited* changed. They changed from *the nation Israel* to *individual tax-gatherers and harlots*. “From that time **Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’**” (Matt. 4:17) “Which of the two did the will of his father?’ They said, ‘The latter.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you that **the tax-gatherers and harlots will get into the kingdom of God before you [the chief priests and elders, vs. 23]**” (Matt. 21:31). “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to **vine-growers**, and went on a journey. And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize his inheritance.” And they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?’ They said to Him, ‘**He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.**’ Jesus said to them, ‘Did you never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner stone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes?’

Therefore I say to you, **the kingdom of God will be taken away from you**, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.’ And when **the chief priests and the Pharisees** heard His parables, they **understood that He was speaking about them**. And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet” (Matt. 21:33-46). “But He said to him, ‘**A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many**; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, “Come; for everything is ready now.” **But they all alike began to make excuses**. The first one said to him, “I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.” And another one said, “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.” And another one said, “I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.” And the slave came back and reported this to his master. **Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, “Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.”** And the slave said, “Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.” **And the master said to the slave, “Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner”**” (Luke 14:16–24). “The calling of other guests now (still going on) takes the place of the first invitation—a new exigency and preparation being evolved—and the supper, until these guests are obtained is postponed to the Sec. Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:379). “In Matt. 21, after the chief priests and scribes and elders manifested their opposition to Him, and after He had told (v. 31) them, ‘Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you’ (i.e. in view of their repentance and faith, they became heirs of the Kingdom)...” (*ibid.*, p. 386) “...therefore (i.e. on account of their refusing to receive Him), I say unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (*ibid.*).

Fifth, *His message* changed. It changed from “*The Kingdom is at hand*” to *silence regarding His Messiahship* (then later to “I am the Son of Man”). “From that time **Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’**” (Matt. 4:17). (Then, *after Matthew chapter 12*,) “**Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ**” (Matt. 16:20). “And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, **Tell the vi-**

sion to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead” (Matt. 17:9). “Therefore I say to you, **the kingdom of God will be taken away from you**, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it” (Matt. 21:43). “**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees**, hypocrites!... Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that **upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah**, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon **this generation**” (Matt. 23:29–36). “Matthew 23:29–36... In the Jewish order of the books of the Old Testament, which is what Jesus used, the first book of the Bible is Genesis, where Abel is mentioned. The last book is II Chronicles, where Zechariah is mentioned. Jesus declared that they were guilty of all the blood from Genesis to 2 Chronicles, much as people today would say from Genesis to Revelation... they rejected His Messiahship, following the example of their leaders. For this reason they would be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets who spoke about the Messiah. This is something unique for that generation, as declared in verse 36: *Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.* It is the judgment for the unpardonable sin” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 302). “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter **you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN**” (Matt. 26:63–64). “To strangers, as to the woman of Samaria, the Centurion, Zaccheus, He revealed from the first more concerning the future purposes of God pertaining to the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, than He did to His own disciples before the conspiracy of the Jews, thus evincing both His Divine foreknowledge and His wonderful tact in keeping His disciples in the most favorable position and mental condition to preach the offer of the Kingdom. This entire procedure, as related in the Gospels, is one of those unintentional but most forcible evidences of divine inspiration” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:383). Dr. Pentecost observes, “...the Lord’s word... constitutes the announcement of the withdrawal of the offer of the kingdom to Israel at that time because of their rejection of Him as Messiah. Peters [in *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:379–83] observes: ‘Jesus, toward the close of His ministry, preached that the Kingdom was not nigh... Just so soon as the representatives of the nation met in council and con-

spired to put Jesus to death, then, released from the first part of His mission, His style of preaching also changed. Instead of proclaiming that the Kingdom was nigh to the nation, He now directly intimates and declares that it was not nigh. Matt. 21:43, “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof,” is already conclusive... But we have more explicit announcements. Thus, Luke 19:41-44 [And when He approached, He saw **the city** and wept over it, saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But **now they have been hidden from your eyes**. For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.**”]... instead of a Kingdom, is presented a direful threatening of fearful incoming evils. Again: in Matt. 23:37, 38 [“O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, **your house is being left to you desolate!**”]... instead of a Kingdom coming then to them, dispersion and the destruction of the city is determined, owing to their unrepentant state... In Luke 21:31 [“Even so you, too, **when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.**”]... since His death was actually contemplated by the representatives of the nation, the offer is withdrawn, and the postponement of the Kingdom, its not being nigh to them, is directly stated by an enumeration of certain events which are previously to take place before it is nigh again... none of them took place between their utterance and the day of Pentecost; hence the Kingdom was not established... Luke 19:11-27 [And while they were listening to these things, **He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, “A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return... But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence.**”] forcibly demonstrates our Proposition. Jesus uttered this parable “because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear”... the parable is given to... indicate that it would not soon appear, but only after an undefined period of time had elapsed... Christ only openly predicted His sufferings and death toward the close of His ministry, Matt. 20:17-20 [“And **as Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took**

the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, ‘Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up.’”], John 12:32-34 [“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” But **He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.** The multitude therefore answered Him, “We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”], etc. This was designedly done... When He was rejected, and efforts were made to destroy Him, then He was free to unfold what God had further purposed in view of, and to overrule, this rejection” (*TTC*, p. 466). “The third change concerned the message that Jesus and the apostles would now proclaim. Until Matthew 12 both He and they went throughout the land of Israel proclaiming Jesus to be the Messiah. In Matthew 10 the apostles were sent out two by two to do just that. After Matthew 12, the apostles were also ordered to follow the new policy of silence, and they were forbidden to tell anyone that Jesus was the Messiah. In Matthew 16, after Peter made his famous confession, *Thou art the Christ (Messiah) the Son of the living God*, Jesus ordered Peter to tell no one that He was the Messiah (Matt. 16:20 [**Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.**]). They were to follow the policy of silence (Matt. 17:9 [And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ‘**Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.**’]) until it was rescinded with the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20 [And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;** and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’])” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 625).

His message also changed from *the announcement and offer of the Messianic Kingdom* to *the formation of the church* (then later to His return and the accompanying fulfillment of Israel’s covenants). “Upon His rejection, He began to speak, in anticipation of His death, of the formation of His Church [i.e. Matt. 16:18—*ed.*], and of His coming back again to the earth. He likewise related the sure fulfillment of every covenant with Israel to the time of His return” (Chafer, *G*, 40%).

Sixth, His *style of preaching* changed. It changed from *blessing* to *rebuking*. “**Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth**” (Matt. 5:5). “**And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them;** and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, ‘**Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all.’ **And He took them in His arms and began blessing them,** laying His hands upon them...” (Mark 10:13–16) “**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,** because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves” (Matt. 23:15). “Just so soon as the representatives of the nation met in council and conspired to put Jesus to death, then, released from the first part of His mission, His style of preaching also changed” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:379). “He sternly rebuked and denounced His opponents. This is artfully represented as a deterioration of character—an indication of human frailty. The reader will observe, however, that the unity of character was preserved to the end, as witnessed e.g. in His weeping over Jerusalem and lamenting its doom, and in the utterances at His apprehension, trial, and crucifixion, when grossly insulted and deeply suffering. The alleged sternness and reproof was based on the rejection of the Kingdom by the representative men of the nation, who refused the condition of repentance and delighted in their sins. He, therefore, as was requisite to His position and tender, portrays their corruption and unfitness for the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 630).

And seventh, His *method of teaching* changed. It changed from *plain speech* to *parables*. “From that time **Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’**” (Matt. 4:17). “**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy**” (Matt. 5:3–7). “The result [of the Sermon on the Mount] was that when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes...” (Matt. 7:28–29) “On that day Jesus went out of the house, and was sitting by the sea. And **great multitudes** gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat down, and **the whole multitude was standing on the beach. And He spoke many**

things to them in parables, saying, ‘Behold, the sower went out to sow’” (Matt. 13:1-3) “And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘**Why do You speak to them in parables?**’ And He answered and said to them, ‘**To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.** For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. **Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.** And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, “You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; And you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes Lest they should see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I should heal them.” But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear” (Matt. 13:10-16). “All these things **Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables**, and **He did not speak to them without a parable**, so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world’” (Matt. 13:34-35). “And as soon as He was alone, **His followers, along with the twelve**, began asking Him about the parables. And He was saying to them, ‘**To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God; but those who are outside get everything in parables, in order that while seeing, they may see and not perceive; and while hearing, they may hear and not understand** lest they return and be forgiven’” (Mark 4:10-12). “And with many such parables He was speaking the word to them as they were able to hear it; and **He did not speak to them without a parable**; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples” (Mark 4:33-34). “And His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable might be. And He said, ‘**To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, in order that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand**’” (Luke 8:9-10). “Christ first taught without a parable, and only when met with unbelief and scorn does He teach in a parabolic manner” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:18). “The parables are like the pillar of the cloud and of fire, when darkness was presented to the Egyptians, but light and brightness to the Covenant people” (*ibid.*). “The fore-known and actually realized rejection of the tender of the Kingdom, conditioned by repentance, making a new ordering requisite in order to prepare

for the Kingdom, gives that peculiar and distinctive aspect to the parables which was so perplexing to the Jewish hearers who anticipated an immediate setting up of the Messianic Kingdom, a hope from which even the disciples could not at once divest themselves" (*ibid.*, p. 19). "The change from the direct form of teaching to the parabolic which excited the astonishment of the disciples is readily accounted for in view of this contemplated postponement" (*ibid.*, p. 21). "...'blindness in part' has fallen upon Israel, (Rom. 11:25), and a clear revelation would only discourage them or drive them further into unbelief" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 88). "It was a crisis akin to that which marked the ministry of our blessed Lord Himself when the Council at Jerusalem decreed His destruction. From that time He enjoined silence respecting His miracles, and His teaching became veiled in parables" (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 55). "...the stated purpose of these parables about the 'mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.'... their purpose was to hide rather than to reveal... 'Because to them it is not given' to know the mysteries of the kingdom (Matt. 13:10-11)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 322). "The giving of these parables, therefore, must be regarded as a divine judgment upon the nation of Israel. Because they had not received the simple announcement of the Kingdom, they now are given something they cannot understand" (*ibid.*). "All this does not deny that these mystery parables of the Kingdom had a beneficent purpose... double purpose, both beneficent and penal... 'For whosoever hath, to him shall be given,... but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath' (Matt. 13:12)" (*ibid.*, p. 323). "...Christ's rejection of that generation of the nation of Israel (Matt. 12). Jesus then withdrew Himself from the house where these incidents took place and retired to the seashore... Previously Christ had used parables infrequently in His teaching. His use of them on this occasion was so significant that when an opportunity presented itself, 'the disciples came to Him and asked, "Why do You speak to the people in parables?"' ([Matt. 13] v.10)" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 215) "In response to the disciples' questions, then, concerning why He spoke in parables, Christ replied that He used parables first *to reveal truth to some* and, second, *to hide truth from others* (Matt. 13:11-15). Christ's answer would be unintelligible if we did not understand the historical situation. Through the course of His ministry Jesus had offered Himself to the nation as Saviour and Sovereign. The nation had seen that offer authenticated before them by the miracles Christ performed, and the nation was called on to respond to the evidence presented. The religious leaders, as representatives of the nation, indicated their purpose to reject the person of Christ and to discount His miracles, insisting His miracles were done by Satan's power. Therefore Christ had no further word for those who rejected

and spurned Him and persisted in their unbelief. On the other hand, some had believed His word and accepted His person, and these needed instruction. In short, Jesus was confronted by a mixed multitude comprising both believers and unbelievers—those who had received Him and those who had rejected Him. We see that He did not attempt to separate the unbelievers from the believers and then instruct only the believers. Rather, He constructed His teaching in such a way that those who had believed would understand, and those who had rejected—even though they heard—would not understand. Believers have the key to knowledge and can interpret His teaching. Unbelievers do not possess that key and, therefore, cannot understand His word. The one who has the key of knowledge will use that key to gain more knowledge, but the one who does not have that key will lose such knowledge as he once possessed. This was the explanation Christ gave the disciples concerning why He used parables in His teaching” (*ibid.*, p. 216). “...one third of what our Lord taught He taught through parables” (*ibid.*, p. 220) “From the parables we can develop an understanding of the theocratic kingdom, tracing the offer by Messiah, its rejection by Israel, its consequent postponement to a future time, the resultant judgment on the generation that rejected His offer, the new form of the theocracy to be developed in the present age, the events preceding the establishment of the coming messianic kingdom, and the characteristics of those who are in the kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 245). “The Mystery Kingdom of Matthew 13... Walvoord [in *The Church in Prophecy*, pp. 24-27] points out that it ‘is a major error to make the word kingdom... always mean the same in all its uses,’ for that term ‘must be interpreted by its context.’ The very fact that the kingdom of Matthew 13 is called a ‘mystery’ shows that this facet of the kingdom program was ‘hidden’ in the Old Testament but revealed in the New, and the term signifies that it is ‘specifically New Testament truth.’ The ‘truths contained in the mysteries of the kingdom... are not an exposition of the Old Testament doctrine of the kingdom as it will be fulfilled in the millennium, but rather a presentation of truth as it relates to the kingdom in the present age’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 391). “The fourth change concerned His teaching method. Until Matthew 12, whenever Jesus taught the masses, He did so in terms that they could and did understand. One example is the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. Matthew points out at the end that not only did the people understand what He was saying, but also where He differed from the Scribes and the Pharisees. In Matthew 12, Jesus began teaching with a new method, the parabolic method, the purpose of which was to hide the truth from the masses. The very act of teaching in parables was a sign of judgment against them. The first series of parables Jesus taught was on the

Mystery Kingdom, the facet of God's kingdom program which was inaugurated as a result of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus and rescinding of the offer of the Messianic Kingdom. To clearly comprehend what is happening in Matthew 13, one must understand the relationship between Matthew 12 and 13. Matthew 12 records the national rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. Jesus was officially rejected by the leadership of Israel. By so doing, they were guilty of the unpardonable sin. From that point on they were under the judgment of A.D. 70, the year in which Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed. In Matthew 13, Jesus taught a series of parables. These parables were spoken on the very same day as the rejection by the nation of the Messiahship of Jesus occurred (Matt. 13:1-3). On that same day the parabolic method of teaching began as a result of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus" (*ibid.*, p. 626). "Matthew 13:10-18 states the purpose of these parables. Verse 10 records: *And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?* The question on the part of His disciples indicates that this was the beginning of the parabolic method of teaching. As a result of the rejection in Matthew 12, in Matthew 13 Jesus began teaching the Jewish masses in parables. This, of course, surprised the disciples because they themselves knew that Jesus, up until that point, had taught them clearly" (*ibid.*). "Since the nation had rejected the light they had, no more light would be given" (*ibid.*, p. 627). "There is a literal mystery involved in the transition from Christ's offer of the messianic kingdom (to Israel) and the spiritual form that followed. The kingdom parables seem to be a crucial turning point; as already noted, before Matthew 13 the Jewish King had been officially present to the Jewish nation. After they rejected Him (Matt. 3-12), Jesus told parables in which a kingdom was established that would grow rapidly and contain both good and evil; in the end, the saved would be separated from the lost, each sent to their final destiny" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:492). (See our discussion of the Matthew chapter thirteen "mystery" parables in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

Chapter 17: Postponement of the Kingdom

It is a generally undisputed fact of history that the first-century Jewish community in Israel rejected Jesus as their Messiah and King (see our previous chapter, *Rejection of the King*). That being the case, following Jesus' rejection, what happened to the covenanted and prophesied (and announced and offered) Kingdom? Did God at that point cancel the entire Kingdom program? Many Christians would answer that no, the Kingdom program was not then *cancelled*, but that it was instead *transformed* in some way. Our contention, however, is that the theocratic Kingdom program was neither cancelled nor transformed, but rather only *postponed* until Jesus' Second Coming.

It is our contention that if we are to have a correct conception of the overall Kingdom program, *the postponement of the Kingdom must be clearly understood*. Without this understanding firmly in place, many common misconceptions concerning the Kingdom will have fertile soil in which to germinate and grow. "The postponement of the Kingdom is the key to the understanding of the meaning of this dispensation" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:590). "Some few, however, properly discriminate, and realize the importance of this postponement" (*ibid.*, p. 628). Without an understanding of the Kingdom's postponement, *much of Scripture will simply not make sense*. For example, "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely**; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that they shall no more say, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, **As Jehovah liveth, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land**" (Jer. 23:5–8). "Thousands of volumes attest to the fact that, with this link missing, it is in vain to form a complete, perfect chain in the Divine Purpose, and at the same time preserve the integrity of the preaching of John, Jesus, and the disciples" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:622). "The rejection of the postponement of the Kingdom, is a rejection of the only key that can unlock the singular and otherwise mysterious sayings of Jesus" (*ibid.*). Without incorporating the postponement of the Davidic Kingdom into our eschatology, *Scripture intended for application to the Tribulation or to the Millennial Kingdom dispensation will likely be incorrectly ap-*

plied to this Church dispensation. For example, “And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever;** and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:30–33). “If our position is correct (and we deem it, as the early church did, impregnable) then it follows, as a matter of course, that many things now applied by divines to this dispensation have no relation, whatever to it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:590). “Volumes, otherwise containing valuable matter, are vitiated by bringing nearly all Scripture to be applicable to the present time, or dispensation” (*ibid.*). “When His kingdom was rejected and its realization delayed until the return of the King, the application of all Scripture which conditions life in the kingdom was delayed as well, and will be delayed as long as the King tarries” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:178). When we overlook the postponement, and deny the future, literal fulfillment of the Jewish Kingdom prophecies, *we are forced to “spiritualize” (alter) Scripture in order to maintain its truthfulness.* “The definite postponement of the Kingdom, once entertained, preserves us from this free and plastic moulding of Scripture to suit our own ideas of the fitness of things” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:590). “Overlooking the postponement of the Kingdom, and assuming that a Kingdom was somehow established... every passage not in harmony with it must be spiritualized until it is forced into an agreement” (*ibid.*, p. 621). *This destroys the precision of Scripture.* As a result, *the biblical, Old Testament idea of the covenanted and prophesied Kingdom is lost.* “It is impossible to comprehend the Kingdom without going back to the Old Test. idea of it, which conception once received and entertained prevents an improper view of the present dispensation” (*ibid.*, p. 590). “Passages which refer exclusively to a still future dispensation are thus constantly applied to this one, without the least attempt to show that they are properly used” (*ibid.*, p. 648).

It should be recognized that *it was not disclosed in the Old Testament that Christ would have two advents.* Instead, the events of both advents were *combined* in the messianic prophecies. For example, “For **unto us a child is born,** unto us a son is given; and **the government shall be upon his shoulder:** and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts

will perform this” (Isa. 9:6–7). “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to **proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God**; to comfort all that mourn” (Isa. 61:1–2) “In the Old Test., so far as the Kingdom is concerned, there is no discrimination between the First and Second Advents” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:626). “One of the most determining factors in the right apprehension of Old Testament prophecy is the recognition of the truth that to no individual in that vast period from Adam to Christ was any intimation revealed respecting the fact that there would be two advents of Christ. Moses did say with regard to the future regathering of Israel that it would be at the time of Jehovah’s return— ‘and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee’ (Deut. 30:3); but no attention seems to have been centered on this promise, as clear as it seems now in the light of subsequent disclosures” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:303). In a similar manner, we suggest that *neither was the postponement of the Kingdom*, which was to span the same period of time as that transpiring between these two advents, *disclosed in the Old Testament*.

The idea of postponement of prophetic fulfillment is not foreign to the Bible; *there were prior postponements*, for instance, the Israelites’ forty-year delay in occupying the promised land. “This postponement is considered no more difficult than the delay of forty years in entering the promised land” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 136).

The Kingdom Has Not Yet Come

If the Kingdom was postponed at Jesus’ First Advent, as we contend, then the Kingdom obviously could not have come prior to the first century. In this section we’ll demonstrate that the Kingdom had not come prior to Jesus’ First Advent, during Jesus’ First Advent, just prior to Jesus’ ascension, just after Jesus’ ascension, in the epistles, or even yet today.

The Kingdom had not yet come *prior to Jesus’ First Advent*. “until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and **the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom**” (Dan. 7:22). “The least reflection will show that the Jewish [remnant] had not the covenanted characteristics of the Kingdom, for as Daniel (7:22) says, the time had not yet come that the saints possessed the Kingdom, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:606).

It did not come *during Jesus' First Advent*. "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for **the kingdom of heaven is at hand**'" (Matt. 4:17). "**Pray, then, in this way:** 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come.** Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven'" (Matt. 6:9-10). "And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**'" (Matt. 19:28). "But I say to you, **I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom**" (Matt. 26:29). "Truly I say to you, **I shall never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God**" (Mark 14:25). "And He said to them, 'When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come**'" (Luke 11:2). "that you may eat and drink at My table **in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**" (Luke 22:30). "Jesus nowhere declared 'that the Kingdom of God has come'" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:366) "Matt 26:29... Mark 14:25... 'until that day'... 'until the Kingdom of God shall come.' If the Kingdom already existed, such phraseology would be entirely out of place, but with our view it is consistent and significant" (*ibid.*, p. 372). "Christ never stated that the kingdom was a present reality" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 264). "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?"... the Kingdom had not yet been established, and therefore the time had not arrived for Him to begin His regal work of judging" (McClain, *GK*, p. 291). "But He said to him, '**Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbiter over you**'" (Luke 12:14)? "And if anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, **I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world**" (John 12:47). "John the Baptist preached the messianic kingdom as a future but impending event: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is *near*' (Matt. 3:2; 4:17)... That the kingdom is still future is further shown in Jesus' model prayer: 'Our Father... your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' ([Matt.] 6:9-10; Luke 11:2). This is plainly about a kingdom that had not yet come and that was not only spiritual but would be accomplished 'on earth'" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:479).

It had not yet come *just prior to Jesus' ascension*. "**To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God**" (Acts 1:3). "And so when they had come together, **they [the apostles, vs. 2] were asking Him,**

saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.’ And after He had said these things, **He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.** And as **they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing,** behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven**’” (Acts 1:6-11). “The conversation between Jesus and the disciples pertaining to the Kingdom, and the question of the latter just before the ascension, most effectually disproves the assertions of eminent writers that the Kingdom was already established sometime in the ministry or life of Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:431).

It did not come *soon after Jesus’ ascension*. “The apostles, after the res. and ascension of Jesus, never used the formula ‘the Kingdom of heaven is at hand;’—thus accepting of the change in the manner of Christ’s teaching, and linked by the phraseology adopted, the Kingdom with the Sec. Advent. For, instead of the previous formula, they now tell us that ‘the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh,’ ‘the Lord is at hand,’ etc. They guard us thus, by the very choice of words, against the notion that the Kingdom was already established, or that it possibly could be set up during the absence of the King. Under the former preaching, Jesus being present, the Kingdom was announced; under the apostolic, Jesus being absent and the Kingdom postponed, His Coming again, as the requisite prelude, is prominently proclaimed” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:478). “We admit that if Jesus or His Apostles had proclaimed the establishment of the Kingdom, as covenanted immediately or shortly after His death, then indeed a powerful argument, owing to the patent dissimilarity between the two, would be presented, but such an establishment (which the primitive Church totally ignored) is taken for granted, and from a premise thus falsely grounded the most adverse conclusions respecting Jesus are entertained and promulgated” (*ibid.*, 3:295).

It had not yet come *in the epistles*. “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; **in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and**

not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:6-8). "This futurity of the Kingdom is the basis of the numerous exhortations to obtain it, to walk worthily of it, to look, seek, and pray for it" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:413). "There is no critically undisputed passage in the Scriptures which declares, or necessarily implies, even a partial establishment [of the Kingdom] in New Testament times" [quoting E.R. Craven, 'Excursus on the Basileia,' Lange's *Commentary on Revelation*, p. 94] (McClain, *GK*, p. 431). "There is no epistle of the New Testament addressed to the saints in 'the kingdom of heaven'" (*ibid.*).

And, in fact, the Kingdom *still has not yet come*. "And **it shall come to pass in the latter days**, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law**, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between **the nations**, and will decide concerning many peoples; and **they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more**" (Isa. 2:2-4). "**Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven**" (Matt. 6:10). "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will **enter the kingdom of heaven**; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me **on that day**, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles'" (Matt. 7:21-22)? "And so **when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, 'Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel'**" (Acts 1:6)? "For He did not subject to angels **the world to come**, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, 'What is man, that Thou rememberest him? Or **the son of man**, that Thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; **Thou** hast crowned him with glory and honor, And **hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands**; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.' For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. **But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him**" (Heb. 2:5-8). "The significant fact that our opponents cannot tell when this promised Kingdom was set up, although professing that it was established, is corroborative evidence in our favor" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:308). "If no such Kingdom exists now, certainly it is no more than simple

justice demands to permit Scripture to assign its reasons for the same” (*ibid.*, p. 372). “The leading essential element, that which constituted a Theocracy, was the fact that God condescended to act as an earthly Ruler. Now it is self-evident that no such distinctive feature was inaugurated at the First Advent” (*ibid.*, p. 423). “Jesus, after He announced the postponement, gives an epitome of Jewish destiny (Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), and only when the Sec. Advent arrives does Jewish tribulation cease” (*ibid.*, p. 629). “Nowhere is a Theocracy at present existing on earth, because God refuses to act now, for any nation or people, in the capacity of an earthly Ruler” (*ibid.*, 3:583). “In a day when the minds of men are occupied with thoughts of war, as they have been for years, how can anyone logically reconcile that with what Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or Ezekiel foretold of the reign of peace on the earth during the kingdom age? Where is the renovated earth? Since when is Satan bound, no longer to tempt me” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 254). “In the period between the advents the Gentile colossus will still be standing, whereas the kingdom age begins with the utter and complete destruction of the colossus, according to the prophecy of Daniel 2” (*ibid.*, p. 255). “Premillennialists claim that the Messianic Kingdom is not now in existence, but they do recognize the mystery form of the kingdom (a provisional arrangement not seen in the Old Testament, but revealed in Matthew 13); and furthermore, they believe all believers are immediately admitted to the kingdom of God (John 3:3)” (*ibid.*, p. 264). “If when our Lord was on earth He proclaimed the Kingdom and His Person as inseparable, and if the future manifestation of the Kingdom will depend on His personal presence, it is not easy to understand how there could be today any genuine Kingdom of God on earth in the Mediatorial sense” (McClain, *GK*, p. 305). “...a future Kingdom, toward which as a glorious goal all the labors of the Church are directed” (*ibid.*, p. 436).

The Kingdom Was Postponed

The Kingdom was offered to Israel by Jesus at His First Advent, but due to Jewish unbelief, it was *postponed* until Jesus’ Second Advent.

Statement of the Postponement

The postponement of the Kingdom is *stated and/or indicated* in numerous passages of Scripture. “Therefore I say to you [the chief priests and Pharisees, leaders of Israel], **the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it**” (Matt. 21:43). “The Kingdom... the nation, therefore, must have sustained a peculiar, special relation to it, or else it could not have been taken from

them” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:389). “The gospel with its blessings is just as freely offered to the Jews, and the privileges of the Church just as graciously extended to them as to the Gentiles. Hence it follows: that the Kingdom of God taken from them is not the gospel, or admission into the Church, or enjoyment of Church blessings, or the privileges of this dispensation, because none of these things were taken from them. What they lost is the Kingdom itself, just as covenanted, and not the after provisional appointments to still secure the Kingdom in the future. Is it not surprising that so plain a feature is so much ignored” (*ibid.*)? “‘The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.’... This text does not affirm that the Kingdom will be taken from the nation of Israel and given to a nation which is another nation racially and politically. When our Lord said the Kingdom would be taken away ‘from you,’ He was speaking to the ‘chief priests and the elders’ (Matt. 21:23)... ‘they perceived that he spake of them’ (Matt. 21:45)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 295). “But this Kingdom, as foreseen by the prophets and announced by our Lord, is not therefore metamorphosed into something else. The same Kingdom shall yet be ‘given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof’ (Matt. 21:43). Now the question is, What nation? Here the Greek noun *ethnos* must not be pressed to mean *Gentile*, for the same term is often used by John and Paul in referring to the nation of Israel (John 11:51; Acts 24:17). And according to the uniform testimony of Scripture, the covenants and rights of this people are irrevocable (Jer. 33:24-26; Rom. 9:3-5). The fulfillment of these divine promises may indeed be interrupted temporarily, and certain individuals or even a whole generation may be cut off from the benefits, but the promises to Israel cannot be abrogated. And although God cannot bestow His covenanted blessing upon ‘a disobedient and gainsaying people’ (Rom. 10:21), He can and will purge and purify this very people so that it may once more be a *nation* before Him. There is to be a future restoration (Rom. 11:11-15), a new birth for this nation (Isa. 66:5-13). Just as the resurrection body is in one sense a new body and yet in another sense the same body, even so the Israel to whom the Kingdom shall be given will be a *new* nation spiritually but also the same nation historically which came from the loins of Abraham. This is nothing unusual in the manner of human speech. We may and do speak of the German nation today as something radically different from the nation of Hitler’s terrible years, yet the historical and vital connection between the two has never been broken” (*ibid.*, p. 296). “Just as in the case of a regenerated *individual*, it is wholly proper to contrast the *new* man with the *old* man without any implication of two separate persons; even so the nation which shall receive the Kingdom will be *spiritually* a new nation but, at the

same time, racially and politically the Israel of history” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “Gaebelein [in *The Gospel of Matthew*, II. 138] suggests that the ‘nation’ which will take their place will be other Israelites: ‘The nation to whom the Lord promises the Kingdom is not the Church. The Church is called the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the Habitation of God by the Spirit, the Lamb’s Wife, but never a nation. The nation is Israel still, but that believing remnant of the nation, living when the Lord comes’” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 172). “...withdrawal of the offer of the kingdom and its postponement until the King’s future return. In Matthew 21:43 Christ said, ‘The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruits.’ While some see the nation of whom Christ spoke as a reference to Gentiles in this present age, it seems better to understand it as a future generation in Israel which will repent as the Davidic form of the kingdom is instituted by the returning Messiah. Regardless, this passage clearly indicates a withdrawal of the offer of the kingdom to that generation” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 226). **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’”** (Matt. 23:37-39)! “...the 118th Psalm... The Lord Jesus Himself put its Messianic reference beyond all dispute when, immediately after His Triumphal Entry and in the face of the opposition from the Jewish leaders, He quoted from this psalm and applied its prophetic words to His own career: ‘Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’ (Matt. 21:42 with Ps. 118:22-23). And again, later, as He pronounced the judgment of desolation upon the rebellious nation, He graciously quoted from the same psalm to indicate the joyous words which will be spoken sincerely by a future repentant Israel in the day when He will come back from heaven to establish and reign in His glorious Kingdom: ‘Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord’ (Matt. 23:38-39 with Ps. 118:26)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 349). **“The stone which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner. This is Jehovah’s doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which Jehovah hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, we beseech thee, O Jehovah: O Jehovah, we beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he**

that cometh in the name of Jehovah: We have blessed you out of the house of Jehovah” (Ps. 118:22-26). “The judgment of [Matt. 23] verse 38, ‘Behold, your house is left unto you desolate,’ must refer primarily to the temple, for the lament of Matthew 23:37-39 is followed immediately by the statement, ‘And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple’ (Matt. 24:1)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 361). “...the Shekinah-Glory... Now once again for a brief season, the Glory of God in the Person of the Messianic King had been present in the temple (Luke 19:47; John 12:41). But the nation had rejected Him; and as He leaves this temple, it is no longer named ‘my house’ (Matt. 21:13), but ‘your house’ (Matt. 23:38). And by reason of His rejection and withdrawal, Israel’s house is left ‘desolate.’ With a proper feeling for the historical importance of our Lord’s word and action, Lange [in J. P. Lange, *Lange’s Commentary*, footnote on Matt. 23:37] remarks, ‘The word marks the moment at which Jesus leaves the temple, and leaves it for a sign that it was abandoned by the Spirit of the theocracy.’... The desolation, thus inaugurated by our Lord’s judicial departure, will reach its dreadful climax in something named by Him ‘the abomination of desolation’ (Matt. 24:15), when the Jewish temple will once more have a regal occupant—this time, Satan’s own great pretender and usurper whose presence there will loose upon the nation its most terrible ‘time of trouble’ (Matt. 24:21-22; 2 Thess. 2:3-4)” (*ibid.*). “The nation which is left ‘desolate’ will some day acclaim the same rejected King with joyous cry, ‘Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord’ (Matt. 23:39). These words cannot refer to any other future time except the second advent of Christ and the conversion of Israel. In this final and ‘exquisite’ utterance of our Lord, therefore, we have the inspired refutation of the modern and popular theory that God is done with the *na-tion* of Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 362). “It is **like a man, away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge**, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. Therefore, be on the alert — for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrowing, or in the morning — lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all, “Be on the alert”” (Mark 13:34-37)! “And **be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast**, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. **Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third**, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. And be sure of this, that

if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. You too, **be ready**; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect” (Luke 12:36-40). “And the Lord said, ‘Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing **when he comes**. Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that slave says in his heart, “**My master will be a long time in coming**,” and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him, and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers. And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more” (Luke 12:42-48). “**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord”**” (Luke 13:34-35)! “And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because **He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, ‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.” But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.” And it came about that when he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done. And the first appeared, saying, “Master, your mina has made ten minas more.” And he said to him, “Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.” And the second came, saying, “Your mina, master, has made five minas.” And he said to him also, “And you are to be over five cities.” And another came, saying, “Master, behold your mina, which I kept**

put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.” He said to him, “By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?” And he said to the bystanders, “Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.” And they said to him, “Master, he has ten minas already.” I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. But **these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them**, bring them here and slay them in my presence.’ And **after He had said these things, He was going on ahead, ascending to Jerusalem**” (Luke 19:11-28). “...during His absence there was no Kingdom, being gone to receive the power to reign; ...He would return and then manifest His acquired power” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 382). “Subordinate kings went to Rome to receive the investiture to their kingdoms from the Roman Emperor, and then returned to occupy them and reign. So Christ received from his Father, after his ascension, the investiture to his kingdom; *but with the intention not to occupy it, till his return at his second coming*. In token of this investiture he takes his seat as the Lamb on the divine throne” [quoting E. B. Elliott, *Horae Apocalypticae*, on Rev. 5:6-8] (McClain, *GK*, p. 340). “...the parable in Luke 19:11-28... ‘thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once’ (vs. 11)... In this parable (Luke 19), a man of noble birth... In this parable Christ taught that He who possesses the right to rule would be absent from the place over which He was appointed to rule... The nation Israel was appointed as the King’s stewards but proved to be unfaithful. Only those found faithful to Him from among the nation will be admitted at the King’s coming into His kingdom” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 226). “The parable of the talents (Luke 19:11-27)... the nobleman (Christ) goes into a far country (heaven) for two purposes: to receive a kingdom and to return... servant (Gentile [?—*ed.*])... citizens (Jews)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:483) “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “The times of the Gentiles’ are indeed preordained, but only in view of this foreordained number of the elect. The foreknowledge of God comprehended the delay in gathering out, and determines the end accordingly” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:402). “Luke records a section which has no exact parallel in the other two Gospels. It is, in fact, a literary parenthesis inserted in Luke’s account of

coming events. This parenthetical section begins with the words, ‘*But before all these things*’ (21:12, ASV), i.e., the things already referred to which will mark the beginning of the ‘end.’ The section ends with the words, ‘*And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*’ (21:24)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 364) “Only Luke gives the panoramic reference to the ‘times of the Gentiles’ which are conterminous with the subjection of Jerusalem to Gentile power. This should not be surprising, for careful students have noted that, of the three Synoptic writers, Luke (a Gentile) has the more universal outlook” (*ibid.*, p. 365). “The very word *until* means that the Gentile trampling of Jerusalem is temporary” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 202). “... ‘Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles *until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*’ (Luke 21:24). Israel rejected her Messiah, and the Kingdom was taken from Israel *temporarily*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:481). “And He told them a parable: **Behold the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. Even so you, too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.** Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away” (Luke 21:29-33). “Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world:** if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but **now is my kingdom not from hence**” (John 18:36, ASV). “John 18:36: ‘Not of This World’... Jesus said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But *now my kingdom is from another place.*’ It is difficult to square this with earlier statements by John the Baptist and Jesus that the hoped-for messianic kingdom was ‘at hand’ (i.e. ‘near’—Matt. 3:2; 4:17) unless one recognizes that when Jesus’ offer was rejected, an interregnum period was enacted (to accomplish God’s eternal purpose to save the Gentiles) between the Advent and the Second Coming, when all prophecies of the messianic kingdom will be fulfilled (25:31-45)” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 493). “John 18:36... Christ’s words *were* a clear and emphatic denial that He had any intentions of setting up such a kingdom—*then*. Jesus is only the King of a ‘spiritual’ kingdom—*now*” (*ibid.*, p. 583). “And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, **‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority’**” (Acts 1:6-7)

The Fact of the Postponement

Considered collectively, the above passages, especially when examined in conjunction with all the Old Testament covenants and prophecies, clearly indicate *the fact of a postponement* of the Kingdom. “The Kingdom is nowhere (although it is currently believed) directly asserted to be a resultant of the First Advent, but in the declarations of Christ and the apostles it is distinctly linked with the Sec. Advent, as e.g. Matt. 25:34, 2 Tim. 4:1, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:244) **“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’”** (Matt. 25:34). “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by **His appearing and His kingdom**” (2 Tim. 4:1) “We see no such Kingdom yet established which meets the requirements of covenant and prophecy, if the latter are received in their plain grammatical sense” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:598). “Can it be possible that David’s Son has a real Kingdom here on earth, when David’s throne and Kingdom are overthrown? When Jerusalem is dntrodden? When Jesus declared (Matt. 23:39, Luke 13:34) that He would be absent from it, leaving it desolate, until a certain return? Alas! Men by ignoring the express language of the covenant, and by an unwarranted substitution, set up another as the Messianic Kingdom, overlooking the simple fact that no Kingdom (so called) can possibly be acknowledged unless it restores (as e.g. Isa. 1:26, 27, etc. [“**Then I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning; After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city. Zion will be redeemed with justice, And her repentant ones with righteousness.**’]) the identical Theocracy withdrawn. It is self-evident—as we have shown in detail—that the twelve and the seventy, who were preachers of the Kingdom, had not the remotest idea of such extraordinary transmutations as have appeared engrafted, by human reason, on the doctrine of the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 664). “The advocates of the Church Kingdom idea... [and]... The Rationalists... a false premise... The thing taken for granted is, that the Kingdom immediately followed the ministry of Jesus; the deduction made is, that being diverse from the one predicted by the grammatical sense, either a change was made in the Plan, or the predictions themselves must be interpreted in a sense to make them correspond with the changes introduced; the error of both is, that neither one nor the other pay any attention to the positive declarations of this same Jesus (after the representative men of the nation conspired to put Him to death) that, owing to the non-repentance of, and His rejection by, the nation, this identical Kingdom—the burden of prophecy,

the subject of early preaching, the one bound in covenant relationship with the Jewish nation—is postponed to a future period” (*ibid.*, 3:484). “The essential point, which cannot be reasonably disputed is this: the Mediatorial Kingdom of Old Testament prophecy, which was announced in our Lord’s early ministry as “at hand,” was not established because of Jewish unbelief, and its arrival is now set definitely at the second advent of the King” [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, p. 355] (Feinberg, *M*, p. 147). “In conclusion, Israel is not the church, and the church is not the kingdom of Old Testament prophecy. That kingdom, offered and rejected by Israel, is postponed for future complete, literal fulfillment. Such a view is falsely accused of bypassing or minimizing the cross, but that charge is unsubstantiated. Daniel 9:26 [‘And **after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing**: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.’] alone connects the cross with the postponement of the kingdom. ‘Cut off’ surely signifies the death of the Messiah. ‘Have nothing’ must mean that He does not get the kingdom. Note the gender of ‘his own’ in John 1:11 [‘**He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.**’]. It cannot mean only a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men, for in that sense He did have numerous disciples even in His earthly ministry. The King was rejected and His kingdom postponed for the second advent until realization in the millennial reign” (*ibid.*, p. 280). “...the interregnum which will intervene between His death and His return from heaven in glory to establish the Kingdom on earth” (McClain, *GK*, p. 321). “During the present Church age, from Pentecost to the second coming of Christ, the Mediatorial Kingdom must be said to be in *abeyance*, in the sense of its actual establishment on earth” (*ibid.*, p. 439). “When the nation’s response of rejection was clear, Christ set aside the nation—those related to Him by blood—and declared that He would accept only those related to Him by faith ([Matt. 12] vv. 48-50). In the mind of Christ, the destiny of the nation was sealed. Christ later would announce that the kingdom of God had been taken from Israel and would be given to a people who would produce the fruit of righteousness (21:43). Jerusalem would come under judgment (24:37-39) and would fall to the Gentiles (Luke 21:24). From this point on Christ no longer publicly announced that the kingdom was at hand; instead, He indicated that the kingdom had been postponed. He was not anticipating a throne, but instead foresaw a cross. What He had originally come to fulfill in God’s covenant program for Israel had been postponed until another coming” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 219). “Matthew wrote not

to prove to the Jews that Jesus actually was the Messiah—as his Gospel is so frequently interpreted. Rather, he wrote to explain why—after the true Messiah came and was introduced to Israel by the appointed forerunner and authenticated Himself and His offer of the kingdom by the miracles that He performed—the kingdom He came to establish was not instituted in fulfillment of the covenants and promises” (*ibid.*, p. 265). “...the offer of the kingdom was rescinded with Israel’s rejection to be reoffered to a later Jewish generation which will accept it and, in turn, bring in the establishment of the kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 272). “As a result of Israel’s rejection of the Messiah, the offer of the kingdom was rescinded, or withdrawn and, therefore, postponed. After the rejection in Matthew 12, Jesus proclaimed a new facet of God’s kingdom program in Matthew 13” (*ibid.*, p. 396). “With the withdrawal of the kingdom, Christ announces ‘woes upon the leaders of the nation’ and the coming of judgment in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 466] (*ibid.*, p. 397). “The guilt is limited to ‘that generation of Israel’ of Jesus’ day, and the judgment that Jesus pronounced came upon that generation in A.D. 70” [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 356-359] (*ibid.*, p. 411). “Feinberg points out that the concept of ‘postponement’ is purely from the human perspective, for Scripture views events from the divine perspective as well as the human standpoint. So, as far as God is concerned, who knows the end from the beginning, nothing is postponed” (*ibid.*, p. 413). “Again, Christ’s kingdom parables introduced the previously unknown plan (mystery) of God by which plans for the messianic kingdom (Israel’s final restoration) would be put on hold in favor of the mystery form (cf. [Matt.] 21:43). Since the chosen nation would completely reject and then crucify her Messiah, the freight train of Israel would be *temporarily* sidetracked (Rom. 11:15) in order to allow the express train of the church to come through on the main tracks (v. 25). Only then, provoked by Gentile salvation (v. 11), will Israel finally (at the Second Coming) embrace her Messiah, when Christ returns to judge the nations and separate good from evil” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:493).

The Cause of the Postponement

The *cause* of the postponement was, generally speaking, Israel’s sinfulness and refusal to repent, and specifically, the nation’s rejection of Jesus as Messiah.

Israel was sinful and refused to repent. “Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because **they did not repent**” (Matt. 11:20). “...the Jewish nation... on its refusal (through its

representative men) to repent, the Kingdom is postponed” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:42). “The Jews themselves, in e.g. ‘The Liturgy of the Jews’ (Art. on, Littell’s *Liv. Age*, Oct. 7th, 1876), acknowledge their sinfulness: ‘We acknowledge that we have sinned; that we have acted wickedly, O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, we beseech Thee, let Thy anger and Thy wrath be turned away from Jerusalem, Thy City and Thy Holy Mountain; for it is on account of our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors that Jerusalem and Thy people are become objects of reproach to all around us,’ etc.” (*ibid.*, 1:225)

This sinfulness and refusal to repent led ultimately to *Israel’s rejection of Jesus as Messiah*. “And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because **He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately**. He said therefore, ‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.” But **his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us”**’” (Luke 19:11-14). “But **you disowned the Holy and Righteous One**, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you” (Acts 3:14) “*Leila Ada* (a converted Jewess)... *Leila Ada*. p. 59, asks what terrible sin her ancestors had committed which called for eighteen centuries of removal from the land, when her fathers, guilty of idolatry—the greatest sin against God—had only seventy years of captivity enforced, etc... ‘What can that crime be, which was committed by our ancestors, and of which to this day we have not repented? Whatever it is, it must be some act or deed of a most atrocious character, an act or deed in the approval of which we have steadfastly persisted, and the guilt of which we have obstinately refused to acknowledge’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:421).

Consequences of the Postponement

Consequences of the Kingdom’s postponement include Israel’s blindness and trampling, the destruction of Jerusalem, the scattering of the Jews throughout the world, the nation’s dormancy, and an extension of the times of the Gentiles.

First, *Israel was blinded*. “And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: **“Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.” Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Lest they see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts,** And return and

be healed” (Isa. 6:9-10). “And Jesus said, ‘For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and **that those who see may become blind**’” (John 9:39). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “It is meet that the Jews should remain in unbelief as long as the Gentiles did. The Gentiles remained excluded from the ordinances of the true religion for 2000 years, from the call of Abraham to the coming of Christ... And yet, for all we know, the time may be shortened or lengthened as best suits the Divine pleasure” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:420). “It will be recalled that there is a peculiar blindness upon Israel respecting the gospel” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:305) “‘The blindness is represented as judicial—a punishment inflicted by God on disobedience and hardness of heart’” [quoting S. G. Green, *Handbook to the Grammar of the New Testament*, pp. 321-322] (McClain, *GK*, p. 323). “Because of Israel’s rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, Israel’s present relationship to God is different than the relationship prior to the rejection. Spiritually, Israel is now under a special judicial blindness” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 415) “Walvoord [in *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 165-168] concludes that... ‘Israel in unbelief is blinded,’ but ‘this blinded condition is temporary, not final’” (*ibid.*, p. 462). “The meaning of the ‘blindness in part’ is not ‘that all Israel has been partially blinded... nor does it imply that the blindness is partial as to time.’ What it does mean is that ‘there will be some in Israel who will not be blinded,’ and these make up the Remnant of Israel. For this very reason, those ‘who try to discourage Jewish evangelization’ are wrong and are guilty of ignorance and ‘false notions’” [quoting Feinberg, *Israel*, pp. 156-158] (*ibid.*, p. 551). “Feinberg [*Israel*, pp. 159-160], like the majority of Dispensationalists, distinguishes between *the fulness of the Gentiles* and *the times of the Gentiles*. The former is an ‘ecclesiastical designation’ which began with Pentecost in Acts two and will end at the Rapture. The latter is a ‘political designation’ which began with Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Captivity and will end with the Antichrist and the second coming” (*ibid.*). (See also our discussion of the removal of Israel’s blindness in the *Events of the Last Half (3.5 Yrs.) of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Second, *Israel was trampled*. “and **they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “The rejection of Him and of His sacrifice was followed by a terrible overthrow of the nation and a continued

subjection, as He and the prophets predicted, under Gentile domination, down to the present day. It confirms the validity of His Theocratic Kingship, and the preciousness of His sacrifice” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:420). (See also the section *The Times of the Gentiles* of our chapter *The Fall of the Kingdom*.)

Third, *Jerusalem was destroyed*. “Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And **after the threescore and two weeks** shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and **the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary**; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:24–27). “But when you see **Jerusalem** surrounded by armies, then recognize that **her desolation is at hand**. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because **these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled**. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for **there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:20–24). “Then, joining with seven other spirits, more evil than himself, they enter the man; and his last state is worse than the first. ‘Even so,’ Christ declares, ‘shall it be also unto this wicked generation’ (Matt. 12:43–45)... As Ellicott [C.J. Ellicott, *Commentary*, on Matt. 12:45] has said, ‘We must turn to the picture drawn by the Jewish historian of the crimes, frenzies, insanities of the final struggle that ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, if we would take an adequate measure of the “last state” of that “wicked generation.”’” (McClain, *GK*, p. 318).

Fourth, *Israel was scattered*. “**You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities**” (Amos 3:2). “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts: **smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered**; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God” (Zech. 13:7-9). “God’s Shepherd, the Messiah, was smitten and so His sheep, Israel, were scattered throughout the world” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 787). “But when you see **Jerusalem** surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in **Judea** flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to **this people**, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and **will be led captive into all the nations**; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:20–24). “The punishment, the scattering and desolation, of the Jewish nation is itself proof of their election as, e.g. Amos (ch. 3:2), declares: ‘You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.’ This casting off is only temporary, as evidence e.g. Zech. 10:6, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:215). “And I will strengthen the house of **Judah**, and I will save **the house of Joseph**, and **I will bring them back**; for I have mercy upon them; and **they shall be as though I had not cast them off**: for I am Jehovah their God, and I will hear them” (Zech. 10:6). “...the fulfillment of prophecy, down to the present day, with the abundant assurances that this cast-away condition of the nation is only temporary and not perpetual” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:49).

Fifth, *Israel as a nation became dormant*. “And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: “Keep on **listening, but do not perceive**; Keep on **looking, but do not understand**.” Render the **hearts of this people insensitive**, Their **ears dull**, And their **eyes dim**, Lest they see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed” (Isa. 6:9-10). “Jesus said to them, ‘Did you never read in the Scriptures, “**THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME**

THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES”? Therefore I say to you, **the kingdom of God will be taken away from you**, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it” (Matt. 21:42–43). “From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, **so these also now have been disobedient**, in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. For **God has shut up all in disobedience** that He might show mercy to all” (Rom. 11:28–32). “God for a time leaving the nation first bidden, and treating the Jews as individuals (i.e. not in their national relationship)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:413) “Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 6:83] states: Now Israel is dormant and all that is related to her covenants and promises is in abeyance. To them—not as a nation, but as individuals—the privilege of being saved unto heavenly glory along with individual Gentiles is extended in this day of God’s heavenly purpose. No Jewish covenants are now being fulfilled; they are ‘scattered,’ ‘peeled,’ ‘broken off,’ and yet to be ‘hated of all nations’ for Christ’s name’s sake. This is the one peculiar age in which there is ‘no difference’ between Jew and Gentile, though in former times God Himself had instituted the most drastic distinction between these two classes of people” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 419). “Chafer notes that Israel is now ‘scattered,’ ‘peeled,’ ‘broken off,’ etc., but these key elements are part of the Palestinian Covenant. While it is true that God is dealing today with Jews and Gentiles as individuals, this is not to deny that God is still working with Israel as a nation as well” (*ibid.*).

And sixth, *the times of the Gentiles were extended*. “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “Down to the present the covenant remains unfulfilled, and the Kingdom continues postponed until the times of the Gentiles have elapsed. The investiture, visible, is delayed for wise, and, to us accounted worthy to reign, glorious purposes” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:578). See also the section *The Times of the Gentiles* of our chapter *The Fall of the Kingdom*.

Objectives of the Postponement

God’s *objectives* of the postponement include Jesus’ vindication, Israel’s punishment, the introduction of an interim facet of the Kingdom (the

church) and the gathering of the members of the church. “Renan and his class totally ignore the abundance of Scripture assigning the reasons for postponement, just as if they had no existence” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:384). “...the reason for its delay, viz., in punishment of the nation with which it is connected... a long period of Gentile dominion during which it cannot exist. God... during this season of delay is gathering out the material, i.e. the saints, who, as co-heirs, joint-rulers with ‘the man ordained,’ shall form such an illustrious, all powerful body identified and incorporated with this Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom, that re-erected it will be sustained with purity, dignity and stability. God’s ways are marvellous in preparing for His own government, overruling the freedom of man and his bias for sin, and constantly, slowly but surely, advancing toward His intended goal... the Jewish nation and the race itself will after so long a trial of Gentile domination and its historical results, especially as witnessed at the time of the end in its confederated wickedness, be the better prepared to acknowledge the incomparable superiority of God’s form of government” (*ibid.*, 2:126). “The reasons for this postponement of inheriting have been given (1) as a punishment to the Jewish nation for its sinfulness; (2) as a means of grace and mercy to Gentiles for engrafting; (3) as a measure by which to obtain the allotted number of the elect to sustain the Kingdom, etc. Hence, a present non-fulfillment should only confirm our hope in a future fulfillment” (*ibid.*, p. 203).

Through the postponement, *Jesus has been vindicated, is being vindicated even now, and will be further vindicated* in the future. “**But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand.** Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to **this people**, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and **will be led captive into all the nations;** and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:20–24). “...the dispersion... a standing proof of inspiration” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:420) “It is in view of this very postponement of the Kingdom—the Jewish nation having shown itself unworthy to receive at that time the re-establishment of the Theocracy—that Jesus foretells the temporary rejection and overthrow of the nation, the down-treading of Jerusalem by the Gentiles during an allotted period, the calling of the Gentiles, a continued national

unbelief during a determined time, the dispersed and yet preserved condition of the nation, the establishment of the Christian Church to secure a seed unto Abraham... Since a delay of fulfillment, established by expressly foretelling it and by resultant existing facts, is no proof of a nonfulfillment, but rather indicative of the wonderful knowledge, power, and consistency of the Person through whom they are given, it follows that the changes, introduced for a time, instead of being antagonistic to the inspiration of the Word and the claims of Christ astonishingly confirm the same. The longer the postponement the more cumulative the evidence, seeing that eighteen centuries of continuous fulfillment of introduced change only increases the display of Christ's wonderful foreknowledge. The postponement thus presented by Jesus forms the only true consistent answer to many of the objections urged against the inspiration of the Bible, for instead of leading us to discard the obvious teachings of the Old Test., the preaching of the disciples and apostles, the faith of the churches, both Jewish and Gentile, just organized, and, above all, instead of placing Jesus in a false position of sending out disciples to preach what was not true, of holding out inducements which were vain, of professing that which He could not perform, of predicting that which can never be realized, and of shifting His plans to accommodate His own inability to give them success, it binds these together into a firm union, meets with a valid reason each point, and fairly vindicates the nature and character of the Messiah" (*ibid.*, 3:485).

Also through the postponement, *Israel is being punished*. "God, foreseeing this defection of the large portion of the nation, postpones this Kingdom, both as a punishment to the nation and as a merciful provision, that He may gather out from among the Jews and Gentiles the people necessary for its re-establishment upon a glorious and triumphant basis" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:180).

The postponement *facilitated the introduction of an interim facet of the Kingdom program (the church)*. "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it" (Matt. 16:18). "I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But **by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles**, to make them jealous. Now if **their transgression be riches for the world** and **their failure be riches for the Gentiles**, how much more will their fulfillment be" (Rom. 11:11–12)! "The postponement forms the basis of the call of the Gentiles, the establishment of the Ch. Church, and the distinctive Chiliastic views of the early Church (referring the Kingdom, etc., to the Sec. Advent)" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:621). "...future... 'I will build.'... the Day of Pentecost" (McClain, *GK*, p. 326) "The

Greek word is *ekklesia*, occurring here (Matt. 16:18) for the first time in the New Testament” (*ibid.*, p. 327).

And, during the postponement, God has been *gathering the members of the church*. “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For **the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself**” (Acts 2:38–39). “Simeon has related how **God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name**” (Acts 15:14). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “...that Kingdom, as covenanted and predicted... its postponement until a Seed—the elect, chosen ones—of Abraham is gathered out” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:384). “The Kingdom is held in postponement until a certain predetermined number of elect are gathered” (*ibid.*, p. 593).

All things considered, with all these divine objectives being met, it should be evident that the postponement of the Kingdom *was not failure*. “A postponement for the wisest of purposes, is no failure” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:544). “Shall this ever be said of God, that He undertook a work that He cannot accomplish, or that the sinfulness of man defeated His ultimate purpose, or that, unable to proceed in a set purpose, He changed His Plan to accommodate Himself to human imperfection. No! When God undertakes a work, we may well abide His own time for its accomplishment” (*ibid.*, p. 545).

The Kingdom Was Not Transformed

Contrary to much popular opinion, the Kingdom was not *transformed* at Jesus’ First Advent. The theocratic Jewish Kingdom was not transformed into a spiritual kingdom, or the intermediate state (of the dead), or the church, or anything else. “The calling of the Gentiles resulted, not from a change in the Kingdom (God forbid), but, from the posture of the Jewish nation, viz.: its deliberate rejection of the King and tendered Kingdom. To argue that the Kingdom itself was changed to accommodate it to the Gentiles, is to violate the covenants, to annul God’s oath to David, to make the Gentiles another separate and superior elect nation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:411). “We are, therefore, not at liberty to change the nature of the Kingdom in order to accommodate it to the state of things existing during this period of postponement” (*ibid.*, p. 626). “...theological alchemy” (Walvoord, *MK*, p.

298) “The assertion that Israel does not mean Israel, and that literal kingdom-prophecies can be made to mean a spiritual kingdom, leads at once and inevitably to amillennialism. (It also leads to ‘confusionism.’)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:586)

Any such transformation of the Kingdom *would have been loudly protested by the Jews*. “How exceeding difficult it would be to eradicate or change the notion of the Kingdom entertained at the time of the First Advent by substituting another without at once entailing a fierce and widespread controversy between unbelieving and believing Jews; and which was evidently averted, as the early Church belief indicates, by the retention of the idea but postponing its realization to the period of the Sec. Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:485). (See our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom message preached by Jesus, etc., stirred up no controversy with the Jews in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*.)

What the Kingdom is Not

Before confirming again what the Kingdom *is*, we’ll first outline what it *is not*.

The Kingdom is not *the gospel of the Kingdom*. “We must discriminate between the means employed by which the Kingdom can be obtained—which is also Gospel or glad tidings—and the Kingdom itself—which proclaimed is the Gospel in its fullest sense” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:152). “If the Gospel in the past, if the most eminent piety and devotion, has not removed the ills incident to life, how will it do this in the future” (*ibid.*, 2:154). “The ‘Appeal’... for the direct agency by which peace is to be secured and wars ended, it substitutes the Gospel (only designed to save ‘them that believe’) in the place of Jesus Christ and His army” (*ibid.*, p. 770).

The Kingdom is not *repentance, faith, obedience or union with Christ*. “Repentance, faith, obedience, union with Christ, etc., are essential for inheriting, but do not constitute the Kingdom itself. The covenant forbids it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:617).

The Kingdom is not *personal, present salvation*. “The error of some writers consists in this: having no proper conception of another and coming dispensation here on the earth, in which salvation is to be realized, they make the faith, hope, and earnest of salvation the salvation itself, and under the influence of this misapprehension indulge themselves in corresponding laudatory flights, opposed alike to fact and the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:377).

The Kingdom is not *a spiritual reign of God in the heart*. “nor will they say, “Look, here it is!” or, “There it is!” For behold, **the kingdom of God**

is in your midst [i.e. “within you”]” (Luke 17:21). “‘the Kingdom of God is within you,’ forgetting that this was addressed to the wicked Pharisees” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:613) “If piety, religion, God’s reign in the heart, etc., is the Messianic Kingdom, we may well ask what need of such promises of the Kingdom in the Davidic line and why not then date the Kingdom from Adam down to the present, seeing that ‘piety’ or ‘religion,’ or ‘God’s reign in the heart,’ has existed continuously?... Piety, religion, etc., are prerequisites to attain to this Kingdom, and are to exist in the Kingdom itself, but are far from constituting the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 583). “There is nothing that our opponents allege concerning Christ’s reign in the heart and Headship over the Church, which we cannot, and do not, cordially receive, claiming, however, that all this does not constitute a Kingdom, but is purely a provisional, spiritual, and providential oversight and rule tending toward the ultimate realization of the Kingdom itself. We distinguish between the means and the end; those who oppose us either blend the two together, or assume the former to be the latter” (*ibid.*). “Neither Abraham, nor his engrafted seed have as yet inherited the Kingdom: hence the Kingdom must be something different from ‘piety,’ ‘religion,’ and ‘God’s reign in the heart’” (*ibid.*, p. 585). “If the Kingdom is what Dr. McCosh, and others, inform us, ‘God’s rule in the hearts of men,’... then covenant language has no definite meaning; then the Prophets and the early Preachers miserably mistook this Kingdom, promising as in the future what learned men tell us ever existed. No” (*ibid.*, p. 605)! “‘God’s reign in the heart,’... Such definitions, however well meaning, are virtually a lowering of Scripture promise and of the intelligence of ancient worthies. Feeling this deeply, sadly, we write plainly for the sake of the truth” (*ibid.*). “...the notion of an existing Kingdom ‘within man,’ and adds, ‘and yet this opinion gains ground.’ Alas! This is but too true that it is gaining ground, rooting out the early Church belief, and preparing both the Church and the world for the predicted state of unbelief on this very subject” (*ibid.*, 2:40). “‘God’s reign in the hearts,’... is not the Jewish conception and usage, thus violating the general analogy of Scripture on the subject” (*ibid.*, p. 43). “...the view of Chrysostom, Luther, etc., that ‘within you’ means ‘in your hearts,’... Spiritualize it, and then ask whether such spiritualisms can explain either the language of the prophets as to its world-dominion, or what Kingdom was really taken from the Jews” (*ibid.*, p. 45). “Like all the great preachers of the Word, Christ fought many of His battles over *neglected* truth. It is possible today, were He standing in some pulpits, that He might stress other aspects of the Kingdom which are currently ignored and even denied. We may also add that if the Kingdom, announced as ‘at hand’ by the Lord, had been exclusively a ‘spiritual

kingdom,' or as some have defined it, 'the rule of God in the heart,' such an announcement would have had no special significance whatever to Israel, for such a rule of God had *always* been recognized among the people of God. Compare the psalmist's affirmation concerning the righteous, 'The law of his God is in his heart' (37:31). Any denial of this would certainly be a new kind of dispensationalism" (McClain, *GK*, p. 303). "What Ladd does not explain is, if Christ only offered an intangible spiritual kingdom which was God's reign in the heart, how could such a thing be 'taken away' from Israel and given to the Church? Such a spiritual reign of God in the heart of the believer was always true, even before Christ came, so what was so new about Christ's offer" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 267)? "The relationship of Israel to the spiritual kingdom has not changed; there was a remnant before Christ, and there is a remnant after Christ. What was really unique with Christ's offer that Israel rejected so that the kingdom was taken away? It appears that whatever it was, it had to be more than just a spiritual kingdom by which God reigns in the heart of the believer. That type of reign is still true among many Jews" (*ibid.*). "Something far more tangible and unique had to be offered to Israel to cause such a decisive act of taking the kingdom away from Israel" (*ibid.*).

The Kingdom is not *a spiritual kingdom*. "Jesus answered, '**My kingdom is not of this world**. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, **My kingdom is not of this realm**'" (John 18:36). "Again: this teaches us how to regard the view that in order to found another (spiritual) Kingdom, Jesus, in opposition to the Pharisees, cuts Himself loose 'from all connection with the Theocracy' (so Shenkel, quoted by Christlieb, *Mod. Doubt.*, p. 374). Well may we ask, what Theocracy was then in existence, when even James (Acts 15:[13-]16 ['And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, 'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT'"']) informs us that the Theocratic Kingdom was in ruins? The truth is, none existed as none now exists, although writers, against the meaning of the word (denoting God's condescending to act in the capacity of earthly ruler) now apply it to the Romish, Greek, and Protestant Churches. It was the Theocratic Kingdom that was offered to the Jews, because, owing to sin, it had been withdrawn from them, and when this tender was refused Jesus positively declared that

this Theocracy should not be established until at His Sec. Advent. Again: this enables us to see how unwarranted Strauss (*Life of Jesus*, vol. 1, p. 520) is in asserting that Jesus at the First Advent hoped to restore the Davidic Kingdom by the Supernatural interference of God, and that the disciples had this idea of restoration ‘gives us a very small idea of their powers of comprehension.’ The answer is plain: the conditional tender of the Kingdom, and the repeated predictions of Jesus concerning its postponement, amply sustain the Messianic position of Jesus, and that He entertained no false hopes. As to the disciples, so long as the Kingdom was preached, and until they were fully enlightened to its postponement it would have been derogatory to their faith in the Kingdom, in the covenant and predictions, yea, in the Messiah Himself if they did not believe in the restored Davidic throne and Kingdom, that being the only Kingdom promised to David’s Son. The lack of comprehension in this case is not in the disciples, but in unbelievers, who are blinded by its present non-establishment, which they parade as proof that it never will be” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:520).

The Kingdom is not *Jesus’ present authority*. “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth**’” (Matt. 28:18). “To refer to the Divine attributes lodged with Jesus (such as His power over the angels, etc.), and from thence infer that He then exerted regal power, is evidence that the party making such an inference has no idea of the Scriptural difference existing between the Divine Sovereignty and the Kingdom (through which that Sovereignty will be gloriously displayed) distinctively promised to David’s Son” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:584).

Jesus is not reigning as King now. “He is never mentioned as King of the church, nor even King of the nations until He comes again as ‘King of Kings and Lord of Lords’ (Rev. 19:16)” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:341). (See also our discussion of the fact that Jesus is not king of the church in the section *The Kingdom is Not the Church* below, and our discussion of Jesus’ ruling the world as one of the purposes of the Second Coming in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

Jesus is not sitting on David’s throne now. “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My [**Jesus**] throne, as **I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne**” (Rev. 3:21). “At present He is engaged in His High Priestly functions, and is seated on His Father’s Throne and not on His own Throne” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 88). “The New Testament has in all fifty-nine references to David. It also has many references to the present session of Christ. A search of the New Testament reveals that there is not one reference connecting the present session of

Christ with the Davidic throne... The inference is plain that Christ is seated on the Father's throne, but that this is not at all the same as being seated on the throne of David" [quoting John F. Walvoord, Millennial Series, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 109:110] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 109). "The New Testament never relates the kingdom promised to David to Christ's present session" (*ibid.*). "...this present age is definitely *not* a development of the Davidic form of the kingdom" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 269). "While there is no question that Christ is sitting on a throne today, according to Revelation 3:21 He is sitting on His Father's throne and not on His own throne. Nor can they claim it is the same throne, for the Bible identifies the Messiah's throne as the Throne of David. Obviously, David never sat on God the Father's throne" (Frucht-enbaum, *I*, p. 414). (See also our discussion of the fact that David's throne is not God's heavenly throne in the *The Davidic Covenant* section of our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.)

The Kingdom is not *the Watchtower Society*. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus (a.k.a. Michael the archangel) returned invisibly in the year 1914, and that he at that time sat on David's throne (in heaven) and began ruling the earth, with the Watchtower Society serving (at least since 1918 or 1919) as God's visible earthly organization. The facts that Jesus did not return in 1914 (Rev. 1:7) and that the Watchtower Society preaches a false and unbiblical gospel (that of "Jehovah's established [since 1914] kingdom") (Gal. 1:8-9) prove their "present kingdom" belief unfounded. Instead, the Watchtower kingdom is no more secure than any of the other Christ-rejecting kingdoms that are in line for crushing by the stone of Dan. 2:44 at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation, in preparation for the genuine messianic, Davidic Kingdom.

The Kingdom is not *the intermediate state of the dead*; it is not "going to heaven when we die." "Whatever the intermediate state may be, whether in Hades simply (as some assert), or in Paradise in Hades (as others claim), or in the third heaven (as some announce), etc., one thing is clearly demonstrable, viz.: that the inheriting of the Kingdom, the receiving of the crown, the obtaining of the distinctive reward as allied with covenanted promises, are all still future, always linked with the future resurrection of the just or allied with the Sec. Advent of Jesus Christ. The Bible is explicit on this point, and the covenants absolutely require this to preserve the requisite unity" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:413). "So little, indeed, did the first Christians hold the notion that the church is the Kingdom, that they refused even to allow the saints after death to have ascended into the third heaven (see Brooks' *El. Proph. Inter.*, Bickersteth's *Guide*, etc.), and be in the enjoyment of it, placing them in an intermediate state, awaiting in Hades the coming of the

Kingdom (so, e.g., Justin Martyr explicitly declares). And even down to Tertullian, who is willing to make an exception in behalf of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Martyrs, this intermediate state or Paradise ‘is not, properly speaking, the Kingdom of heaven, into which they will not enter until after Christ’s Advent.’ (So Neander, *Ms. of Dogmas*, p. 252, vol. 1.)” (*ibid.*, p. 643) “The early church had no idea that this Kingdom was received at or after death” (*ibid.*, p. 669). “That interpretation of the Scriptures is the only correct one, which can truly and freely accept of all the divine utterances without the least attempt to soften them, or to explain them away, or to receive them with a sort of mental reservation. The test in this case is the incorporation of and using without contradiction, the identical phraseology of the Bible. Any theory which cannot do this, is most certainly defective, and open to the gravest objection; especially is this true of the last things in view of the mighty issues resulting therefrom. An Eschatology which leaves out the biblical exhortations respecting the nearness of the day of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our duty to watch for it, really takes the life out of the subject, and gives us but a cold dead body for faith and hope to grasp. Those who do this, strive to make amends by so exalting the intermediate state and the condition of the saints, that if we were to credit them, the Advent itself is of comparatively little consequence so far as the increased happiness and honor of the saints is concerned. This however is anti-scriptural, and hence we reject all theories which would disparage or lower, or set aside ‘the blessed hope,’ and the language employed in reference to it” (*ibid.*, 3:105). (See our discussion of the intermediate state of the dead in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

The Kingdom is Not the Church

And finally, the Kingdom is not *the church*. Because over the centuries this is idea that the church is the Kingdom has been such a common and deeply-seated misconception within Christendom, we’ll examine it in some detail here.

Our arguments as to why the church is not the Kingdom are as follows:

First, *the Bible nowhere states that the church is the Kingdom*. “Is there a single passage which directly teaches that the Christian church is the Kingdom? No such declaration or passage is to be found in all the apostolical writings” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:437). “If the church is the predicted Kingdom of God, we certainly ought to find some direct passage teaching this, either in the writings of the Apostles or their immediate successors. But such an one cannot be found” (*ibid.*, p. 641).

Second, *Jesus’ farewell discourse does not mention the Kingdom*. “Although during the supper the Kingdom had been mentioned specifically at

least five times, there is no reference at all to it in the much longer record of the farewell discourse which followed. This omission would be very strange if, as some claim, our present age is the period of the Messianic Kingdom. But if in His discourse to the Eleven He was preparing all His disciples for an interim between His departure and His return to establish the Kingdom, then His silence as to the latter becomes understandable. And this undoubtedly was the main purpose of the discourse” (McClain, *GK*, p. 373).

Third, *Jesus is not King of the church*. “The church is represented as Christ’s body, simply because that body are ‘co-heirs,’ joint inheritors with Him in the Kingdom, and therefore they are purposely never called ‘the subjects of the Kingdom’—a phrase coined by man and contradictory to both the honor and position of the body, which takes a much higher rank. It is inconsistent, to say the least, to call ‘inheritors’ of a Kingdom, the subjects of it... Jesus is called, and by right, and in the covenanted manner, is, ‘the King of the Jews,’ ‘King of Nations,’ ‘King of the World,’ but is never called ‘the King of the Church.’... they being also kings with Him, it is rightfully His title to be styled ‘King of Kings’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:597) “The reader will of course discriminate here: the Church is subject (Eph. 5:24, etc.) to Christ, and this, in the very nature of the case, is indispensable, but this subjection is preparatory to the future glorification and exaltation of the Church, for when allied with Him in glory, this subjection is swallowed up in joint rulership, etc. with Christ, though still subordinate, as David’s Son is to the Father; and hence our argument merely is, that believers, in view of their future position, are never called ‘the subjects of the Kingdom,’ which is opposed to their being ‘kings and priests reigning with Christ’ in the Kingdom. Believers are ‘heirs,’ and not the subjects of the covenanted Kingdom. Origen (*Ag. Celsus*, B. 4, oh. 10) refers ‘the Kingdom of God,’ as ‘reserved for those who are worthy of becoming its subjects;’ we prefer the Scriptural phraseology, if it were only to remind us of future exaltation and glory” (*ibid.*). “...the church a Kingdom... it infers such a Kingdom, being utterly unable to produce a decisive passage which declares either that the Son of man now reigns as predicted or that the church is at present His Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 615). “...the exceeding slight foundation upon which the prevailing view rests. A direct passage in favor of the Augustinian view cannot be produced... now, we cannot, for a moment, allow that a Kingdom the subject of covenant and prophecy, the object of faith, hope, and joy, can be left, if really established, to mere inference. And more, we cannot believe, that if set up as many theologians tell us, the early church for several centuries would be unconscious of the same” (*ibid.*). “Christ is the ‘Head’ of His Church (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; Col. 1:18), but He is never spoken of as its King”

(Larkin, *DT*, p. 74). “And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave **Him as head over all things to the church**” (Eph. 1:22) “but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into **Him, who is the head, even Christ**” (Eph. 4:15) “**He is also head of the body, the church**; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything” (Col. 1:18). “There is a sense, of course, in which Christ today rules in the Church. But the nature of this rule is very different from that of the Mediatorial Kingdom. ‘It is as its Head that He rules over it [the Church], not as its King; for this latter title is never used of this relation. Nor is His rule over His Church legal and external, like that of an earthly king... The relation between Him, the Head, and the Church, His Body, is a living one, such as nowhere else exists, or can exist; His will is the law, not merely of its action, but of its life... He rules in the Church through the law of a common life...’” [quoting S. J. Andrews, *God’s Revelations of Himself to Men*, pp. 284-285] (McClain, *GK*, p. 437) “The problem Amillennialism faces is that while the Bible portrays the relationship between Christ and the Church in various metaphors (head and body, groom and bride, vine and branches, foundation and stones of the building, etc.), king and kingdom is not one of them” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 190). “Christ is indeed referred to as the head of the Church, but never its king” (*ibid.*).

Fourth, *the church does not fulfill Israel’s covenants*. It is especially evident that the church does not fulfill the Davidic Covenant. “The church possesses none of the characteristics of the kingdom promised to David’s Son. The Theocratic relationship, the throne and kingdom of David, are lacking” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:609). “Let the student but consider the Kingdom covenanted to David’s Son, a real, visible, external Theocracy here on the earth, and he will see at once that to transmute this into an invisible, indefinite Kingdom is to take undue liberty with the Divine Record, and to introduce an element perverting the proper application of much Scripture” (*ibid.*, p. 655). (See our discussions of Israel’s covenants in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.)

Fifth, *the church does not fulfill Israel’s promises*. First, *the church has never been authorized to fulfill the Kingdom promises*. Churches can only assume and attempt to usurp Kingdom power in this dispensation by allegorizing the Kingdom promises. And second, *the church is not capable of fulfilling Israel’s promises*. “the Church cannot do it, since the most moral and pious fall beneath the curse, experiencing disease, sorrow, death, the grave, and corruption” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:156). “When men ignore God’s Plan and mode of fulfillment, and attempt to make their own and realize it, the

consequences, owing to human weakness and depravity, are always disastrous, no matter how good the men, or sincere the motives, originating them. Under the specious plea of honoring God and exalting Christ, man has been crushed under a despotism, which persecuted to the death. The blood of many, many martyrs still keeps up the unceasing cry, 'How long, O Lord'" (*ibid.*, 3:551).

Sixth, *the church lacks an ordered and duly recognized Kingdom government.* "The idea of a stable, well-ordered, acknowledged, and duly enforced government is connected by all the prophets with the Messianic Kingdom, but if the church is it, what party can rightfully claim it?" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:639). "Can we imagine that when Christ's Kingdom as covenanted and predicted is once truly set up, that it will be in a shape so undecisive and peculiar, that men will contend with each other as to its nature and form? No! Never" (*ibid.*)!

Seventh, *the church was established in a time of peace, not in a time of (as prophesied for the establishment of the Kingdom) upheaval.* "Behold, **a day of Jehovah cometh, when** thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For **I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;** and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.** And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and **Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee.** And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light; the bright ones shall withdraw themselves: but it shall be one day which is known unto Jehovah; not day, and not night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening time there shall be light. And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. **And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth:** in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one" (Zech. 14:1-9). "for **then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short,

no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.... But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and **then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.** And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other” (Matt. 24:21–31). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.’** And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, ‘We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because **Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came,** and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and **to destroy those who destroy the earth**” (Rev. 11:15–18). “...the Jews... they expected the Messiah to come in a time of great trial; this derived from the declaration of the Prophets, as e.g. Zech. 14; Dan. 7 and 12; this the language also of Jesus to the Pharisees, Luke 17, Matt. 24; but instead of war, etc., as portrayed by Zech. and others, the Christian Church was established in a time of peace” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:618). “The time when this Kingdom is set up is a time of dire vengeance, as the slaying of the beast, giving his body to the burning flame indicates” (*ibid.*, p. 674).

Eighth, *the church is preparatory to the Kingdom.* “How sad it is, to see excellent men, who desire to honor Jesus, make that which is preparatory to be the full realization of covenant and prophecy. The simple truth, that the apostles showed that this Jesus, once dead, but risen and exalted, was the Messiah promised, and that at His Sec. Advent—not before—this covenanted and predicted Christship would be manifested in power and glory, is completely overshadowed by a preconceived theory to which all Scripture must bend. Do we need to be surprised at the lack of faith in the Church, when good men, in vast numbers, lend themselves to such a work” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:442). “The church’s relation to this Kingdom is a subordinate and preparatory one” (*ibid.*, p. 593). “Many, impelled by the idea that if the church is a Kingdom there ought, of necessity, to be a unity, have

sought for this in various ways—in an outward union of believers, in an exact agreement of doctrine, in some form of church government, etc. Whereas, if they had retained the belief of the earliest age respecting the church, they would have seen that the uniformity they sought after is not a prerequisite. Diversity, as seen in the Apostolic Churches by contrasting the Jewish and Gentile, is not opposed to the Scriptural idea of the church. For, not being regarded as a Kingdom but as a preparatory stage for the Kingdom, some latitude was allowed in its external manifestation and even in non-essential doctrine and practice (see e.g. decision of Council at Jerusalem, Acts 15:19, 28) while unity was based on fellowship with Christ and consequent adoption as Abraham’s seed” (*ibid.*, p. 594). “The church leads to, or is appointed as a means to attain unto, the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 602). “The means by multitudes mistaken for the end” (*ibid.*, p. 607)

Ninth, *church members today are heirs, not possessors or reigning kings of the Kingdom.* “and if children, **heirs** also, **heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him**” (Rom. 8:17). “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, **heirs according to promise**” (Gal. 3:29). “to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow **heirs** and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Eph. 3:6) “You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and **I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you**” (1 Cor. 4:8). “This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment **so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering**” (2 Thes. 1:5). “**The Lord** will deliver me from every evil deed, and **will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom**; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (2 Tim. 4:18). “that being justified by His grace we might be made **heirs according to the hope of eternal life**” (Titus 3:7). “Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and **heirs of the kingdom** which He promised to those who love Him” (James 2:5)? “for in this way the **entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you**” (2 Pet. 1:11). “If the church is the Kingdom, and believers are now in it, why designate them ‘heirs,’ etc., of a Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:600)? “The early Church view is content, and so are we, to receive the language unchanged as confirmatory of our doctrine, so that, as Clement (sec. Epis.), it exhorts all that ‘all may attain to the Kingdom of God,’ asserting that in the future ‘we shall enter into His Kingdom, and shall receive the promises’” (*ibid.*). “...the appointed time of in-

heriting, specifically located at the Sec. Advent” (*ibid.*) “Barnabas (*Epis.* ch. 6) declares, that saints do not rule now; and speaking of the promised dominion adds: ‘We ought to perceive that to govern implies authority, so that one should command and rule. If therefore, this does not exist at present, yet still He has promised it to us. When? When we ourselves also have been made perfect (so as) to become heirs of the covenant of the Lord’” (*ibid.*, p. 601). “Flesh and blood cannot inherit (i.e. to become a ruler in it) this Kingdom, 1 Cor. 15:50” (*ibid.*, p. 602). “The church, then, instead of possessing a Kingdom, as actually existing according to promise, only possesses it in anticipation, in looking for and expecting its arrival” (*ibid.*). “...the disclaimer that Paul made of now reigning” (*ibid.*, 1:670) “The Christian era has been no golden age of righteousness nor has the church conquered the world. It is more accurate to recognize that the world has to a large degree possessed the church” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 53).

Tenth, *church members today are suffering, not reigning.* “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore **the world hates you**” (John 15:18-19). “These things I have spoken to you, that you may be kept from stumbling. **They will make you outcasts from the synagogue**, but an hour is coming for everyone who **kills you** to think that he is offering service to God. And these things they will do, because they have not known the Father, or Me. But these things I have spoken to you, that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you” (John 16:1-4). “Truly, truly, I say to you, that **you will weep and lament**, but the world will rejoice; **you will be sorrowful**, but your sorrow will be turned to joy. Whenever a woman is in travail she has **sorrow**, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she remembers the **anguish** no more, for joy that a child has been born into the world. Therefore you too now have sorrow; **but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice**, and no one takes your joy away from you. And in that day you will ask Me no question. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father for anything, He will give it to you in My name” (John 16:20-23). “**The night** is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12). “**You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you**” (1 Cor. 4:8). “For just as **the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance**, so also our comfort is

abundant through Christ” (2 Cor. 1:5). “Now I rejoice in **my sufferings** for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s **afflictions**” (Col. 1:24). “therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of **all your persecutions and afflictions** which you endure” (2 Thes. 1:4). “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in **suffering** for the gospel according to the power of God” (2 Tim. 1:8) “**If we endure, we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:12) “The church, instead of being represented as a Kingdom, is held up to us as a struggling, suffering people” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:617). “Jesus, too, nowhere says that His followers must endure tribulation in His Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 626). “Paul himself professes not yet to reign” (*ibid.*, 2:37). “Persecution, trial, suffering, etc., have, more or less, characterized the Church’s history” (*ibid.*, p. 149). “The time of trial, fighting, struggling, pilgrimage, absence from the bridegroom, mixture of tares and wheat, tribulation, sorrow, death, etc., is forcibly designated as ‘the night’” (*ibid.*, p. 414). “For whatever Christian experience we have here, it is an experience, an earnest given in the night” (*ibid.*, p. 415). “...the theory that saints are now reigning in the Church... This is an opinion indorsed by many, and in the past has led even to many a deed of violence and blood” (*ibid.*, p. 572). “While ‘God is in History,’ and the order of events are under His supervision and control, it is also true that no such alleged Theocratic rule exists, for that Theocratic relationship is confined to the Jewish nation and to the future” (*ibid.*, 3:15). “Sorrow, trial, tears, etc., are our common lot until He comes... contrasting... our present imperfectly experienced salvation with completed Redemption, our present tempted, suffering condition with appearing with Him in glory” (*ibid.*, p. 316) “The theory that Christ and the saints are now reigning in a present kingdom of God on earth, is specifically refuted by the Apostle Paul” [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, p. 433] (Feinberg, *M*, p. 147) “We are not to forget that this period of Christ’s absence, so glorious in many respects, is also *a time of humiliation, persecution, and suffering*. If the world hates them, the Lord’s people are not to think it strange: ‘ye know that it hated me before it hated you.’ It is because they belong to Him and are ‘not of the world’ that the world will hate them (John 15:18-19). When they are expelled from their places of worship, even put to death as an act of religious piety, they are not to let such experiences cause them to stumble, since they have been warned in advance (John 16:1-4). These things will not be easy to bear: they will often be weeping while the world rejoices; but eventually their sorrow

shall be turned into joy (vss. 20-23), a possible reference to that coming 'day' of the Church's deliverance at the Lord's coming. All that He has said, therefore, is intended to give them His 'peace' in the midst of suffering. And His final word is very comforting: 'In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (vs. 33)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 376). "...the present age of the Christian witness against the world... that future glorious age when all nations will be enjoying the incomparable benefits of the reign of the Son of man with His glorified Bride" (*ibid.*, p. 378). "Andrews has well said [in S. J. Andrews, *God's Revelations of Himself to Men*, pp. 284-285], 'To affirm that mortal and sinful men are already admitted to have part in His functions of universal rule, and are empowered by Him to govern the nations, is a proud and presumptuous antedating of the Kingdom. His kings must be first made like Him, immortal and incorruptible. When the earthly in them is changed into the heavenly, then can they exercise His heavenly authority'" (*ibid.*, p. 438). "The basic assumption is always the same: The Church in some sense is the Kingdom, and therefore has a divine right to rule; or it is the business of the Church to 'establish' fully the Kingdom of God among men. Thus the Church loses its 'pilgrim' character and the sharp edge of its divinely commissioned 'witness' is blunted. It becomes an *ekklesia* which is not only in the world, but also of the world. It forgets that just as in the regeneration of the individual soul only God can effect the miracle, even so the 'regeneration' of the world can only be wrought by the intrusion of regal power from on high (Matt. 19:28)" (*ibid.*, p. 439). "And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**" (Matt. 19:28).

Eleventh, *the church cannot be reigning during these "times of the Gentiles."* "and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until **the times of the Gentiles** be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). "Give no offense either to Jews or to **Greeks or to the church** of God" (1 Cor. 10:32) "As the 'Times of the GENTILES' is still running, the Church cannot be in this Dispensation a governing or Kingdom power" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 19). (See our discussion of the times of the Gentiles in the *The Times of the Gentiles* section of our chapter *The Fall of the Kingdom*.)

Twelfth, *the church's gospel is not the gospel of the Kingdom.* "From that time **Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'**" (Matt. 4:17). "And **this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations,**

and **then the end shall come**” (Matt. 24:14). “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;** and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20). “but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). “Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I [Paul] preached to you,** which also you received, in which also you stand, **by which also you are saved,** if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For **I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures**” (1 Cor. 15:1-4) “The new command of Christ, ‘Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth’ (Acts 1:8) does not coincide with the gospel of the kingdom which must precede the institution of the kingdom” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 469). “When men are invited to receive the grace of God in salvation today, they are not urged, ‘Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 266). (See our discussion of the preaching of ‘this good news of the kingdom’ in the *Events of the Last Half (3.5 yrs.) of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

And thirteenth, *the church does not establish the Kingdom in the world*. “Those modern phrases of ministers and people, ‘of extending, enlarging, building up, etc., Christ’s Kingdom’ are not to be found in the New Test. They are the result of viewing the church as the Kingdom... Christ Himself personally, and not men, can build up this Kingdom at the appointed time” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:618). “The believer certainly carries on a warfare, constantly and unremittingly, if faithful, against temptation and evil, and in behalf of the truth and God’s appointments, but never in behalf of an existing Kingdom” (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of the church’s purpose in this age in the *Purposes of the Church* section of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*. See our discussion of the restoration of the Theocratic Kingdom in the *Purposes of the Second Coming* section of our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

What the Kingdom Is

So then, if the Kingdom is not the gospel, repentance, faith, obedience, personal and/or present salvation, union with Christ, the reign of God in the heart, a spiritual kingdom, Jesus' present authority, the Watchtower Society, the intermediate state of the dead, or the church, then what is it? We contend that *the Kingdom is today what it has always been, namely, a (future) literal, earthly, theocratic, Jewish Kingdom*. Again, the Kingdom has not been *transformed*, but merely *postponed*. "There is one Kingdom under the Messiah, David's Son and Lord, in some way linked with the election of the Jewish nationality, which is the great burden of prophecy. This Kingdom, too, according to the grammatical sense, is one here on the earth, not somewhere else, as e.g. in the third heaven or the Universe. Take the most vivid descriptions, such as are contained in Isa. 60, or Dan. 7, etc., and they refer this Kingdom exclusively to this earth, which, of course, follows naturally from the relation that this Kingdom sustains to the Jewish nation and Davidic throne. Any other portraiture of it would be incongruous, and hostile to covenant and fact" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:245). "Indeed, all the particulars needed for a full identification of the identical Kingdom, once established but now overthrown, are thus given in the most simple language. Why, following the Origenistic method, change this language, and make David's throne and kingdom, Jewish restoration, Jerusalem, etc., mean something else than the words plainly convey, without a direct revelation from God that such a change is intended" (*ibid.*)? (For a full description of the Kingdom to come, see the 4. *The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom* section of our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*, and our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

Chapter 18: Reaffirmation of the Kingdom

In our previous chapter, *Postponement of the Kingdom*, we presented evidence that at Jesus' First Advent the theocratic, Davidic Kingdom of Israel was neither annulled nor transformed, but rather only temporarily *postponed*. If it be true that the Theocratic Kingdom as described in the Old Testament was merely postponed, and that it is still very much to be realized in the future, we would expect to find reaffirmation of this fact in the New Testament; reaffirmation recorded within the New Testament narrative subsequent to the Kingdom's postponement. This reaffirmation of the Kingdom is the subject of this chapter. In this chapter, we will present evidence of the future Theocratic Kingdom's reaffirmation in the Gospels, in the Acts of the Apostles, in the Epistles and in Revelation.

Examination of this evidence found throughout the remainder of the New Testament reveals that a future earthly, theocratic, Davidic Kingdom continued to be the expectation of Jesus and His followers (and also of the Jews who rejected Jesus, for that matter), even after Jesus' rejection (in Matthew chapter 12) and the subsequent postponement of the Kingdom. "Let any one carefully consider the phraseology of the New Test. in reference to the coming again of Jesus, and observe how there is united with it all the Jewish hopes of kingdom, restitution, redemption, dominion, reigning, crowning, destruction of enemies, deliverance of His people, etc., and he will clearly see that the distinctive Messianic hopes, the hopes that centre in the official Christ, are postponed to the expected, precious Sec. Advent of the Messiah" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:440). "Now all this employing Jewish phraseology without any indication of change of meaning, can only be reconciled with the postponement of the Kingdom to the Sec. Advent. The careful student of Scripture must have been arrested by this additional peculiarity, corroborative of our argument, that in many places (as e.g. 1 Cor. 1:7, 8 [so that you are not lacking in any gift, **awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless **in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**.]), etc. the apostles rapidly pass from the present to the Advent, the intervening period being not worthy to be compared, owing to the absence of the King and Kingdom, to what transpires at the Messiah's return" (*ibid.*, p. 442). "Christianized Jews, in their respective congregations, held both to this Sec. Advent (having received Jesus as the Messiah), and to the restoration of the Davidic throne and Kingdom at the second appearing of Jesus" (*ibid.*, p. 445). "The apostles, in their writings, constantly speak of the Kingdom as something that was well understood and fully comprehended as to meaning. Nowhere

do we find the modern explanation and definition given to it; and, according to our argument, being covenanted and fully described by the prophets, it needed no such additions, being already clearly apprehended” (*ibid.*, p. 448). “Every writer of ability and learning—whatever theory he may adopt respecting the Kingdom—acknowledges the apostolic and early belief in a speedy Sec. Advent... Donaldson (editor of *Ante-Nicene Library*), in his *His. Ch. Doc. And Lit.*, vol. 2, p. 261, declares, respecting the Pre-Mill. doctrine advocated by Justin... ‘All expected Christ to appear on earth, to raise His saints, to grant them the possession of the earth, and to bless them with uninterrupted happiness’” (*ibid.*, p. 470). “The reader will carefully notice how in view of such predictions the Jews were accustomed to call this period of the Messianic reign ‘the Salvation.’ This is an additional argument in our favor, seeing that the Apostles use the phrase just as the Jews did without explanation and refer it to the Sec. Advent” (*ibid.*, 2:143). “If the Jewish expectation was erroneous, as moderns now say, then it was wrong for inspired men to employ such confirmatory phraseology without appending a suitable correction or definition, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 183) “The idea of ‘the end of time’ never entered into the views of the disciples, who, instead, looked for the restoration of the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 424). “We believe that these disciples knew more accurately, owing to their facilities and that the subject was made a speciality, the things pertaining to the Kingdom than any men that have lived since their day” (*ibid.*, 3:528). “Though the Davidic form of the covenanted kingdom was postponed until the second advent of Christ because of Israel’s rejection, the New Testament writers make frequent reference to the kingdom of God. At times it is used in reference to the coming Davidic kingdom, sometimes in reference to the eternal kingdom, but most frequently it is used in reference to the new form of the theocracy predicted by Christ in Matthew 13. The Old Testament covenants are referred to, to show that the spiritual blessings that are ours stem from the universal aspects of the covenants that God gave to Israel. While God’s program would be administered by the nation Israel and flow through them to those in the nations of the earth, yet God had provided for blessing for the world through His covenant people. We thank God for the blessings that are ours while we anticipate blessings the covenant people will experience in the future when they turn by faith to Him in repentance” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 290).

Reaffirmation of the Kingdom in the Gospels

As we saw in our previous chapters *Rejection of the King* and *Postponement of the Kingdom*, the official rejection of Jesus by the Jews oc-

curred with the Jewish leaders' ascription of Jesus' miraculous powers to Satan in Matthew chapter twelve. Therefore, it will be the purpose of this chapter to examine the later narratives of the New Testament text, subsequent to Matthew chapter twelve, for evidence that Jesus, the apostles and others still expected, despite Jesus' rejection, the inauguration of the (postponed) Theocratic Kingdom, only now at later date. We'll begin this examination with the New Testament's *four Gospels*. Rather than examining the written record book by book (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), we'll do this person by person: Jesus, the soldiers at the time of Jesus' arrest, the Jews at the time of Jesus' trial, Pontius Pilate, the chief priests, scribes and elders, the penitent thief on the cross, Joseph of Arimathea and the men on the road to Emmaus.

Reaffirmation by Jesus

Even after *Jesus* had been rejected by the Jewish leaders in Matthew chapter twelve, He still spoke of an earthly, future theocratic, Davidic, Jewish Kingdom.

Jesus still spoke of *Jerusalem's future acceptance of Him and the concurrent ending of the times of the Gentiles*. “O **Jerusalem**, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! **How often I wanted to gather your children together**, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, **from now on you shall not see Me until you say, “BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD”**” (Matt. 23:37–39)! “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24).

Jesus still had a personal *zeal for the Jewish temple*. “even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for **my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples**. The Lord Jehovah, who gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own that are gathered” (Isa. 56:7-8). “And they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to cast out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves; and He would not permit anyone to carry goods through the temple. And He began to teach and say to them, ‘Is it not written, **My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?** But you have made it a robbers’

den” (Mark 11:15-17). “Neither is there any change in His [Jesus’] attitude as, on the way to His death, once more He drives the moneychangers out of the temple. Why not simply ignore this temple if, as some argue, because of her sin God is done with the nation of Israel and the Old Testament theocratic idea? On the contrary, as the Messianic Priest-King of Israel, our Lord in His final word lays claim to the existing Jewish temple, citing an Old Testament prophecy in defense of His action: ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’ (Mark 11:15-17, ASV; cf. Isa. 56:7-8)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 293).

Jesus spoke of *the age to come* which had a specific eschatological meaning in the contemporary Jewish mind. “And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in **the age to come**” (Matt. 12:32). “but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and **in the age to come, eternal life**” (Mark 10:30). “...this expression used by the Jews, and adopted without dissent or change... Matt. 12:32, ‘neither in this world (age) nor in the world to come.’... it was a proverbial expression referring to the Advent of the Messiah... So Paul, Heb. 2:5, ‘for unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak,’... This world to come is given to Jesus as man, thus corresponding with His future coming as the Son of man, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:405). “Barnes, *Com. Heb.* 6:5 on the phrase ‘the world to come,’ says: ‘Or, of “the Coming age.” “The age to come” was a phrase in common use among the Hebrews, to denote the future dispensation, the times of the Messiah,’ etc.” (*ibid.*).

In His *Olivet discourse* (Matt. 24-25, Luke 21 and Mark 13) Jesus gave numerous indicators that God was not yet finished with Israel. In fact, the entire discourse concerns Israel. “And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out **the temple buildings** to Him. And He answered and said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down.’ And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, **when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age**’” (Matt. 24:1-3)? “then let **those who are in Judea** flee to the mountains;” (Matt. 24:16) “But **pray that your flight may not be** in the winter, or **on a Sabbath;**” (Matt. 24:19-20) “*Matthew 25:1-13*. The entire Olivet Discourse, in which this portion appears, is Christ’s farewell word to Israel” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:302).

In this Olivet discourse, Jesus spoke of *the end of the age*. “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of **the end of the age**’” (Matt. 24:3)? “Matt. 24, which gives an epitome of Jewish history to the ending of the times of the Gentiles” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:149) “...the end of the age... They were asking of the age in which they were then living, to be sure, and that was the age of the law, or the Jewish age... a preliminary period that, some have believed, refers to the end of the church age. That seems untenable because the Lord was not answering a question concerning that age at all. The primary reference seems to be, if the context is considered, to the end of the Jewish age. There is in the present age, however, a foreshadowing of the things spoken in those verses” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 163). “They were not speaking of the end of the church age, in which they were not living, but the end of the then-present Jewish age” (*ibid.*, p. 175).

He listed the signs that would indicate that *the Kingdom is near*. “Even so you, too, **when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near**” (Luke 21:31).

He spoke of *the abomination of desolation*, linking it with Judea and Daniel’s prophecy. “**Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.** Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And **he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate;** and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:24–27). “And forces shall stand on his part, and they shall profane the sanctuary, even the fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt-offering, and they shall set up **the abomination that maketh desolate**” (Dan. 11:31). “And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and **the abomina-**

tion that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand and two hundred and ninety days” (Dan. 12:11). “Therefore when you see **the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)**” (Matt. 24:15) “**But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains**” (Mark 13:14). (See our discussion of Antichrist seating himself in the Tribulation temple in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

He spoke of the *Great Tribulation*, which Jeremiah and Daniel identified with the Jewish nation. “Alas! for **that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:7). “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of **thy people**; and **there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered**, every one that shall be found written in the book” (Dan. 12:1). “for **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall**. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:21-22). “For **those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, and never shall**. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect whom He chose, He shortened the days” (Mark 13:19-20). (See also our discussions of the Jewish aspects of the Great Tribulation in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

He prophesied that the *gospel of the kingdom* would be preached to all the nations. “And **this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come**” (Matt. 24:14). (See our discussion of the preaching of “the gospel of the kingdom” in the *Events of the Last Half (3.5 yrs.) of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

He prophesied concerning the *coming of the Son of Man*, which coincides with Daniel’s Kingdom prophecy. “I saw in the night-visions, and, **behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should**

serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13–14). "and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then **all the tribes of the earth** will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**" (Matt. 24:30). "For **the coming of the Son of Man** will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall **the coming of the Son of Man** be" (Matt. 24:37–39). "But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, 'I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, **hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.**' Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, 'He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?' They answered and said, 'He is deserving of death'" (Matt. 26:63–66)! "And **then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**" (Mark 13:26). "And Jesus said, 'I am; and **you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven**'" (Mark 14:62). "Dan. 7:13, 14... the application of this passage of Daniel by Jesus Himself, when before the High Priest, to His future personal Advent... its connection with Daniel... Matt. 26:64... the sober exegesis of the Church Fathers... We can safely adopt the interpretation given by the pious Jews to Daniel 7:13, sustained as it is by Christ Himself" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:222).

He prophesied concerning the *gathering of the elect*, using the same language used in the Palestinian Covenant and in Zechariah for the prophesied future gathering of the Jews back to the land of Palestine. "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon **thee [Israel]**, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and **gather thee from** all the peoples, **whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee**. If any of thine outcasts be **in the uttermost parts of heaven**,

from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and **Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed**, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And Jehovah thy God will make thee plenteous in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul” (Deut. 30:1-10). “And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, **Jerusalem** shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For *I*, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her. Ho, ho, flee from the land of the north, saith Jehovah; for **I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens**, saith Jehovah” (Zech. 2:3-6). “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. ‘And **He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other**’” (Matt. 24:30-31). “And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And **then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth, to the farthest end of heaven**” (Mark 13:26-27). (For our detailed discussion of Israel’s regathering to the land at the inauguration of the Kingdom, see our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

Jesus confessed to being *King of the Jews*. “Now Jesus stood before the governor, and **the governor questioned Him, saying, ‘Are You the King of the Jews?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you say’**” (Matt. 27:11). “And **Pilate questioned Him, ‘Are You the King of the Jews?’ And answering He said to him, ‘It is as you say’**” (Mark 15:2). “Then the whole body of them arose and brought Him before Pilate.

And they began to accuse Him, saying, ‘We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that **He Himself is Christ, a King.**’ And **Pilate asked Him, saying, ‘Are You the King of the Jews?’** And **He answered him and said, ‘It is as you say’**” (Luke 23:1-3). “Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘So You are a king?’ **Jesus answered, ‘You say correctly that I am a king.** For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” (John 18:37).

He spoke of future *drinking of the fruit of the vine in the Kingdom.* “**And in this mountain will Jehovah of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.** And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covereth all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 25:6-8). “**But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom**” (Matt. 26:29). “Matt. 26:20, drinking ‘this fruit of the vine,’ is indicative of personal presence” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:189). “The declaration of Jesus, Matt. 26:20, when referring to ‘this fruit of the vine’ (i.e. ‘wine, the fruit or produce of the vine’—so Barnes), He declares that He would not drink of it ‘until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom.’ To make this material wine merely typical of something else, does violence to the passage. A comparison of this passage with Luke 22:29-30, with the renewal of nature, with the eating of Jesus after His resurrection, etc., shows that humanity (however glorified) is retained, and that a personal Coming is related to the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 191). “and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you **that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Luke 22:29-30). “Matt. 26:29, ‘But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom.’ Now, however, men may say. ‘This expression is figurative, signifying the highest happiness,’ we are not so certain of its figurative nature (comp. Stair, *Com. loci*), because the act and direct reference to ‘this fruit of the vine’ would indicate the contrary” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:464). “**Truly I say to you, I shall never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God**” (Mark 14:25). “And when the hour had come He reclined at the table, and the apostles with

Him. And He said to them, ‘I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, **I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.**’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, ‘Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, **I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes**” (Luke 22:14-18).

And, He spoke of future *authority in the Kingdom*. “Blessed is that slave whom **his master** finds so doing **when he comes**. Truly I say to you, that he **will put him in charge of all his possessions**” (Matt. 24:46–47). “Matt. 24:46, 47, has ‘Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make him ruler over all his goods.’ (Compare the being ‘faithful over a few things’ and becoming ‘ruler over many things,’ Matt. 25:21, the ‘authority over ten cities,’ etc., Luke 19:17, and ‘if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Him,’ 2 Tim. 2:12). Such language is based on the idea that the reward bestowed upon faithfulness is an elevation to a position of superiority evidenced by the exercise of authority and rule” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:577). “And he said to him, “Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, **be in authority over ten cities**”” (Luke 19:17). “and **just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Luke 22:29-30).

Reaffirmation by Others

Others in the gospel accounts also spoke of Jesus’ future Kingship and/or Kingdom.

The soldiers at the time of Jesus’ arrest recognized Him as *King of the Jews*. “Then **the soldiers** of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. And **they stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe on Him. And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews’**” (Matt. 27:27-29)! “And **the soldiers** took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. And they dressed Him up in purple, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; and they began to acclaim Him, ‘Hail, **King of the Jews!**’ And they kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting at Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. And after they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, and put His garments on Him.

And they led Him out to crucify Him” (Mark 15:16-20). “And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and arrayed Him in a purple robe; and they began to come up to Him, and say, ‘Hail, **King of the Jews!**’ and to give Him blows in the face” (John 19:2-3).

The Jews at the time of Jesus’ trial likewise knew what it would mean Kingship-wise if Jesus were the Messiah. “As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but **the Jews cried out, saying**, ‘If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who **makes himself out to be a king** opposes Caesar.’ When Pilate therefore heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And **he said to the Jews, ‘Behold, your King!’** They therefore cried out, ‘Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!’ **Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar’**” (John 19:12-15).

Pontius Pilate also, at least mockingly, recognized *Jesus’ Kingship in relation to the Jews*. “And **Pilate answered them, saying**, ‘Do you want me to release for you the **King of the Jews?**’ For he was aware that the chief priests had delivered Him up because of envy. But the chief priests stirred up the multitude to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead. And answering again, Pilate was saying to them, ‘Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the **King of the Jews?**’” (Mark 15:9-12)? “And the inscription of the charge against Him read, **‘THE KING OF THE JEWS’**” (Mark 15:26). “Now there was also an inscription above Him, **‘THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS’**” (Luke 23:38). “**Pilate** therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, ‘Are You the **King of the Jews?**’” (John 18:33)? “‘But you have a custom, that I should release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the **King of the Jews?**’” (John 18:39) “And **Pilate wrote an inscription also, and put it on the cross**. And it was written, **‘JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS’**” (John 19:19).

The chief priests, scribes and elders did likewise. “And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, they gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink. And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots; and sitting down, they began to keep watch over Him there. And they put up above His head the charge against Him which read, **‘THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.’** At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way **the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him, and saying**, 'He saved others; He cannot save Himself. **He is the King of Israel**; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. He trusts in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He takes pleasure in Him; for He said, "I am the Son of God.'" And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him" (Matt. 27:33-44). "In the same way **the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying**, 'He saved others; He cannot save Himself. Let **this Christ, the King of Israel**, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!' And those who were crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him" (Mark 15:31-32).

The penitent thief on the cross expected Jesus to come in His future Kingdom. "And one of **the criminals** who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, 'Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!' But **the other** answered, and rebuking him said, 'Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.' And **he was saying**, '**Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!**' And He said to him, 'Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise'" (Luke 23:39-43). "...the poor thieves on the cross... 'a noble Chiliast'" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:464)

Joseph of Arimathea was waiting for the Kingdom of God. "**Joseph of Arimathea** came, a prominent member of the Council, **who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God**; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus" (Mark 15:43). "And behold, a man named **Joseph**, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man (he had not consented to their plan and action), a man **from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God**" (Luke 23:50-51)

And, *the men on the road to Emmaus* were hoping that Jesus was going to redeem Israel. "And He said to them [the two men on the road to Emmaus], 'What things?' And they said to Him, 'The things about **Jesus** the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. But **we were hoping**

that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened” (Luke 24:19-22).

Reaffirmation of the Kingdom in the Acts of the Apostles

The future Theocratic Kingdom is reaffirmed in the *Acts of the Apostles* by the events recorded in the book of Acts and by the testimony of the apostles therein.

Reaffirmation by the Events in Acts

The Kingdom is reaffirmed in the *events* of the Acts of the Apostles.

It was reaffirmed in *the reoffer of the Kingdom to Israel*. “And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. **Again he sent out other slaves saying,** “Tell those who have been invited, ‘Behold, I have prepared my dinner; **my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast**” But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest **seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire**” (Matt. 22:1-7). “And while he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement. But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, ‘**Men of Israel,** why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? **The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers,** has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. But **the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets,** that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled. **Repent** therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, **in order that** times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that **He**

may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. Moses said, “The Lord God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed in everything He says to you. And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” And likewise, **all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways”** (Acts 3:11-26). “The same gospel of the Kingdom was preached after the death and ascension of Jesus that was proclaimed before” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:467). “During His earthly ministry our Lord had specifically foretold of such a reoffer. The prediction is recorded in Matthew 22:1-7, clothed in the form of a parable of ‘the kingdom of heaven,’ in which a certain king makes a marriage feast for his son (vs. 2). Two calls are sent out by the King... The *first* call of the parable was issued by our Lord through His disciples (Matt. 10:1-15; Luke 10:1-9)... Then there was to be a *second* call announcing that the dinner is now ‘prepared’ and ‘all things are ready’ (vs. 4)—certainly a reference to our Lord’s finished work of redemption at Calvary... But again the call is rejected, this time by actions which help to identify it in Biblical history: some Jews would turn away with contemptuous indifference, according to the parable, while others would mistreat and kill the messengers (vs. 6). This points to the post-Pentecostal offer, as described in the Book of Acts, when the officials of Israel did exactly that. During the gospel period not an official disciple of Christ was killed by the Jews, but during the period of the Acts the terrible persecution and killing of the messengers began. And there is no third call for this generation of Israel, but judgment falls: the King sends forth his armies, destroys the murderers, and burns their city—a parabolic prediction of the awful destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (vs. 7)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 406). “The preaching in Acts proceeded on the basis of the death and resurrection of Messiah which had now become historic facts, thus providing the soteriological foundation without which there could have been no enduring Messianic Kingdom established on earth. And the former problem of a Messiah who dies and yet reigns gloriously had now been cleared up by the resurrection of Jesus. It would have been strange, therefore, if there had been no reoffer of the Kingdom following

Pentecost, such as Luke records in the third chapter of Acts” (*ibid.*, p. 426). “It may be asked how there could have been any genuine option for Israel during this period, since the destruction of Jerusalem had already been clearly predicted by our Lord as a judgment upon Jewish unbelief; and also that the people were to be scattered among all nations and Jerusalem trodden down until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Luke 21:24). The answer is that every intelligent Jew understood from the prophets that a terrible time of tribulation would immediately precede the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. Therefore, the fulfillment of our Lord’s predictions could have ushered in the end, since the time element is always unrevealed. To read 1900 years of time into these predictions is to abandon the historical standpoint in our interpretation. And the early disciples were expecting the shock of tribulation, the imminency of the Church’s separate rapture having not yet been clearly revealed as it would be later in the Pauline epistles” (*ibid.*). (See also our discussion of Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost in the section *By the Testimony of the Apostles in Acts* below.)

The Kingdom was also reaffirmed by *the believers’ selling of their property*. “For there was not a needy person among them, for **all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales, and lay them at the apostles’ feet**; and they would be distributed to each, as any had need” (Acts 4:34-35). “The attitude of these early Jewish believers toward property suggests the expectation of an imminent establishment of the Kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 402).

And, the Kingdom was also reaffirmed by *the transitional differences between the early and later chapters of Acts*:

It was reaffirmed in *the transition from Jewish Kingdom expectations to Gentile church life*. “Not the Old testament merely but the Gospels themselves are seemingly separated from the Epistles by a gulf. To bridge over that gulf is the Divine purpose for which the Acts of the Apostles has been given to the Church. The earlier portion of the book is the completion of and sequel to the Gospels; its concluding narrative is introductory to the great revelation of Christianity” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 55). “We must needs recognise the intensely Jewish character of the Pentecostal dispensation” (*ibid.*, p. 72). “The apostles were Divinely guided to declare that if, even then, the ‘men of Israel’ repented, their Messiah would return to fulfill to them all that their own prophets had foretold and promised of spiritual and national blessing” (*ibid.*, p. 74). “In a word, if ‘To the Jew first’ is characteristic of the Acts of the Apostles as a whole, ‘To the Jew only’ is plainly stamped upon every part of these early chapters” (*ibid.*, p. 76). “Nothing was further from the thoughts of these men than ‘founding a new religion’”

(*ibid.*, p. 78). “...the open rejection of the long-favoured people... Within that truth lies concealed the key to the mystery of a silent Heaven” (*ibid.*, p. 83). “My contention is that the Acts, as a whole, is the record of a temporary and transitional dispensation in which blessing was again offered to the Jew and again rejected” (*ibid.*, p. 175). “...the Acts of the Apostles—a book which is primarily the record, not, as commonly supposed, of the founding of the Christian Church, but of the apostasy of the favoured nation” (*ibid.*, p. 177). “It would have been premature in them to have turned away from the nation thus favored, until they were clearly taught, both by inspiration and the providence of God, that the nation, as such, had indeed fallen, and that others, even Gentiles, were engrafted. This clinging so tenaciously and persistently to the nation is evidence—the highest—of their faith in this very election, incorporation, adoption, and that salvation is truly identified with the Jewish nation. This very feature which multitudes deem so defective in early Christianity, and which infidels scoffingly deride, is honorable to those believers” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:407). “Various authors of eminence have unjustly accused the apostles, and especially Peter, of being ‘too Jewish’ in their views respecting the call of the Gentiles. But in the light of the covenants and the election, how, we ask, could they be otherwise” (*ibid.*, p. 409)? “Acts: Book of transition... Positionally, the old order was done away at the death of Christ, as signified by the tearing of the veil of the temple (Matt. 27:51)... Experientially, however, the transition covered nearly four decades... Ethnically, there was a transition from dealing primarily with Jews to dealing with both Jew and Gentile without distinction... from Israel to the church... from Law to grace... from the offer to Israel of an earthly Davidic kingdom to the offer to all men of salvation based on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 266). “During the days of His flesh Christ was engaged almost wholly in *teaching* about the Kingdom of Old Testament prophecy and in *doing* the predicted miraculous works which constituted His regal credentials as its Messianic King... the Church, a new thing which is not identical with the Kingdom... the Book of Acts... The Church is present *historically*, having begun as a definite body of people on the day of Pentecost. But the Kingdom, although occupying a large place in apostolic preaching and teaching, is present only as an ‘eschatological’ possibility...” (McClain, *GK*, p. 389) “[in the early chapters of Acts]... the *ekklesia*... it did not yet occupy the center of the stage, as it came to do later when the apostolic offer of the King and His Kingdom once more was met with violent opposition on the part of the rulers of Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 403). “The thirty years which followed... the destruction of Jerusalem are in truth the most obscure in the history of the Church. When

we emerge in the second century we are, to a great extent in a changed world. Apostolic authority lives no longer in the Christian community; apostolic miracles have passed; the Church has fairly begun her pilgrimage through “the waste of Time”” [quoting Samuel G. Green, *Handbook of Church History*, p. 22] (*ibid.*, p. 409). “The period begins with the Kingdom in first place, the Church having almost no distinguishable separate identity. As the period progresses in time, the Church begins to assume a more prominent place, with a glory of its own, while the established Kingdom becomes more remote” (*ibid.*, p. 423). “In the book of Acts this ‘kingdom of God’ appears as something future, the term being used, as James Orr has observed, ‘in an almost exclusively eschatological sense’” (*ibid.*, p. 425). “...nowhere do the preachers ever assert that the Kingdom has been established” (*ibid.*). “The record in the early chapters of Acts suggest strongly that the *ekklesia* was then regarded as the saved Jewish ‘remnant’ of Old Testament prophecy which would constitute the spiritual nucleus of the Messianic Kingdom. Certainly, in those early days, the Church was not in possession of the truth, later revealed, that it was destined to be a unique body as distinguished from all other bodies of the saved in all ages. This observation not only fits the historical situation but also harmonizes with the progress of revelation” (*ibid.*, p. 427). “...the transitional character of the period covered in the Book of Acts. Because of the reoffer of the Kingdom to Israel, the period begins with the Kingdom in the forefront. And while the prophets had made clear that the Gentile nations were to share in its benefits, the nation of Israel always held the place of priority. Therefore, it becomes understandable that the admission of Gentiles to the *ekklesia* raised the problem of *how* they were to be received, if at all. Within the Church the problem moved toward a solution in co-ordination with two other movements: first, the growth of Jewish opposition to the offer of the Messianic Kingdom; and second, the progress of revelation as to the unique nature of the *ekklesia* begun on the day of Pentecost” (*ibid.*, p. 428). “The shift in preaching emphasis, from the Kingdom as an imminent possibility contingent on Israel’s repentance, to the Church as a unique body of believers in which all racial and national distinctions disappear, helps to explain another curious phenomenon in the history of the Acts. Out of the 28 chapters of the book, no less than fifteen are concerned primarily with the work of the apostle Paul. And, as we have noted, the Jewish opposition very quickly centered upon this one man following his conversion. Now the reasons for this attitude were undoubtedly various. But Paul’s distinctive view of the *ekklesia* must not be overlooked. For it was through this apostle, as an instrument of divine inspiration, that God unveiled the lofty character of the

ekklesia begun on Pentecost... no distinction between Jew and Gentile... It was one thing to say that Gentiles might enter the *ekklesia*; it was something else to declare that within that body the Jew had no advantage or priority over the Gentile! And it is a striking fact that at the very time *Paul* was nearly torn to pieces by the Jews at Jerusalem, there was in that city a Christian church with James and its elders, all apparently enjoying immunity from Jewish persecution (Acts 21:17-19, 31)" (*ibid.*). "Historically, therefore, the theological barrier between Jew and Gentile was completely broken down when the opposition of Israel to our Lord's Kingdom was again moving to the crisis of divine judgment, and when contemporaneously the Pentecostal *ekklesia* was being unveiled in the Pauline epistles as a unique body having a glory all its own. And, we may add, if there had been no reoffer of the Kingdom to Israel in the period of the Acts, the Jewish problem might easily have been clarified at the very beginning by an immediate full revelation of the nature of the Church begun on the day of Pentecost. The fact that it was delayed demands some explanation which is in harmony with both history and revelation" (*ibid.*, p. 429). "A Summary of the Acts Period: In preaching and testimony the Acts period must be regarded as transitional, displaying characteristics which belong to both the Kingdom and the Church. Just as in the period of the Gospels the Kingdom had been offered to the nation of Israel, even so during the history of Acts the Kingdom was again offered to Israel. In both periods the offer was authenticated by the same 'signs and wonders' which, according to the prophets, belonged properly to such an offer. And its establishment, in both periods, was conditioned upon repentance and acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah on the part of the nation. Furthermore, in both periods there was Jewish opposition which moved to a crisis of rejection. But parallel with this movement in Acts there was also the history of the Church which began at Pentecost as the spiritual nucleus of the coming Kingdom; and which, following the crisis of Jewish rejection of their Messianic King, was revealed as a unique body destined among the saved of all ages to occupy the highest place in the Kingdom of God. As the period of Acts ends, we pass from the time area of 'signs and wonders' into an era characterized chiefly by the demand for unquestioning faith in the presence of a silent heaven as far as great public miracles are concerned. The period opened with the triumphant sermon of Peter on Pentecost, followed almost at once by his official offer of the Kingdom made from the temple porch, both addressed to representatives of the nation of Israel assembled from all nations at the city of Jerusalem. The period moved to its close with the day-long appeal of Paul, now a prisoner in chains, addressed to the 'chief of the Jews' assem-

bled in the great Gentile metropolis of Rome. It was followed quickly by the 'prison epistles' in which the unique glory of the *ekklesia* was fully revealed. The end came in the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in A.D. 70. The Book of Acts, therefore, presents another one of those probationary periods ordained by divine grace for the nation of Israel. And like a similar period in Old Testament history, when Israel wandered in the wilderness, it lasted approximately one generation. This time, however, the nation failed to enter the promised 'rest' of the Kingdom, not only at the beginning but also at the end of the probationary period. Significantly, both in Old Testament prophecy and in our Lord's eschatological discourse, *the last landmark* before we enter the uncharted time of the present age, is the destruction of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:26; Luke 21:24). Beyond this now historical landmark looms only the beginning of the end. Between the destruction of Jerusalem and the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:13-18), divine revelation indeed speaks of general conditions and tendencies, but there is no single *event* by which the Church may infallibly locate herself in the ocean of time. The period covered by the Book of Acts, therefore, while a genuine segment of the present Church age, has nevertheless a character which differs markedly from that area of time following the destruction of Jerusalem. In this peculiar character we may find at least a partial explanation of the complexities of that Biblical history of the Church which by divine inspiration was recorded by 'the beloved physician'" (*ibid.*).

And, it was reaffirmed in *the transition from public miracles to the absence of public miracles*. "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, **your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing;** for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes" (Isa. 35:1-7). "And it came about that **when Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities.** Now when John in prison heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his

disciples, and said to Him, ‘Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Go and report to John what you hear and see: **the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up,** and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matt. 11:1-5). “And **everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles**” (Acts 2:43). “and have tasted the good word of God and **the powers of the age to come**” (Heb. 6:5) “The death of Stephen was the secret crisis of their destiny. Never again was a public miracle witnessed in Jerusalem. The special Pentecostal proclamation was withdrawn” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 83). “Although in the early pages of Acts Jerusalem is filled with miracles, after the martyrdom of Stephen there is never again any record of a public miracle in that city” (McClain, *GK*, p. 409) “In the Scriptures great public exhibitions of miraculous divine power are invariably connected with the Mediatorial Kingdom of God... They are the signs of the Kingdom, given primarily as a testimony to the nation of Israel, to whom in a peculiar sense that Kingdom belonged by divine covenant, and upon whose repentance depended its imminent establishment upon earth. This was the burden of the prophets as they spoke to Israel about the Kingdom (Isa. 35:1-7). The same thing was affirmed by our Lord in His earthly ministry to the chosen nation (Matt. 11:1-5). And it was reaffirmed by the apostles in their testimony to Israel throughout the Book of Acts (2:1-20, 43)” (*ibid.*, p. 411). “Hebrews... the Acts period... reminding the Jewish readers of that generation that they had ‘tasted... the powers of the age to come’ (6:5, ASV)... following the crises of Jewish rejection reached in Acts 28 and the destruction of Jerusalem, the age of great public miracles came to an end” (*ibid.*, p. 412). “In an interesting passage, Geerhardus Vos seems to agree that there was some connection between the miracles during the period of Acts and the contemporary eschatological expectations: ‘The subsequent receding of this acute eschatological state has something to do with the gradual disappearance of the miraculous phenomena of the apostolic age’ (‘Eschatology of the New Testament,’ *I.S.B.E.*, Vol. II, p. 980). But what the connection is he does not attempt to explain” (*ibid.*). (For further discussion of the absence of public miracles in the Church Age, see the *The Silence of God* section of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

Reaffirmation by the Testimony of the Apostles in Acts

The Kingdom is also reaffirmed by *the testimony of the apostles in the Acts of the Apostles*.

It was reaffirmed *by the apostles just before Christ's ascension*. “The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to **the apostles** whom He had chosen. **To these He also presented Himself alive**, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, **appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God**” (Acts 1:1–3). “And so when they had come together, **they [the apostles, vs. 2] were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’** He said to them, **‘It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;** but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.’ And after He had said these things, **He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.** And as **they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing,** behold, **two men in white clothing** stood beside them; and they also **said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven’**” (Acts 1:6–11). “Now we know that neither a period nor an epoch can be affirmed concerning an event which is only imaginary” [quoting G. V. Lechter, *Lange’s Commentary on Acts*, on Acts 1:6] (Peters, *TTK*, 1:367). “He remained after His resurrection with those previously sent-forth preachers of the Kingdom ‘forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God’ (Acts 1:3). It is exceedingly difficult to conceive, when the Kingdom was the principal topic of conversation, that if these apostles were still ignorant of the very nature of the Kingdom and Christ’s death was to be the medium for their enlightenment, some decided information to remove the alleged ‘error’ was not granted to them during these forty days. The tenor of the narrative shows that in all their conversations respecting the Kingdom nothing was said that changed the faith of the apostles. They still held the belief that they had authoritatively preached. The proof is found in the question (v. 6), ‘Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again, the Kingdom to Israel?’ This is admitted by all—very reluctantly indeed by some commentators and writers—to mean that they still believed in a restoration of the Davidic throne and Kingdom under the reign of the Messiah. The reply of Jesus, as we already had occasion to observe, confirms their belief; for instead of rejecting their idea of the nature of the Kingdom, He takes that for granted as substantially correct, and only

refers to the time when it should again be restored to Israel as something reserved by the Father, thus meeting the question proposed which related to the time" (*ibid.*, p. 430). "Those who have no sympathy with our views are forced to admit in this place a still believed in national restoration of the Jews. So e.g. 'Govinus the Jesuit, in his comment on Acts 1:6, says that Cyprian, Jerome, Chrysostom, Theophilus, Alexandrinus, Augustine, Bede' understood it. Indeed, an interminable list might be produced..." (*ibid.*, p. 431) "It was just such a question as hearts full of love, faith, and hope would suggest with a resurrected Messiah before them. The question vindicates their deep interest in 'the Christship' of Jesus, and His answer confirms their confidence in Him" (*ibid.*, p. 432). "If the apostles were mistaken in their notions of the Kingdom, how can we trust them as infallible guides in other matters" (*ibid.*, p. 434)? "If... the faith of the apostles was discarded by the church as 'too Jewish,' then it follows of necessity that the very foundations of Christianity are unreliable and the superstructure erected upon them is unsafe" (*ibid.*, p. 435). "Knapp has conceded that the apostles did not know the truth respecting the Kingdom until after the ascension, although they had been previously sent out to preach the Kingdom (hence, they preached error, etc.); why then did they not apologize for their preaching an erroneous Kingdom, and tell us, if Knapp is correct, how and when they were enlightened" (*ibid.*, p. 462)? "By our line of argument, the intelligence, integrity, and authority of the apostles are fully sustained" (*ibid.*, p. 470) "...the apostles... if in error on the leading important subject of the Kingdom, why not also in error on the resurrection, the atonement, and, in brief, all other doctrines" (*ibid.*, p. 622)? "He left His own disciples down to the very last moment (Acts 1:6), in the belief that His Kingdom was truly one connected with the restored nation under the Theocratic-Davidic rule" (*ibid.*, 2:78). "'The times and seasons,' Acts 1:7, has evident reference to Daniel's (the Seventy, as Olshausen notices, applied the same Greek words to Dan. 2:21)" (*ibid.*, p. 189) "And he changeth the **times and the seasons**; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding" (Dan. 2:21) "Dr. Increase Mather (Pres. of Harvard Univ.), in his *Mys. of Israel's Salvation*, pointedly says: 'Christ did never actually deny His having such a visible glorious Kingdom upon earth as that which His disciples looked for; only He corrected their error as to the time of this Kingdom's appearing. Christ did not say to them that there should never be any such restoration of the Kingdom to Israel as their thoughts were running upon; only He telleth them that the times and seasons were not for them to know; thereby acknowledging that such a Kingdom should indeed be as they did, from the

holy prophets, expect. Herein was their error, not in expecting a glorious appearing of the Kingdom of God, but in that they made amount that this would be immediately” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:342). “It is true that the disciples, so enamored of the many Old Testament prophecies of the glory of the coming King, had failed to understand adequately and allow for the references to His vicarious death in the Old Testament revelation. But now that those things were fulfilled, what could possibly hinder the speedy establishment of the kingdom by the King at that time” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 140)? “The verb ‘restore again’ is also full of significance. They did not ask about a kingdom that had never had a beginning, but there was to be a restoration of something that had already existed. In what sense that is meant will presently be seen. The verb (*apokathistaneis*) literally means ‘to restore to its former state’” (*ibid.*). “Far from being an inappropriate and foolish question, as some have laboriously sought to prove, the problem occupying the minds of the disciples was legitimate and important” (*ibid.*). “Following His death and resurrection, Christ spent a period of at least forty days giving instruction to His chosen disciples. The main subjects of this special teaching were two: first, ‘concerning himself’ (Luke 24:27, 44); and second, ‘the things pertaining to the kingdom of God’ (Acts 1:3). The source materials used were the Old Testament Scriptures: ‘all things... which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms’—the customary threefold division of the Old Testament books (Luke 24:44). Thus, in this post-resurrection school of instruction, we have both the King and His Kingdom brought together as the one central theme of Old Testament prophecy” (McClain, *GK*, p. 281) “The first eleven verses of Acts... Luke only, in the first-named passage, states the length of this ministry as ‘forty days’” (*ibid.*, p. 390). “Luke 24:13-24... two disciples had sadly said, ‘But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel’ (vs. 21, ASV)... And, according to Luke’s account in Acts, the forty days of our Lord’s post-resurrection ministry were designed to meet this particular need of the disciples in several ways. (1) During this period of time Christ demonstrated to them the reality of His resurrection from the dead... Thus by sensible signs and Biblical testimony were the disciples convinced of the resurrection of Jesus, and so prepared for further instruction about the Kingdom. (2) Luke says that during the forty days Christ was ‘speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God’ (Acts 1:3). And in his Gospel, where he elaborates somewhat more fully as to the content of our Lord’s teaching on the subject, we learn that it included an exposition of the Old Testament testimony ‘concerning himself,’ with reference especially to His *suffering* and the subsequent *glory* (Luke 24:26-27, 46). In this teaching, the fact of His resurrec-

tion became the connecting link between the suffering and glory, solving the mystery of a Messiah who must die for His people and yet who also must reign over them gloriously in a coming Kingdom. It was this vital connection that gave to the resurrection so prominent a place in the doctrinal preaching of the early chapters of Acts. (3) We are also told by Luke that before His ascension Christ gave certain 'commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen' (Acts 1:2). This unquestionably is a reference to the so-called 'commissions' recorded in Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:46-49, John 21:15-17, and Acts 1:7-8. Having informed them concerning 'the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,' and also as to His own place in relation to that Kingdom, He now outlines a definite program of action to be followed by His disciples during the interregnum until He returns to establish the Kingdom. In summary, therefore, we may say that the chief subject of our Lord's post-resurrection ministry was the 'kingdom of God'; and the Biblical record contains no mention of the 'Church' as such. This omission does not necessarily mean that the latter was not discussed at all (for doubtless it was); but it does mean that the Church must have occupied a wholly subordinate place in this period of Christ's teaching" (*ibid.*). "...the forty days of special instruction about the Kingdom were completed. And considering that their Teacher had been the Messianic King Himself, the risen son of God, the disciples by this time should have been fairly well informed about the essential 'things pertaining to the kingdom.' Judged in the light of these facts, their final question on the subject should not be dismissed lightly as evidence of an 'unspiritual' and 'carnal' viewpoint, as some writers assume to do. Such treatment imputes not only inferior intelligence to the apostles but also, worse than that, incompetence to their Teacher. Regarded seriously, a number of important assumptions are latent in the question under discussion. (1) The question assumes the restoration of a divine Kingdom which once existed. (2) The disciples' question also assumes that this Kingdom was not then established on earth. (3) The question also assumes that when the Kingdom is restored, Israel will once more possess the Kingdom in the sense of its meaning in Old Testament history and prophecy. (4) The disciples' question shows clearly that the one point upon which they lacked information was that of *time*. The emphasis on this point is more striking in the order of the Greek words: Lord, *at this time* wilt thou restore the kingdom to Israel? Evidently the apostles, schooled in the teaching of the Messianic King Himself, had heard nothing which would absolutely preclude the possibility of the establishment of the Kingdom in the near future of their own times" (*ibid.*, p. 393). "Christ's Reply to the Disciples' Question: (1) In this reply to the disciples

there is no rebuke nor correction for their general assumptions. If their ideas of the Kingdom had been totally wrong, certainly this was the time for Christ to have set them right, not only for their sakes but for ours also who would read the inspired record. If, because of her sins, God was now done forever with the historical nation of Israel; if all her divine covenants were now to be taken away and given to the Church; if the throne of David was now to be transferred from earth to heaven; if the glorious utterances of the prophets are only 'beautiful dreams' never to be realized in the reign of Messiah in a Kingdom on earth where all war and disease and injustice shall have been abolished; if the sickly cast of platonic dualism is now to be thrown over great areas of Old Testament prediction in which the brightest aspirations of humanity are divinely validated—how simple it would have been for our Lord Jesus Christ to have set the apostles right in a single utterance. But there is no record of such an utterance in this crucial point... 'As to the fact itself, the coming of the Kingdom, and as to Israel's privilege with respect to the latter, they entertained no doubt; and the Lord was so far from disapproving of such an expectation, that he rather confirmed it by declaring that the Father had fixed the times. Now we know that neither a period nor an epoch can be affirmed concerning an event which is only imaginary. Those interpreters have altogether mistaken the sense, who maintain that Jesus here entirely rejects the conceptions entertained by his apostles respecting the Messianic Kingdom, for this is by no means the case. He did not deny that either their expectation of the appearance on earth of his glorious Kingdom in its reality, or their hope of the glorious future which that Kingdom opened to the people of Israel, was well founded; he simply subdued their eager curiosity respecting the time...' [quoting G. V. Lechter, *Lange's Commentary on Acts*, on Acts 1:6] (2) Since the question of the disciples had concerned only the time of the Kingdom's establishment, so our Lord's reply deals pointedly with this matter: 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons.' (3) During the unrevealed time of the Interregnum, His apostles are to be occupied with a world-wide ministry of witnessing. It is easy to forget that, while the commission of verse 8 has an application to every believer of the present age, it was addressed in the first instance to 'the apostles whom he had chosen' (Acts 1:2). And although He had warned them to expect persecution, or even death (John 16:1-4), there is no intimation in this final commission to them that the task of witnessing might not be interrupted by the coming of the Kingdom within the reach of their own generation. It is completely unhistorical to read into the words of Acts 1:8 nineteen centuries of time. One of the reasons for leaving the time span wholly unrevealed was, as we shall see, because another offer of the

King and His Kingdom was to be made to the nation of Israel (Acts 3:19-21). And the silence of God as to the length of the Interregnum left room for a genuine decision on the part of the nation. To have revealed in advance any fixed chronology would have turned the divine offer into a hollow mockery. (4) ...His promise of a similarly visible second coming, given through the 'two men... in white apparel' as He was going up (Acts 1:9-11). Both the ascension and its attendant promise were intended to give reassurance to the disciples regarding Jesus and His relation to the expected future Kingdom. The ascension, on the one hand, demonstrated the truth of His claim to be the Messianic King; and the promise of a second advent, on the other hand, reaffirmed the reality and certainty of the future establishment of His Kingdom... 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven' (Matt. 26:63-64). (5) In this final promise of a second coming of the Messianic King (Acts 1:11), the angelic messengers seem almost to exhaust the resources of human language in declaring the reality and visibility of that grand event. The coming One will be 'this same Jesus [*houtos*, this very one], which is taken up.' He will 'so [*houtos*, in this way] come in like manner [*hon tropon*] as ye have seen him go.' This language grows in impressiveness when we recall that the great purpose of His second advent will be to establish the Kingdom on earth. If the coming of the King will be something fully tangible in the realm of sense experience, as affirmed by the angels, there remains no sound reason for denying the same reality to the Kingdom which He will bring. So the apostles understood, and so they taught" (*ibid.*, p. 394). "Dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel,' the reference is clearly restricted to the Mediatorial Kingdom, for the *ekklesia* had not yet begun" (*ibid.*, p. 425). "They were correct in their anticipation that as Messiah Christ will again restore the kingdom to Israel" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 268). "It is extremely important to notice that Jesus did not change their concept of the coming kingdom... timing... the timing was not for them to know (Acts 1:7)" (*ibid.*). "In Acts 1:6, when the disciples wanted to know when the kingdom was going to be restored to Israel, they were not told that they were in error, that the kingdom would never be restored to Israel, but only that it was not for them to know the 'times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority' (Acts 1:7)" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 117). "The last thing the disciples asked Jesus was 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6; cf. 15:13-16). If there were to be no future literal kingdom, then this was Jesus' last opportunity to correct them, as He had done with their misunderstandings on many other occasions. But He did not; instead, He implied that it would come in the Fa-

ther's good time, and that meanwhile they were to be witnesses in all the world (1:7-8)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:56). "Acts 1:6-11... Considering the Messiah Himself had just spent forty days speaking of things pertaining to 'the kingdom of God' (v. 3), the disciples were not speaking out of ignorance when they asked Him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' (v. 6)" (*ibid.*, p. 488). "The 'restoration' implies that the one point on which the disciples lacked information was the *time* of the coming kingdom (not its nature)" (*ibid.*). "If there were no literal national future for Israel, then Jesus missed His last chance to correct them and say something like 'Do you still not understand' (Matt. 16:9). By contrast, He gave not one word of rebuke and affirmed a future messianic kingdom of which only God knew the timing: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority [for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel]...' (Acts 1:7-8)" (*ibid.*) "Even after Jesus' time on earth, the *kingdom* of Israel, which included its unconditional land-promises (*forever*), had not yet been fulfilled. Jesus here implied that it was coming but did not say when" (*ibid.*, p. 508).

The Kingdom was reaffirmed by *Peter*. "Recent Christian writers may, rather sarcastically, remark that Peter thought that 'the Gentiles must be brought, as it were, over the bridge of Judaism into the Kingdom of God.' But Peter had no right to think otherwise until God revealed the matter to him how Gentiles could be engrafted and also become of the elect people without observing the rites and ceremonies of Judaism. In this whole affair, the apostles sustained the very attitude required by our Propositions concerning the covenants and election" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:409).

It was reaffirmed by Peter *on the day of Pentecost*. "But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: 'Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but **this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel**: "And it shall be in the last days," God says, "That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams; Even upon My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit And they shall prophesy. And I will grant wonders in the sky above, And signs on the earth beneath, Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come. And it shall be, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'" (Acts 2:14-21). "It were against all probability to suppose that

the apostle meant to speak of the prophecy (of Joel) as having found a complete fulfillment in the events of that particular day” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:439) “Then he pointed to the partial fulfillment—for he did not use the regular clause ‘that it might be fulfilled,’ which is generally found in New Testament fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies—of the prophecy of Joel concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 141). “Brethren, I may confidently say to you **regarding the patriarch David** that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that **God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne**” (Acts 2:29-30) “And while he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement. But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, ‘**Men of Israel**, why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? **The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers**, has glorified His servant Jesus... But **the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets**, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled. **Repent** therefore and **return**, that your sins may be wiped away, **in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.** Moses said, “The Lord God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed in everything He says to you. And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. **It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways**” (Acts 3:11-26). “whom (Acts 3:12-26) the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things’ (keeping in mind the Jewish idea of restitution as always associated with the restored Davidic Kingdom) shall come, and then ‘He (God) shall send Jesus Christ’ through whom this is effected” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:317). “If the phrases were to be spiritualized, he [Peter] ought to have stated the fact, and assigned the reasons for such a transmutation” (*ibid.*, 2:461). “Peter... the Apostle urges the Jews, as a people, to repen-

tance and conversion, because the times of refreshing, as the prophets abundantly testify, are connected with just such a repentance and conversion... The delay in carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles, the priority given to the Jews, the sparing of the nation for some time, etc., was to still mercifully tender to them—in view of their being nationally entitled to the blessings—the promised times of refreshing on condition of repentance. The continued national unbelief and impenitence prevented—as had been already foreseen and predicted—God’s gracious purposes, and delayed them until the ‘times of the Gentiles’ would be fulfilled” (*ibid.*, p. 463). “Luther (quoted by Dr. Seiss, *Last Times*, Third Dis.), ‘All things are now disordered and decaying; whence Peter says that the heavens must receive Christ until the time when all things shall be restored again to what they were in Paradise; thus agreeing with Paul, that the whole creatureship has been made subject to vanity, and that it is to be hoped that not man only but the earth and heaven shall again be brought back to their Edenic state’” (*ibid.*, p. 466). “The language of the apostles is eminently calculated to confirm the Jewish belief in the literal fulfillment of the Davidic covenant” (*ibid.*, 1:317). “Let any one read the [Davidic] covenant and prophecies directly bearing on it, and then place himself in the position of a Jewish hearer of Peter, with Jewish faith, expectations, and covenant relationship, and the decided impression will be made that the covenant is not altered but remains unchanged, that the death of Jesus combined with resurrection and exaltation only qualifies him the better to meet the conditions of the covenant, and that through this resurrected Jesus, when the time appointed by the Father arrives, this covenant will be verified” (*ibid.*). “Acts 2:14-36 and 3:12-26... Peter boldly asserts that Jesus was to sit on David’s throne” (*ibid.*, p. 438) “Let the student place himself in the posture of the Jewish hearers at that preaching, with their Jewish expectations of the Kingdom and ‘the Christ,’ and he will see at once that this sermon was most admirably adapted to confirm the Jews in their faith of the Kingdom. Peter’s argument takes the Jewish view of the Kingdom to be the correct one, and as one well known, and hence, without entering into particulars, endeavors to show that Jesus is that Messiah under whom the covenanted sitting upon David’s throne will yet eventually be realized—His resurrection and present exaltation giving us the needed assurance. The Kingdom is not disputed, but He who is to be the Messiah, the King, is the subject controverted and thus brought forward. This is confirmed by the second discourse, in which it is distinctly announced that this Jesus, thus declared to be the Messiah, shall remain in heaven until the period of restitution spoken of by the prophets, and always linked with the Messianic Kingdom, shall arrive; for this Jesus shall come

again to be the Restorer as the prophets announce. Now let the reader consider how the hearers of Peter regarded the times of restitution, comprehending under it the Messianic reign, the restoration of the Davidic throne and Kingdom, etc., and it is utterly impossible to conceive of any other impression made upon their minds than that the Kingdom was still future, and would be established when Jesus would come again. The proof is found in the historical fact, that the first Christians thus understood Peter. The times of restitution and the times of the Kingdom are strictly equivalent phrases to the Jewish mode of thinking and belief; hence the language of Peter, as consistency demanded, is in strict accord with our Proposition. Many of our opponents are forced to give us Acts chs. 2 and 3, as fully sustaining continued ‘Jewish expectations’” (*ibid.*). “Peter continues to preach to the Jews ‘the Christ,’ which was understood by all to denote the One anointed to be the King on David’s restored throne” (*ibid.*, p. 441). “Our argument shows that Peter, however ignorant of the means and time of accomplishment, consistently held to one continuous proper meaning of ‘Christ,’ corresponding with his preaching as a disciple and an apostle” (*ibid.*). “Even after the church began, this future literal kingdom was offered to Israel (in Acts 3) by Peter, who referred to the restoration of Israel (vv. 19-21), promised in the Old Testament and to be fulfilled when Messiah returned. In fact, Peter declared that He would *not* return until they repented and accepted Him as their Messiah” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:57).

And, it was reaffirmed by Peter *before the Sanhedrin*. “But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy; and they laid hands on the apostles, and put them in a public jail... But Peter and the apostles answered and said, ‘We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a **Prince** and a Savior, **to grant repentance to Israel**, and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him’” (Acts 5:17–32).

It was reaffirmed by *James at the Jerusalem conference*. “And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, ‘Brethren, listen to me. Simeon has related how God **first** concerned Himself about taking **from among the Gentiles a people for His name**. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, “**After these things I will return, And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, And I will rebuild its ruins, And I will restore it**”” (Acts 15:13-16) “**In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is**

fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, **and all the nations that are called by my name,** saith Jehovah that doeth this” (Amos 9:11-12). “The apostles all agreed to this postponement as presented by James” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:439). “In its original context, *the tabernacle of David* cannot ‘be an equivalent of the New Testament church’ for the simple reason that the ‘prophecy concerns the *rebuilding* of that which was fallen down’ and the Church is hardly that which has already broken down in Amos’ day. The blessings listed by Amos [9:11] ‘are *earthly, territorial, and national*, and have nothing to do with a spiritual church to which none of these blessings has been promised” [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 203-206] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 464) “Walvoord [in *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 203-206] interprets James as saying ‘that it was God’s purpose to bless the Gentiles as well as Israel, but in their order.’ He insists that two key words, *first* and *after* not be ignored. The program of God ‘was to visit the Gentiles *first*, “to take out of them a people of his name” and then ‘*after* the Gentile period’ will come ‘the period of Jewish blessing and triumph.’ Walvoord concludes that this passage does not teach that Christ’s Davidic rule is fulfilled in the Church, but establishes ‘a specific time order.’ God will *first* ‘conclude His work for the Gentiles in the period of Israel’s dispersion.’ Then, *after* that purpose is accomplished, He will ‘return,’ which Walvoord identifies with the second coming, ‘to bring in the promised blessings for Israel” (*ibid.*).

The Kingdom was reaffirmed in Acts by *Paul*.

It was reaffirmed by Paul *in Thessalonica*. “Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of **the Jews**. And according to **Paul’s** custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths **reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, ‘This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.’** And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and coming upon the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people. And when they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, **‘These men who have upset the world have come here also; and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act**

contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.’ And they stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things. And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them” (Acts 17:1–9).

It was also reaffirmed by Paul *before Agrippa*. “And Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You are permitted to speak for yourself.’ Then Paul stretched out his hand and proceeded to make his defense: ‘In regard to all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am about to make my defense before you today; especially because **you are an expert in all customs and questions among the Jews; therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.** So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time previously, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. And now **I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain,** as they earnestly serve God night and day. And **for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews**” (Acts 26:1–7).

And, it was reaffirmed by Paul *before the leading Jews in Rome*. “And when we entered Rome, **Paul** was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him. And it happened that after three days he called together those who were the leading men of the Jews, and when they had come together, he began saying to them, ‘Brethren, though **I had done nothing against our people, or the customs of our fathers,** yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. And when they had examined me, they were willing to release me because there was no ground for putting me to death. But when the Jews objected, I was forced to appeal to Caesar; not that I had any accusation against **my nation.** For this reason therefore, I requested to see you and to speak with you, for **I am wearing this chain for the sake of the hope of Israel.**’ And they said to him, ‘We have neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren come here and reported or spoken anything bad about you. But we desire to hear from you what your views are; for concerning this sect, it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere.’ And when they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and **he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God,** and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, **from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets,** from morning until evening. And some were being persuaded

by the things spoken, but others would not believe. And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, **‘The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers,** saying, “GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, ‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND **RETURN, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM.**”’ Let it be known to you therefore, that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen.’ [And when he had spoken these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.] And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters, and was welcoming all who came to him, **preaching the kingdom of God,** and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered” (Acts 28:16–31). “The apostles never were compelled to combat the Jewish idea of the Messiah, or of the Kingdom. We have a noted instance of this in Paul, who disputed with the Jews (e.g. Acts 28:17-29), ‘expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets.’ He speaks of ‘the hope of Israel,’ ‘preaching the Kingdom of God,’ and never once intimates that the Jews were mistaken in their views of the Kingdom as derived from the Covenant” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:469). “‘for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain’ (Acts 28:20). This ‘hope’ was a very specific thing, referred to in Acts four times (cf. 23:6; 24:15; 26:6-7). It involved (a) the hope of the coming of the Messianic Kingdom as set forth in Old Testament prophecy; (b) the hope of a resurrection of those Israelites who had died, to the end that they might participate in the Kingdom (cf. Ezek. 37:11-38)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 421). “Paul declares that he is chained for *the hope of Israel*, a reference to the Messianic Hope and not the Church” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 688).

Reaffirmation of the Kingdom in the Epistles

The Kingdom is reaffirmed in *the New Testament epistles* by Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude.

Reaffirmation by Paul

The Kingdom is reaffirmed in all of *Paul’s* epistles except Philemon: in Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First

Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus and Hebrews (if authored by Paul). “This subject of the election and the call of the Gentiles, with the engrafting on the principle of faith, fully accounts why Paul enters so largely into the matter of, and lays so much stress on, the doctrine of justification through faith. The contrast between his writings and that of the other apostles in this particular is so great that some have concluded it—erroneously—to be ‘another Gospel.’ But the key is to be found in his being specially appointed as the apostle of the Gentiles. His very mission made this a very significant and highly important topic, and consequently, in faithfulness to his calling, he enlarges upon it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:411). “...the three aspects in which Paul represents Christ... (a) sub-angelic humiliation; (b) heavenly exaltation; (c) earthly dominion” (*ibid.*, 2:195). “In brief, every Epistle that Paul wrote is in perfect agreement with our doctrinal position” (*ibid.*, 3:363). “Paul... a teacher of this identical Kingdom, delayed... until the Second Advent” (*ibid.*, p. 503) “The most frequent reference to the ‘kingdom’ or the ‘kingdom of God’ in the Epistles is a reference to the present form of the kingdom in which individuals by faith in Jesus Christ, and because of His death and resurrection, receive salvation and the gift of eternal life. All these are a part of the kingdom of God” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 284). “The biblical covenants dominated the thinking of the writers of the Old Testament Scripture. And while those covenants play a prominent role in the Gospels, little reference is made to the covenants in the New Testament Epistles. This observation supports the fact that during this present age, in which a new form of the kingdom is being developed, God has temporarily set aside the nation Israel, His covenant people, and is developing a new kingdom program” (*ibid.*, p. 285).

In *Romans* Paul lays out an extensive description of Israel’s past, present and future, particularly in chapters nine through eleven. “Paul informs us that the nation of Israel will yet be restored to its place of blessing under God. To set the context, Romans 9-11 is about Israel’s past blessings (9), present rejection (10), and future national restoration (11). In 9:3-4, Paul makes it evident he is speaking of literal physical Israel, not any kind of ‘spiritual’ Israel, and in 10:1, he declares: ‘My heart’s desire and prayer to God *for the Israelites* is that they may be saved.’ They are said to be the ‘nation’ (v. 19) to whom Moses wrote and the ‘Israel’ to whom Isaiah prophesied (v. 21). Further, in Romans 11, Paul calls them ‘His [God’s] people,’ of whom Paul is one (v. 1), that God has not rejected forever (vv. 1-2 NKJV), because ‘God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable’ (v. 29)... The nation *as a whole* will be converted and restored, just as God promised, *when Messiah returns*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:57). “Chapters 9-11 of Paul’s letter to the Romans

form a unit wherein he deals with the question ‘Has God cast away His people?’ (11:1 NKJV); Romans 9 deals with Israel’s past, Romans 10 with Israel’s present, and Romans 11 with Israel’s future, including a description of the process of rejection, retribution, and restoration” (*ibid.*, p. 485). “God has not, will not, and cannot cast them away (11:1-2, 29). God’s unconditional promises will be fulfilled; the nation as a whole will be converted and restored when their Messiah returns (vv. 24-26)” (*ibid.*, p. 536). “...Israel’s *election* in Romans 9... Israel’s *defection* in Romans 10... Israel’s *salvation* in Romans 11” (Horner, *FI*, p. 255) “concerning **His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh**” (Rom. 1:3) “**For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.** For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that **the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God**” (Rom. 8:19-21). “who are **Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises**” (Rom. 9:4) “...the adoption, by which Israel became the national son of God” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 506). “There are five such promises: first, an ‘eternal national entity’ so that ‘Israel need never fear for her national existence’; second, an ‘eternal land’ so ‘the right and title to it have irrevocably been given to them by God’; third, an ‘eternal King’ so David will ‘never lack for a son to reign upon his throne’; fourth, an ‘eternal kingdom’ so the Messiah’s dominion will be ‘an everlasting one’; and fifth, ‘an eternal throne’ so David’s ‘throne would exist forever’” [quoting Charles Feinberg, *Israel*, pp. 117-126] (*ibid.*, p. 507). “Paul, when listing Israel’s privileges, puts them in the present tense. It is better to view these privileges as still belonging to Israel, but the enjoyment of these privileges is based upon obedience” (*ibid.*, p. 515). “‘the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises’ (Rom. 9:4). This is not the language of superseded Judaism” (Horner, *FI*, p. 309). “You will say to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?’ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this,’ will it? Or **does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?** What if **God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known**, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon

vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles” (Rom. 9:19–24). “Paul’s discussion of the potter and the clay in Romans 9:19-24 is in the context of Israel’s national election and in keeping with the Old Testament motif” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 823). “I say then, **God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!** For I too am an **Israelite, a descendant of Abraham**, of the tribe of Benjamin. **God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.** Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel” (Rom. 11:1-2)? “I say then, **they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be!** But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous” (Rom. 11:11). “Samuel Wilkinson [*The Israel Promises and their Fulfillment*, p. 170]... ‘The whole confusion arises from making partial and temporary deprivation of blessing to mean final and full repudiation.’ Yet the very purpose of Romans 11 is to stress that the fall of Israel is neither full, final, nor fatal” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 243). “Now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be **riches for the Gentiles**, how much more **will their fulfillment be**” (Rom. 11:12)! “(a) ‘Now if the fall of them (b) be the riches of the world, and (a) the diminishing of them, (b) the riches of the Gentiles: (c) how much more their fullness.’ Observe of whom the Apostle predicates this ‘fall’ and ‘diminishing,’ and it is of the same party (not another as the believing portion) that this ‘fullness’ is stated” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:69). “Now, obviously, there can be no fullness of Israel if they have no future” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 167). “Commenting on 11:12, Hoyt [in Herman Hoyt, *First Christian Theology*, pp. 125-126] states that the previous passage points out that Israel’s fall led to Gentile salvation. This leads to a logical inference: if the fall of Israel ‘resulted in God turning to the larger world of mankind with the riches of His grace,’ then logically ‘the fulness of Israel will unfold in benefits to the Gentiles far beyond anything ever dreamed’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 516). “The ‘salvation of the Jews will produce such an amazing response from among Gentiles that there will be a world revival.’ Jews will evangelize the Gentiles both in the Tribulation and in the Millennium, resulting in millions being ‘swept into the kingdom of God’” [quoting Hoyt, *First Christian Theology*, pp. 125-126] (*ibid.*, p. 517). “But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, **what will their acceptance be** but life from the dead? And **if the first piece of dough be holy, the lump is also; and if the root be holy, the**

branches are too. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, **do not be arrogant toward the branches;** but if you are arrogant, remember that **it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.** You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.’ Quite right, **they were broken off for their unbelief,** but you stand by your faith. **Do not be conceited, but fear;** for if **God did not spare the natural branches,** neither will He spare you. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to **those who fell,** severity, but to you, God’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And **they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again.** For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree” (Rom. 11:13-24)? “Gentile ‘high-mindedness’... Ignoring the express covenant language, and mistaking the Kingdom itself—two fatal doctrinal mistakes” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:359) “Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by thy faith. Be not **highminded,** but fear” (Rom. 11:2, ASV) “Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not **highminded,** but fear” (Rom. 11:2, KJV) “...the Gentile ‘high-mindedness,’ against which we are cautioned by Paul (Rom. 11)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:426) “High-minded Gentilism will not delay or alter God’s purposes” (*ibid.*, 2:73). “...the ‘Wild’ Olive branches were grafted in ‘among’ them [vs. 17—*ed.*], not ‘instead of’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 62) “They were not broken off that the Gentiles might be grafted in, but they were broken off because of ‘UNBELIEF’” (*ibid.*, p. 158) “The ‘GOOD Olive Tree’ is not rooted up and destroyed and a ‘WILD OLIVE TREE’ planted in its place, but it still remains alive and gives life to both the ‘Good’ and ‘Wild’ Olive branches” (*ibid.*). “Those Jews who rejected Christ and thus broke away from the religion of Abraham, are the branches, who, through unbelief, are broken off” (*ibid.*). “Paul knew what he was talking about when he said that the grafting of the ‘Wild’ Olive on the ‘Good’ Olive Tree was ‘CONTRARY TO NATURE.’ From this we see that the injection of Gentilism into Judaism is not beneficial to Judaism. That Judaism is of purer stock than Gentilism, and for the purification of Judaism, Gentilism, or the ‘Wild’ Olive branches, must be removed, or cut off, from the ‘Good’ Olive Tree, and be replaced by the grafting back again of the ‘Natural Branches.’ Rom. 11:24. By Gentilism we mean that part of the Gentile world known as Christendom, or the professing Church, as described in the King-

dom of Heaven parables of Matt. 13. And it is only the Laodicean part of it that God says He will ‘SPUE OUT OF HIS MOUTH’ (Rev. 3:16), that as ‘Wild’ Olive branches God will remove from the ‘Good’ Olive Tree, for all true believers who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and that make up the true Church the ‘Body of Christ’... cannot be displaced” (*ibid.*). “God has not ‘Cast Away’ His people Israel... He will revive the broken off branches and graft them back again” (*ibid.*). “This parable teaches us that we are not to look upon the unbelieving Jew as a cast-off and withered branch only fit for fire-wood, but we are to consider that his ‘casting away’ as well as his ‘blindness’ is only temporary, and that he will again take up his position among the nations of the earth” (*ibid.*). “The ‘Olive Tree’ then is a symbol of Israel’s RELIGIOUS Privileges, and it is worthy of note that while Israel is compared to trees, their oppressors, the Gentile Nations, are spoken of in the Scriptures as WILD BEASTS. Dan. 7:1-28” (*ibid.*). “The tree represents the root of Abrahamic blessing... all can partake of the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant in salvation through Christ, the Seed of Abraham, yet not necessarily belong to the New Testament church” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 237). “In the analogy of the olive tree, Paul was viewing the root as the covenant that put Israel in a privileged position” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 286) “Israel’s stumbling was for Gentile salvation, but the purpose of Gentile salvation is Jewish salvation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 682). “Israel is the owner of the Olive Tree, but Israel is not the tree itself. The *root* of this place of blessing is the Abrahamic Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 784). “...if Gentiles are to remain in the place of blessing, they must continue in faith... He is not dealing with individual believers and unbelievers, but with nationalities of Jews and Gentiles... Gentiles are warned against boasting over the *natural branches*, for they are not self-sustained; they are sustained by the root: the Abrahamic Covenant, which is a Jewish covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 785). “This Olive Tree, this place of blessing, belongs to Israel. How so? The place of blessing is based upon the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel. Because these are Jewish covenants, the place of blessing belongs rightfully to the Jews... *their own olive tree*. The fact that Israel owns the tree shows that Israel is not the tree, for the owner and that which is owned are distinct entities” (*ibid.*, p. 786). “The Olive Tree is neither Israel nor the Church, but it is ‘the place of privilege’ or the place of blessing. [quoting Ryrie, *Premillennial Faith*, pp. 65-67]. (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 500). “For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, **how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree**” (Rom. 11:24)? “As Ryrie [in *Premillennial Faith*, pp.

65-67] states, ‘the fullness of blessing for Israel will be “much more.” This statement alone is conclusive evidence ‘that Israel will have a future’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 500). “‘...Israel who is of the good tree naturally be grafted back in.’ The point of this passage is that someday they will be.” [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 172-173] (*ibid.*, p. 502). **“For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in”** (Rom. 11:25) “In describing how long this blindness or hardness or casting away is to continue, he emphatically limits it to ‘until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in.’ This may denote either until the filling up of the predetermined elect out of the Gentiles is accomplished, or until, as in Christ’s declaration, the filling up, the complement of ‘the times of the Gentiles’ is finished. In either case the rejection of the nation is not final but bounded by a definite period known to God” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:70). “The ‘veil’ is still over the nation. However individuals may accept of personal salvation in believing, the nation, as such, bears a strong dislike to Jesus of Nazareth, and regards with disdain the interpretation of prophecies which would link the ultimate forgiveness and glory of the nation with a reception of this same Jesus. It is too humiliating for faith to accept, being at present regarded as a degradation for them to owe their final recovery and restoration to, ‘the crucified One’” (*ibid.*, p. 666). “the Gentiles, in order to participate in the promises covenanted to the Jews, must be grafted in, adopted... becoming the seed of Abraham and thus inherit the promises with Abraham; and that, when this incorporation of Gentiles (produced by Jewish defection) has been sufficiently carried out to raise up a seed unto Abraham (for Theocratic purposes) then will the elect Jewish nation be restored to its covenanted Theocratic-Davidic position, thus vindicating and establishing its election before all nations” (*ibid.*, 3:411). “The calling of the Gentiles, which had begun in earnest (Rom. 9:24-33), is temporary until the time that the full number of Gentiles is completed” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 639). “They were hardened in part until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in. The Greek word translated as *fulness* means ‘a full number’ or ‘a complete number.’ In other words, God has a set number of Gentiles that He has destined to come into the place of blessing, the Olive Tree of verses 16-24. After the *fulness of the Gentiles* has come in, after that set number is reached, then all Israel will be saved” (*ibid.*, p. 785). “The *mystery* of this passage is not that of Israel’s national salvation, for that was revealed in the Old Testament. The mystery is that of a partial, temporary hardening of Israel until a full number of Gentiles is reached. The *Israel* of this verse must refer to

national Israel for that has been its meaning the other ten times *Israel* has been used since chapter nine (which even Covenant Theologians admit) and there is no reason to make this verse the one exception, especially since it makes perfect sense and is a contrast to the *Gentiles* in the previous verse” (*ibid.*). “As Paul brings to a conclusion his lengthy treatment of the place of Israel in the program of God, he points out that the present blindness and hardening of Israel is not a permanent one. It is temporary, until the full number of Gentiles preordained for the Body of the Messiah is reached (vs. 25). It is then that the hardening of Israel will be removed, and all Israel living at that time will be saved (vv. 26-27)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 411). “...*until*—this is the key word... The mystery is that of a partial, temporary hardening of Israel until a full, set number of Gentiles is reached, and this is something that was not revealed anywhere in the Old Testament. The Greek word for *fullness* means a ‘set number,’ and Paul’s point is that God has set a number of Gentiles He intends to bring into the Body” (*ibid.*, p. 684). “Acts 15:14 [“Simeon has related how **God** first concerned Himself about **taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.**”]... call out from among the Gentiles a people for His Name. This calling out from among the Gentiles will continue *until the fulness*, that set number of Gentiles, is reached... Then God will deal with Israel as a nation again, rather than just with Jewish individuals. This national dealing will lead to all Israel’s being saved” (*ibid.*, p. 789). “Of course, not all Jews who ever lived came out of Egypt, but every Jew who lived at that time did come out of Egypt. This verse should be interpreted in the same way: every Jew living at that time will be saved. The *mystery* of this passage is not that of Israel’s national salvation, for that was revealed in the Old Testament. The *mystery* is that of a partial, temporary hardening of Israel until the full number of Gentiles is reached” (*ibid.*). “Through the Messiah’s rejection, God would temporarily set aside His dealings with national Israel and attempt to provoke her to jealousy by centering on the Gentiles’ salvation. Israel would not be restored as a nation until the ‘fulness of the Gentiles’ (Rom. 11:25 NKJV) was complete, for, said Paul, ‘I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in’ (*ibid.* NIV)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:483). “Paul... ‘leaves no doubt about what he wants his readers to learn from this mystery: to stop thinking so highly of themselves in comparison with Jews (v. 25a). We who are Gentiles should likewise take these verses as a reminder that we are only part of the great salvation-historical plan of God and that that plan has its climax in the salvation of Israel” [quoting D. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 713]

(Horner, *FI*, p. 259). “David Stern commented [in *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 747], ‘Christians are indeed a chosen people set aside for God to possess—not by way of superceding the Jews as God’s people, but by way of being joined to them by faith in the same God and in the Jewish Messiah. A so-called “Christian” who opposes or looks down on the Jews as merely God’s “former” people has missed the point altogether’” (*ibid.*, p. 288). (See also our discussion of the removal of Israel’s blindness in the section *Events Just Prior to the Tribulation* in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.) **“and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob’”** (Rom. 11:26). **“And a Redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith Jehovah”** (Isa. 59:20). “To make the Israel of verse 26 mean anything other than a reference to Israel’s national salvation is ‘exegetical violence’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 112). “Cox [in *Biblical Studies*, pp. 77-78] does limit the *all Israel* to be only the remnant, destroying Paul’s own contrast already begun in chapter nine between Israel the whole and Israel the remnant. To keep this contrast intact then, 11:26 does refer to a future national salvation of Israel in contrast to the present partial salvation of Israel. Cox also admits that if ‘taken literally at face value,’ 11:26 teaches that every Israelite is assured salvation; but he is wrong in saying that the verse would require the salvation of every Jew ‘past, present, and future.’ If this were the case, then it would be an ‘unbiblical teaching’ as Cox states. This salvation of all Israel is only after *the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, so it only includes all Jews living at that time and not all Jews of all time” (*ibid.*, p. 221). “Throughout Romans 9-11, *Israel* is consistently used for Jews in contrast to Gentiles” (*ibid.*, p. 222). “...he [William Hendriksen, *Israel in Prophecy*] misses Paul’s contrast. During the period of Gentile salvation, only part of Israel is being saved; but once the *fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, thus bringing the period of Gentile salvation to an end, then it will not be a part of Israel that will be saved, but *all Israel shall be saved*” (*ibid.*, p. 223). “The *all Israel* is not just the sum total of all remnants, but *all Israel* is in contrast to partial Israel, and so refers to a national salvation following *the fulness of the Gentiles*” (*ibid.*, p. 226). “Ladd’s wish that Paul had said much more about Israel’s salvation is not really necessary. All the details are available in the Old Testament, and Paul is simply drawing on some of them. Because of his position that any such belief must be based on the New Testament, Ladd will not use the Old Testament to fill in the gaps” (*ibid.*, p. 305). “While it is true that at the present time the believing remnant is only a small part of Israel the whole, at the time of the eschatologi-

cal kingdom, *all Israel* and *the remnant of Israel* become the same (Mic. 2:12), because *all Israel shall be saved* (Rom. 11:26)” (*ibid.*, p. 308). “I will surely assemble, O **Jacob, all of thee**; I will surely gather **the remnant** of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men” (Mic. 2:12). “Since Paul ‘connects the salvation of Israel with the appearance of the “Deliverer,” this event will occur at the second coming” [quoting McClain, *Romans*, p. 202] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 549) “Israel... the messianic kingdom, which was delayed (but never annulled) by their rejection. When Messiah returns and is accepted by national Israel, then ‘all Israel will be saved’ (v. 26); this will be at the end of the tribulation before the beginning of the millennium” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:487). “Romans 11 crucially reveals that even after the church has been established, there is still a future for national Israel—they will one day be re-ingrafted, restored, and ‘saved’ (v. 26). This refers to those of the chosen nation who are left, namely, the remnant who accept Christ as Messiah, after some two-thirds are destroyed in the Tribulation judgments” (*ibid.*, p. 509). “When Messiah returns and is accepted by Israel, ‘all Israel will be saved’ (Rom. 11:26); that is, all who are believers (cf. Rev. 14:3-4 [‘And I saw, and behold, **the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand**, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads...’]) and are left at the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 545). “To a plain man, untrammelled by traditional interpretation, the words of this prophecy appear very simple. *Israel shall be saved*: that means the Jewish nation and people. It cannot possibly mean the Gentiles, because they are mentioned in the verse which directly precedes our text, in direct contrast to the Jews. “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until; the fullness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25). *All Israel*: that means the whole people or nation of the Jews. It cannot possibly mean a small elect remnant. In this very chapter the Israelitish nation and the *election* out of Israel are mentioned in contradistinction to one another. “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it; and the rest were blinded” (Rom. 11:7)” [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, pp. 145-146] (Horner, *FI*, p. 346) “**And this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’ From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers**” (Rom. 11:27-28) “Therefore by this shall the iniquity of **Jacob** be forgiven, and this is all the fruit of **taking away his sin**: that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalk-

stones that are beaten in sunder, so that the Asherim and the sun-images shall rise no more” (Isa. 27:9). “And a **Redeemer will come to Zion**, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith Jehovah. And as for me, **this is my covenant with them**, saith Jehovah: my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith Jehovah, from henceforth and for ever” (Isa. 59:20–21). “[Rom. 11] Verses 26b-27 give the evidence of Israel’s future salvation from the Old Testament by quoting Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 790). “Eventually, God must bring the whole nation to Himself because *they are beloved for the fathers sake*; He has made covenant promises to them that He must fulfill” (*ibid.*). “...beloved enemies (Rom. 11:28)” (Horner, *FI*, p. 68) “As Matt Waymeyer [in ‘The Dual Status of Israel in Romans 11:28,’ *MSJ*, (Spring 2005), p. 63] points out, ‘It is difficult—if not impossible—to understand these two clauses as describing the church. In what sense can those of the Body of Christ be described as the “enemies” of God?’” (*ibid.*, p. 294)? “In this OT setting... Israel after the Spirit was the true Israel having circumcision of the heart as well as the flesh... It would be totally incorrect to say that Israel after the flesh had no national or territorial identity in the sight of God in that historic setting... ‘You are not going to take possession of their [the Canaanites’] land because of your righteousness or your integrity... in order to keep the promise He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ (Deut. 9:5-6). Israel’s possession of the land was to be based, not on obedience but on covenant promise alone... The basis then of entrance into the promised land was solely God’s covenant faithfulness, that is sovereign grace... We are repeatedly told that God’s persistence with national Israel, from the very beginning of its redemption, is for the sake of ‘Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’... ‘for the sake of the fathers’ (Rom. 11:28)” (*ibid.*, p. 300). (See also our discussion of Israel’s four unconditional covenants in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*, and our discussion of the forgiveness and regeneration of Israel in the *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.) “for **the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable**” (Rom. 11:29). “Since the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance, then God never rejected the Jewish nation and the real problem is Jewish unbelief” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 116). “The calling has to do with Israel’s national election and the gifts are the covenantal promises which are the result of that election. Neither are subject to being recalled; they are irrevocable” (*ibid.*, p. 786). “The *calling* is Israel’s national election; the *gifts* are the covenantal promises, one of which is the national salvation of Is-

rael” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 685). “For **God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all**” (Rom. 11:32). “God has shut up all that He might have mercy on all, and that is the summary of the gospel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 786). “If anyone is saved at all it is by God’s mercy” (*ibid.*). “**Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen” (Rom. 11:33-36). “Indeed, if we fully understand God’s dealings with the Jewish people, if we clearly understand God’s plan and program for Israel, and if we appreciate it from God’s standpoint we, too, will have to say the doxology that Paul said: *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 787)! “Paul concludes his Israelology with a doxology in verses 33-36” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 791). “For I say that **Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers**, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, ‘Therefore I will give praise to Thee among the Gentiles, And I will sing to Thy name.’ And again he says, ‘Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people.’ And again, ‘Praise the Lord all you Gentiles, And let all the peoples praise Him.’ And again Isaiah says, **There shall come the root of Jesse, And He who arises to rule over the Gentiles, In Him shall the Gentiles hope**” (Rom. 15:8-12). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious” (Isa. 11:10). “Rom. 15:8: ‘Now this I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (Israel) for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.’ He did not come to annul those promises; but He did come to confirm them” (Chafer, *KHP*, 24%).

In *First Corinthians* Paul exhorts the Christians at Corinth to eagerly anticipate the future ‘day of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ at which their resurrection and translation is to take place, and their subsequent reigning as kings with Jesus. “so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly **the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in **the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Cor. 1:7-8). “You are already filled, you have already become rich, **you have become kings without us; and I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you**” (1 Cor. 4:8). “I have decided to de-

liver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in **the day of the Lord Jesus**" (1 Cor. 5:5). "Or do you not know that **the saints will judge the world**? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts" (1 Cor. 6:2)? "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death **until He comes**" (1 Cor. 11:26). "and last of all, as it were to **one untimely born**, He appeared to **me** also" (1 Cor. 15:8). "What Paul means is, that he was born before the time, that his was a premature birth, and that his 'New Birth' is a type of the Birth of the Jewish Nation when the Lord returns, and not of the 'New Birth' of a Christian. As Paul saw the glory of the Lord, and heard his voice, so shall it be with the Jewish Nation assembled at Jerusalem when Christ shall reveal Himself on the Mount of Olives at His return" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 66). "But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are **Christ's** at **His coming**, then comes **the end**, when **He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father**, when **He has abolished all rule and all authority and power**. For **He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet**. **The last enemy that will be abolished is death**" (1 Cor. 15:23-26). "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, '**Death is swallowed up in victory**. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:51-57). "If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed. **Maranatha**" (1 Cor. 16:22). "'Maranatha'... Aramaic... 'our Lord come'" (Showers, *M*, p. 130).

In *Second Corinthians* Paul again encourages the saints at Corinth to look forward to 'the day of our Lord Jesus' and their raising with Him. "just as you also partially did understand us, that we are your reason to be proud as you also are ours, in **the day of our Lord Jesus**" (2 Cor. 1:14). "knowing that **He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you**" (2 Cor. 4:14).

In *Galatians* Paul affirms that the Abrahamic Covenant has not been nullified. "Now **the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed**. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to

one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ. What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise**” (Gal. 3:16-17).

In *Ephesians* Paul speaks of this age and of the ages to come (in which God will show the surpassing riches of His grace toward the church in Christ Jesus) and the administration suitable to the fulness of the times, wherein all things in the heavens and upon the earth will be summed up in Christ. “He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to **an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.** In Him” (Eph. 1:9-10) “which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in **this age**, but also in **the one to come**” (Eph. 1:20-21). “in order that in **the ages to come** He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7).

In *Philippians* Paul eagerly anticipates “the day of Christ,” when the Savior will come from heaven and transform believers’ bodies so they conform to His glorious body. “so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until **the day of Christ**” (Phil. 1:10) “holding fast the word of life, so that in **the day of Christ** I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain” (Phil. 2:16). “For our citizenship is in **heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:20-21).

In *Colossians* Paul says that when Christ is revealed, Christians will also be revealed with Him in glory. “**When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory**” (Col. 3:4).

In *First Thessalonians* Paul had much to say about Jesus’ future coming, the Rapture of the church and His delivering the church from the wrath to come. “and **to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come**” (1 Thes. 1:10). “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of **our Lord Jesus at His coming**” (1 Thes. 2:19)? “so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness

before our God and Father at **the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**" (1 Thes. 3:13). "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until **the coming of the Lord**, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord**" (1 Thes. 4:14-17). "For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!'** then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief" (1 Thes. 5:2-4) "For **God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thes. 5:9) "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and **may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass" (1 Thes. 5:23-24). "Why then, seeing that these Thessalonians are charged by Neander and others as holding to 'Jewish forms' of the Kingdom, did not the apostle, when on the subject of the resurrection, refute their Jewish notions of the Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:243)?

In *Second Thessalonians* Paul describes the last-days apostasy, the removal of the restrainer, relief for those who are afflicted, the gathering of the saints in Jesus and their glorification in Him, the revealing of the man of lawlessness, the day of the Lord with its destruction of the unbelievers, and the slaying of the man of lawlessness. "For after all **it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed** — for our testimony to you was believed" (2 Thes. 1:6-10). "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to

the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for **it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that **in his time he may be revealed**. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only **he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way**. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness” (2 Thes. 2:1-12). “Paul’s teaching fully corresponds with that of Peter. Thus e.g. in the 1st and 2nd chs. of 2 Thess. he unites the Kingdom with the Advent of the Lord Jesus, and, instead of a present covenanted Kingdom existing, predicts that before the still future ‘day of Christ’ is manifested there will be a falling away, and the Son of perdition, the Antichrist, will be revealed” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:439).

In *First Timothy* Paul mentioned the future appearing of Jesus. “that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until **the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time** — He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen” (1 Tim. 6:14-16).

In *Second Timothy* Paul referred to Jesus as a descendant of David, referred to His appearing and His Kingdom, and anticipated reigning with Him. “Remember **Jesus Christ**, risen from the dead, **descendant of David**, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also

may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:8-12) “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of **Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living** and the dead, and **by His appearing and His kingdom**” (2 Tim. 4:1) “in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which **the Lord**, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved **His appearing**” (2 Tim. 4:8).

In *Titus* Paul anticipated the “blessed hope” and the appearing of Jesus’ glory. “looking for **the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**” (Titus 2:13)

In *Hebrews* the writer (Paul?) of the book made references to the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Hebrew prophets, the new covenant with Israel, Jesus’ Second Coming, the world to come in subjection to the Son of Man, the powers of the age to come, and the kingdom that believers are to receive that cannot be shaken. “the Epistle to the Hebrews... Of course, when men spiritualize God’s promises and survey them only from a modern mystical standpoint there must necessarily be ambiguity, but let any one place himself on covenanted ground and then he will see the clearness of the argument, (1) to show that Jesus is the Messiah, (2) that the promises will be fulfilled in and by Him, (3) that even as Priest He makes provision for their fulfillment, (4) that His very death ensures the fulfillment of the covenant, (5) and that such a realization of covenant promises will be experienced at His Sec. Coming unto Salvation. Thus this epistle falls in fully, clearly, and powerfully with the other portions of Scripture” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:440). “This Epistle has been attributed to Paul, Barnabas, Clement, Luke, Mark, Aquila, Silas, and Apollos... the author cannot be dogmatically asserted” (*ibid.*, 3:363). “**God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets** in many portions and in many ways” (Heb. 1:1) “For He did not **subject to angels the world to come**, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘What is **man**, that Thou rememberest him? Or **the son of man**, that Thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; **Thou** hast crowned him with glory and honor, And **hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.**’ For in **subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him**” (Heb. 2:5-8). “and have tasted the good word of God and **the powers of the age to come**” (Heb. 6:5) “For when

God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself” (Heb. 6:13) “in order that by two unchangeable things, in which **it is impossible for God to lie**, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us” (Heb. 6:18). “For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also **king of Salem**, which is king of peace. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made **like the Son of God**, he abides a priest perpetually” (Heb. 7:1-3). “For it is evident that **our Lord was descended from Judah**, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests” (Heb. 7:14). “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as **He is also the mediator of a better covenant**, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. For finding fault with them, He says, ‘Behold, **days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers On the day when I took them by the hand To lead them out of the land of Egypt;** For they did not continue in My covenant, And I did not care for them, says the Lord. For this is **the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, And I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, And **they shall be My people**. And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, And everyone his brother, saying, “Know the Lord,” For all shall know Me, From the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more.’ When He said, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear” (Heb. 8:6-13). “since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed **until a time of reformation**” (Heb. 9:10). “And for this reason **He is the mediator of a new covenant**, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive **the promise of the eternal inheritance**” (Heb. 9:15). “Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at **the consummation of the ages** He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Him-

self. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so **Christ** also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **shall appear a second time for salvation** without reference to sin, **to those who eagerly await Him**” (Heb. 9:26-28). “For yet **in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay**” (Heb. 10:37). “By faith **Abraham**, when he was called, **obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance**; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he **lived as an alien in the land of promise**, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with **Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise**; for **he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God**. By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered **Him faithful who had promised**; therefore, also, there was born of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. **All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth**. For those who say such things make it clear that **they are seeking a country of their own**. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, **they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one**. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their **God; for He has prepared a city for them**. By faith **Abraham**, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and **he who had received the promises** was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your descendants shall be called.’ He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come. By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with **the people of God**, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he en-

dured, as seeing Him who is unseen. By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the first-born might not touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace. And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of **Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets**, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, **in order that they might obtain a better resurrection**; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (**men of whom the world was not worthy**), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. And **all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect**" (Heb. 11:8-40). "Paul (Heb. 11:8, 9 and 11:13-40), who expressly informs us that the Patriarchs sojourned in 'the land of promise,' which they were to receive as 'an inheritance,' 'pilgrims and strangers,' and that 'they died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth.' How, with such evidence before us, can we attribute to only their posterity what is directly asserted of themselves personally" [quoting Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:297] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 93)? "Abraham, summoned by God and converted from paganism in Ur of the Chaldeans, entered Canaan via Haran and was confronted with more paganism in the land of promise. He explored his inheritance from north to south as an unsettled nomadic tent-dweller" (Horner, *FI*, p. 249) "...we nowhere read of the patriarchs, that they expressed a conscious desire for a home in heaven" [quoting F. Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2.246] (*ibid.*). "...concerning Heb. 11:10... 'Here the heavenly Jerusalem is not contrasted with the earthly city, but with the frail and movable dwellings of the patriarchs in their nomad life'" [quoting F. Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2.238]

(*ibid.*). “Abraham’s hope was eschatological, but not in the sense of heaven’s superiority to the earth, of the spiritual as superior to the material. Rather, his hope was of the future messianic age, the millennial kingdom in which heaven would be manifest on earth and residence there would be gloriously holy, permanent” (*ibid.*, p. 250). “...a Hebrew, who was accustomed to designate the restored Davidic Kingdom a heavenly Kingdom, and the country enjoying its restoration and Theocratic blessings, a heavenly country” [quoting Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 1:295] (*ibid.*). “The hope of a ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ was not a matter of a superior, exclusively spiritual or extraterrestrial location, but rather a fulfilled, holy, spiritually substantial regeneration of what was formerly polluted and imperfect” (*ibid.*). “The clearest evidence that this renewed city is the earthly Jerusalem of Palestine is found in the numerous passages in Jewish literature where this renewal demands a great expansion in the city’s territory” [quoting J. C. De Young, *Jerusalem in the New Testament*, pp. 113-114] (*ibid.*). “The challenge, then, as stated earlier, is to use a hermeneutical approach to these passages, especially in Hebrews, that relies on Hebrew perception” (*ibid.*). “The Rabbinic literature in general looks forward to a restored Jerusalem under earthly conditions. The new city is described in detail in terms which are often fantastic, but the welter of imagination bestowed upon the subject does not alter the fact that what the Rabbis hoped for, and described as “the Jerusalem of the age to come,” was essentially the material capital of a material state... The heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews is not the product of Platonic idealism, but the eschatological temple of apocalyptic Judaism, the temple which is in heaven primarily in order that it may be manifested on earth” [quoting C. K. Barrett, *The Eschatology of Hebrews*, *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology*, pp. 374, 389] (*ibid.*, p. 251). “The heavenly country is not a country in heaven but a country *from heaven*. The heavenly kingdom is the *kingdom from heaven* and not the kingdom in heaven... Though heaven is the happy abode of the disembodied righteous during the present age, in the age to come heaven comes to earth” [quoting S. E. Waldron, *The End Times Made Simple*, pp. 239-40] (*ibid.*). “In this setting of heaven come to earth, Israel and the Jewish people will be fulfilled (Rom. 11:12), not superseded, and the Gentile nations will happily submit to this divine order as engrafted wild olive branches. To this end was the gospel sent forth (Zech. 14:9, Acts 3:19-21, Rom. 8:18-30)” (*ibid.*, p. 252). “But **you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and **church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven**, and to God, the Judge of all, and to **the spirits of righteous**

men made perfect, and to **Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant**, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, **‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.’** And this expression, ‘Yet once more,’ denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since **we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken**, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:22-28)

Reaffirmation by James

James exhorted the heirs of the kingdom to be patient until the coming of the Lord. “Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and **heirs of the kingdom** which He promised to those who love Him” (James 2:5)? **“Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.** Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for **the coming of the Lord is at hand.** Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, **the Judge is standing right at the door.** As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord” (James 5:7-10).

Reaffirmation by Peter

Peter was highly eschatologically-minded. “What Van Oosterzee so aptly applies to Peter, will be found, to a very great extent, true of all the apostles: ‘as well the discourses as the First Epis. of Peter teach us to recognize this apostle especially as the Apostle of Hope, in this sense, that the return of the Lord equally dominates his whole presentation of Christian truth, his whole conception of the Christian life’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:440).

In *First Peter*, Peter exhorted his fellow partakers of the glory that is to be revealed to fix their hope completely on the grace to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus. “who are protected by the power of God through faith for **a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor **at the revelation of Jesus**

Christ” (1 Pet. 1:5-7) “Therefore, **gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**” (1 Pet. 1:13). “Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in **the day of visitation**” (1 Pet. 2:12). “**The end of all things is at hand**; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer” (1 Pet. 4:7). “but to the degree that you share the sufferings of **Christ**, keep on rejoicing; so that also at **the revelation of His glory**, you may rejoice with exultation” (1 Pet. 4:13). “Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and **a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed**” (1 Pet. 5:1) “**And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory**” (1 Pet. 5:4). “**And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen**” (1 Pet. 5:10-11).

Similarly, in *Second Peter*, Peter exhorted believers to be holy in conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God. “Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the **entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ** will be abundantly supplied to you” (2 Pet. 1:10-11). “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you **the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, but we were eyewitnesses of **His majesty**. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’ — and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so **we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention** as to a lamp shining in a dark place, **until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts**” (2 Pet. 1:16-19). “**But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men**” (2 Pet. 3:7). “**But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of**

people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since **you look for these things**, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless” (2 Pet. 3:10-14)

Reaffirmation by John

John, in First John, warned that Antichrist and the day of judgment are coming, and exhorted believers to abide in Jesus, so that when He appears, they may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame. “**And the world is passing away**, and also its lusts; **but the one who does the will of God abides forever**” (1 John. 2:17). “Children, it is **the last hour**; and just as you heard that **antichrist is coming**, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour” (1 John 2:18). “And now, little children, **abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming**” (1 John. 2:28). “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, **when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is**. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John. 3:2-3). “and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is **the spirit of the antichrist**, of which you have heard that **it is coming**, and now it is already in the world” (1 John. 4:3). “By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in **the day of judgment**; because as He is, so also are we in this world” (1 John. 4:17).

Reaffirmation by Jude

Jude exhorted believers to wait anxiously for the mercy of Jesus, and to look forward to standing in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy. “keep yourselves in the love of God, **waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life**” (Jude 1:21). “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you **stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy**, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen” (Jude 1:24-25).

Reaffirmation of the Kingdom in Revelation

The Kingdom was reaffirmed by John in the book of *Revelation*. “Oosterzee (*Theol. of N. Test.*, p. 378), says that the Apocalypse sustains a ‘purely Israelitish character’ (see e.g. p. 53 where the Jewish views are stated), and that it indicates ‘that even the most highly developed of the Apostles at the end of his course, had by no means torn himself from the Theocratic national ground in which he had ever been rooted.’ We thank such men for their frank and noble concessions of truth, however adverse it may be to their own theories, especially when it is done not in the spirit of unbelief but for the sake of the truth” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:435). “Now, is it credible, if the doctrine of the Millennium is an error, that John in the Apoc. should employ the very ideas and language to perpetuate it, as seen in the church” (*ibid.*, p. 453)? “Let the careful reader answer the following question, and he will see how eminently consistent with fact is our doctrinal position. How could John, under Divine guidance, well knowing the Jewish views that were current (which our opponents fully admit as we have shown), pen down the portraiture of a Messianic reign (Rev. 20:1-6 and 11:18), which in its plain grammatical sense corresponds so accurately with the prevailing Jewish opinions, unless such a sense contains the truth? God would not, could not, take the dearest cherished Messianic hopes and parade them in such an expressed sense to deceive believers, when He intended a different sense to be placed upon the words. God does not undertake that which, if perpetrated by a man, we would unhesitatingly denounce as dishonest, disreputable, and cruel” (*ibid.*, p. 466). “Bh. Russel (*On Mill.*) states: ‘It is worthy of remark that so long as the prophecies regarding the Millennium were interpreted literally the Apocalypse was received as an inspired production, and as the work of the apostle John; but no sooner did theologians find themselves compelled to view its annunciations through the medium of allegory and metaphorical description, than they ventured to call in question its heavenly origin, its genuineness, and its authority’” (*ibid.*, p. 485). “M Clintock & Strong’s *Cyclop.*, Art. ‘Revelation,’ remarks: ‘The interval between the apostolic age and that of Constantine has been called the Chiliasitic period of Apocalyptic interpretation. The visions of John were chiefly regarded as representations of general Christian truths, scarcely yet embodied in actual facts, for the most part to be exemplified or fulfilled in the reign of Antichrist, the Coming of Christ, the Millennium, and the day of judgment. The fresh hopes of the early Christians, and the severe persecutions they endured taught them to live in those future events with intense satisfaction and comfort’” (*ibid.*). “Chiliasm, based on covenant and prophecy, existed before the Revelation was given” (*ibid.*, p. 490). “...the

great vital topic of the Book, viz., the coming of Jesus” (*ibid.*, 2:176) “Some reject the book solely on this ground as teaching a ‘Jewish’ Coming and reign of a personal Messiah. We, however, joyfully accept of this feature as blessed evidence of its inspiration, making it confirmatory of covenanted promises” (*ibid.*). “...Rev. 20: 1-6 which was so universally held by the early Church to teach a literal resurrection, and to be so thoroughly consonant with Jewish views, that the Apocalypse narrowly escaped proscription by the enemies of Chiliasm... The application of the Origenistic system of interpretation, as many have noticed, saved and gave it canonical authority” (*ibid.*, p. 264). “It is only through this doctrine of the Kingdom that the Apocalypse can or will be understood and consistently interpreted” (*ibid.*, 3:366). “The Theocratic idea, in the very nature of the case, must ever be kept in view, for with it the Apocalypse begins and ends. It begins with announcing His Future Advent, and delineates His Theocratical character as ‘the Prince of the kings of the earth,’ and ‘the Alpha and Omega,’ etc., and ends with the Theocratical rule inaugurated here on earth. The Kingdom being the goal of prophecy, it is reasonable to expect that the very last predictions would largely enter into the subject, and in such a manner as to show how the older prophecies will be ultimately fulfilled. To understand such fulfillment, however, it is requisite to carefully notice the prophecies previously given by the same Spirit, and which, without undue repetition (it being taken for granted that the reader knows them because they embrace ‘the Hope’), may be partially incorporated by quotations, etc. With a knowledge of the covenants and prophecies pertaining to the Kingdom, the student is placed in the only position suitable to the contemplation and study of a book, which largely deals in a restored Theocracy, as is clearly evidenced not only by the Advent of David’s Son, but by the corresponding adoption of older Theocratic predictions, and enforcing them by identifying and linking them with such an Advent” (*ibid.*). “...the historical fact that some, who could not enter into the spirit and end designed by the Apoc. (viz., too Millenarian and Jewish), doubted its genuineness and authority, but that no book of the New Test. is so fully proven to be genuine as this one” (*ibid.*, p. 367) “A direct amplified description of the restoration of the nation is purposely avoided because it would unnecessarily provoke the jealousy and persecution of the Roman power. A sufficiency for faith and hope is given, provided the believer receives the Bible as a whole” (*ibid.*, p. 369). “All the early Christians had no difficulty in embracing the Apocalypse as a Divine Revelation, seeing that it both accorded with the previously given predictions of God, and that, owing to the postponement of the Kingdom and withdrawal for a time of the King, it filled up a void by detail-

ing His Coming again and the measures that would be taken in effecting the restored Theocracy... A Kingdom awaiting the Coming of David's Son; preceded by a first resurrection; introduced as and containing what, the older prophets declared; incorporating a tribal division; holding forth a glorious reign here on earth, etc. all this corresponds too accurately with 'Jewish conceptions' to suit the taste of those who are anxious to rid themselves of everything distinctively 'Jewish.' Let unbelief take such a position; but faith, supported by the general analogy and unity of Revelation, joyfully seizes upon the book as explanatory of the manner in which the Millennial predictions are to be fulfilled in this Coming One, and in His most blessed Theocratic rule" (*ibid.*, p. 370). "...these several modes of interpretation, only as they severally bring out distinctively the Theocratic relationship that the Apoc. contains in common with previously given prophecies. That system which does this the most effectively is the most worthy of our reception; that which ignores this the most, is the most unreliable" (*ibid.*, p. 371). "No book has ever received such outrageous treatment from the hands of its enemies and professed friends" (*ibid.*, p. 373). "We believe that God will raise up some, who, for the sake of the truth pertaining to 'the Christ,' will be enabled to give in regular order a correct interpretation of the Apoc. As the time approaches for its fulfillment, as the Interval draws nigh in which its most stupendous scenes will be witnessed, as a preparation to those who shall be persecuted under the Antichrist, as a source of comfort and hope to the believing, and even as a warning to the world, such will be the result" (*ibid.*). "Killen (*Ancient Church*, p. 183) remarks: 'The Apoc. was acknowledged to be a divine revelation as soon as it appeared; and its credit remained unimpeached until the question of the Millennium began to create discussion'... Kurtz (*Ch. His.*, vol. 1, p. 232) says: 'The Council of Laodicea omitted from the Canon only the Book of Revelation, manifestly from its dislike to, and dread of, Millenarianism.'... the Apoc. is, as many writers have declared, a most fitting conclusion of the Canon, summing up in itself the glorious outcome of Old Test. prophecy and New Test. prediction" (*ibid.*, p. 382). "...that the seals, trumpets, and vials predict such a state of things as only agrees with our teaching, is alone sufficient. Thus e.g. it is only when the seventh and last trumpet sounds that the Kingdom, universal, of Jesus is revealed, and—consider it well—linked with (Rev. 11:15-18) angry nations, a time of wrath, of resurrection, and of reward. When the Millennial age itself is introduced (Rev. 20:1-6) it is preceded by the Personal Advent of Jesus and His saints, and the destruction of a mighty confederation of wicked (Rev. 19:11-21). The great revelation of glory, sovereignty, etc., follows a series of trial and judgments, in which the Church

[Tribulation saints—*ed.*] and the world are both included. No Millennial period, no Kingdom, no triumph, until the Coming of Jesus” (*ibid.*). “After the Saviour comes, after the initiation of terrible judgments, after events in which Jesus is personally manifested and employed, then comes, and only then, redemption perfected, and a Kingdom in which dwelleth righteousness” (*ibid.*, p. 383). “This book has for its end the covenanted and predicted Kingdom of the Messiah” (*ibid.*). “The introduction, continuation, and conclusion of the book is designed to urge upon every believer that the great object of his love and hope is the Sec. Coming of the Lord Jesus. That is made paramount in his faith, hope, and love; and, consequently, if he devotedly loved his Saviour, believed in His revelation of glory, hoped to inherit with Him in His Kingdom, that Coming must assume a corresponding and relative importance and confirmation in his heart and life, in his meditations, prayers, and teaching” (*ibid.*, p. 384). “First, the rapture of the church takes place. Then follows the seventieth week of Daniel or the Tribulation period from chapter four to nineteen. There are parenthetical visions, to be sure, as in chapters 7 and 14, but they can be discerned from the subject matter and the context in which they are found. They in no way hinder the orderly progress of the revelation. The twentieth chapter speaks of the Millennium, and the last two chapters deal with eternity to come. Could anyone expect the last book of the Bible to be more orderly? The book of Revelation rounds out the Word of God in a perfect way” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 183). “...the Apocalypse which is pre-eminently the New Testament book of the coming Kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 491). “The naming of the book as the Book of Revelation relates to the fact that at the second coming of Christ, Christ will be revealed. This is introduced early in the book itself: ‘Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen’ (1:7)” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 253). “The Book of Revelation, in many respects, is the counterpart of the four Gospels where Christ is presented in His first coming” (*ibid.*). “Revelation, while subject to all types of scholarly abuse and divergent interpretation, if taken in its plain intent yields a simple outline of premillennial truth—first a time of great tribulation, then the second advent, the binding of Satan, the deliverance and blessing of the saints, a righteous government on earth for 1000 years, followed by the final judgments, and the new heaven and new earth” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 118). “The Book of Revelation has no direct quotations from the Old Testament, but it has about 550 references back to the Old Testament [For a nearly exhaustive listing of these references, see Appendix XI of Dr. Fruchtenbaum’s *Israelology*.—*ed.*]. The majority of the things

found in the first twenty chapters of the Book of Revelation are found elsewhere in the Old Testament. Only the last two chapters deal with things totally new” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 10). “The value of the Book of Revelation is not that it provides a lot of new information, but rather that it takes the scattered Old Testament prophecies and puts them in chronological order so that the sequence of events may be determined” (*ibid.*). “The material found in the last two chapters is totally new material which describes the Eternal Order. The Old Testament prophets never foresaw anything beyond the Messianic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 11). “Since so much of this book [Revelation] is based on the Old Testament, a proper study of it will require a study of the Old Testament, resulting in a more comprehensive knowledge of the whole Bible” (*ibid.*, p. 13). “The Messiah has all three offices, but He does not function in all three roles simultaneously. He has functioned as a prophet in the past. He is now functioning as a priest. In the future He will function in His office as a king. John’s vision of Jesus is that of a king, but a king has many roles, one of which is to serve as a judge... A sub-theme of this book is judgment; the whole book deals with one judgment after another” (*ibid.*, p. 17). “The Book of Revelation ends the same way it begins: with a promise of a blessing to those who keep (in the sense of watching for) the things prophesied in the book” (*ibid.*, p. 535).

Reaffirmations of the Kingdom in Revelation include:

Chapter 1: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Rev. 1:1-3). “John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from **Him** who is and who was and **who is to come**; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; and from **Jesus Christ**, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and **the ruler of the kings of the earth**. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and **He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen” (Rev. 1:4-7). “...verse seven [of Rev. chapter 1] gives the *theme* of the book, which is the Second Coming of the Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 15) “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord**

God, ‘who is and who was and **who is to come, the Almighty**’ (Rev. 1:8). “I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and **kingdom** and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (Rev. 1:9). “and in the middle of the lampstands one like a **son of man**, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle” (Rev. 1:13). “and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and **I have the keys of death and of Hades**” (Rev. 1:18).

Chapter 2: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God**” (Rev. 2:7). “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. **Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life**” (Rev. 2:10). “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death**” (Rev. 2:11). “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it**” (Rev. 2:17). “And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and **I will give to each one of you according to your deeds**” (Rev. 2:23). “Nevertheless **what you have, hold fast until I come**” (Rev. 2:25). “And **he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star**” (Rev. 2:26-28).

Chapter 3: “Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. **If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you**” (Rev. 3:3). “**He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels**” (Rev. 3:5). “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has **the key of David**, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this” (Rev. 3:7) “While having this ‘Key of David,’ He does not now exert its power (just as He has also the keys of death and the grave), for He awaits the period of the Sec.

Advent when this bestowed authority will be duly manifested” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:205). **“Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth”** (Rev. 3:10). **“I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown”** (Rev. 3:11-12) **“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name”** (Rev. 3:12-13) **“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea [the last of the 7 churches] write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see”** (Rev. 3:14-18). **“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne”** (Rev. 3:21).

Chapter 4: **“After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.’ Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. And around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads”** (Rev. 4:1-4). **“the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying”** (Rev. 4:10)

Chapter 5: **“and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has**

overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals” (Rev. 5:5). “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and **didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth**’” (Rev. 5:9-10).

Chapter 7: “And I heard the number of those who were sealed, **one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel**” (Rev. 7:4) “After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands” (Rev. 7:9) “And I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, **‘These [the great multitude] are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb**’” (Rev. 7:14).

Chapter 11: “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.’** And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, ‘We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because **Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth**’” (Rev. 11:15-18).

Chapter 12: “And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, **‘Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down**, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time**’” (Rev. 12:10-12).

Chapter 14: “And I saw another **angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to**

every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because **the hour of His judgment has come**; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters’” (Rev. 14:6-7).

Chapter 15: “Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou alone art holy; For **all the nations will come and worship before Thee, For Thy righteous acts have been revealed**” (Rev. 15:4).

Chapter 17: “And the ten horns which you saw are **ten kings**, who have not yet received a kingdom, but **they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour**. These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast. **These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is** Lord of lords and **King of kings**, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful” (Rev. 17:12-14).

Chapter 19: “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For **the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns**. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready**.’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to **the marriage supper of the Lamb**.”’ And he said to me, “These are true words of God”” (Rev. 19:6-9). “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, **a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war**. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And **the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses**. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**’” (Rev. 19:11-16). “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying **to all the birds** which fly in midheaven, ‘**Come, assemble for the great supper of God**; in order that you may **eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all**

men, both free men and slaves, and small and great” (Rev. 19:17-18). “And I saw **the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army.** And **the beast** was seized, and with him **the false prophet** who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; **these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire** which burns with brimstone. And **the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh**” (Rev. 19:19-21).

Chapter 20: “And I saw **an angel** coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And **he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.** And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.** Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:1-6). “...the often refuted assertion that our whole doctrine is based on ‘one passage,’ viz., Rev. 20:2-6. Now, this is derived from the assumption that our belief is founded on the idea of the duration of the reign of Christ and of His saints, and not, as our argument shows, on the Covenants and a multitude of glorious predictions” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:173). “And **when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown**

into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**" (Rev. 20:7-10). "And I saw **a great white throne** and **Him who sat upon it**, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw **the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne**, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. **This is the second death, the lake of fire**. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

Chapter 21: "And I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**; for the **first heaven and the first earth passed away**, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw **the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God**, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, **the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.**' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.' And He said to me, 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. **I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.** But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death'" (Rev. 21:1-8). "And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, 'Come here, I shall show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**' And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me **the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.** Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper" (Rev.

21:9-11). **“And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life”** (Rev. 21:24-27).

Chapter 22: **“And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever”** (Rev. 22:1-5). **“And he said to me, ‘These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place. And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book’”** (Rev. 22:6-7). **“And he said to me, ‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.’ ‘Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.’ Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying”** (Rev. 22:10-15). **“John, in contrast to Daniel [12:4—*ed.*], was told not to seal up his book, for all prophecy can now be understood and its fulfillment could begin any time”** (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 536). **“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star”** (Rev. 22:16). **“And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’”**

And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take **the water of life without cost**” (Rev. 22:17). **“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book”** (Rev. 22:18-19). “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, **I am coming quickly.**’ Amen. **Come, Lord Jesus.** The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen” (Rev. 22:20-21). “Dr. Craven (Lange’s *Com. Rev.*, p. 400) remarks: ‘...In the prayer “Amen; come, Lord Jesus’... In this prayer is summed up all that the Christian heart can desire—the destruction of the power of Satan; the deliverance of the creature from the bondage of corruption; the banishment of sin and sorrow from the individual heart and from the world; the restoration of all things; the establishment of the Kingdom and righteousness; the beholding by Jesus in fullness of the travail of His soul; the bestowment upon Him in completeness of his promised reward”’ (Peters, *TTK*, 3:384).

See also our discussions of the book of Revelation in our chapters *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*, *The Great Tribulation* and *The Second Coming of the King*.

Chapter 19: The King of the Kingdom

Every kingdom is composed of a throne (authority to rule), a king and subjects. We've already covered in some detail, in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*, the *throne* of the Theocratic Kingdom of God, namely the Davidic throne. We've also touched upon the *subjects* of the Theocratic Kingdom, namely the regenerated nation Israel and the saved Gentiles that survive the Great Tribulation. (We'll cover these subjects of the Kingdom in greater detail in our chapters *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom*). Now in this chapter we'll turn our attention to the *King* of the Theocratic Kingdom, the theanthropic¹⁹ Person who is destined to occupy the Davidic Throne, namely, Jesus the Christ. Whereas regenerated Israel is the *nucleus* of the Theocratic Kingdom, Jesus the Christ, as He reigns from His Davidic throne in Jerusalem, is the very *focal point* of the Kingdom. In this chapter we'll take a close look at Jesus' identity and His qualifications for Kingship, including the steps that He's already taken in preparation for His occupation of the Davidic throne. "We 'Bibliolaters' are accused of 'ignorance,' but our ignorance is founded on a view of the Divine Purpose taken as a whole, which necessitates as a preparatory Theocratic ordering the incarnation, divinity, resurrection, exaltation, and return of Jesus 'the Christ'" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:516).

The King of God's Kingdom has two major responsibilities: to redeem and to reign. "According to the Old Testament, the Messiah was to have two principal responsibilities: to redeem and to reign. He was to be both Saviour and Sovereign" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 189).

If this redeeming and reigning are to be perfectly effectual, the Kingdom's Priestly King Himself must be perfect and capable of accomplishing all that is required of Him. As we will see below, Jesus the Christ is uniquely qualified and fully equipped to accomplish every goal and purpose of His Kingship. "What the world needs, as the prophets saw clearly, is not primarily a better philosophy of government or a more perfect system of legislation, but a *Person* who has the character, wisdom, and power needed to rule for God among men. This is the central theme of prophecy from first to last" (McClain, *GK*, p. 161). "Among sinful men, the rule of a priestly hierarchy has generally resulted in the corruption of both functions, political as well as sacerdotal... It was under the presidency of a high priest that the Great Council of Israel, in an appalling travesty of justice, condemned to death her own Messianic King" (*ibid.*, p. 166).

¹⁹ Both God and man

Qualifications of the King

In His deity and in His humanity, in His submissiveness, incarnation, innocence, obedience, character, perfection, miracles and suffering, Jesus is eminently qualified to be King of God's Kingdom. He is the perfect Messiah. "To make the Covenant available, provision must first be made to meet the sinfulness and results of sin even in believers, which the typical sacrifices could not effect... if the Jew will but consider what this Theocracy demands, if ever realized as prophecy represents it, such as moral purity, the triumph over the grave, the presence of God, the return to an Edenic state, the removal of the curse, etc., he must see that such an important transformation can never take place unless He, through and in whom God again condescends to act in the capacity of an earthly ruler, is both sinless Himself, and has power to act as Mediator and Redeemer of sinful man... Jesus Christ as described in the New Test., meets in every respect the requirements of prophecy, in person, in character, in work already performed, in station, in promise, etc., preparative to the ultimate end" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:420). "Jesus in every respect is qualified to carry out the remainder of the programme as given by the Divine Purpose. He is David's Son as covenanted; He is Divine (Isa. 9:6; Zech. 13:9; Jer. 23:6; Ps. 2:7; Rom. 9:11; 1 Tim. 3:16; Tit. 1:3; 1 John 4:15; Heb. 1:8; 1 John 5:20, etc.); He is One and equal with the Father, (John 14:7-11; 10:30; 12:45; 17:10, etc.); He is the Image of God, (Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:5; 2:9, etc.); He possesses eternity (Heb. 13:18; Rev. 1:17, 18); He has Omnipresence (Matt. 17:20; 28:20, etc.); He is Omniscient (John 2:24, 25; Rev. 2:23; John 16:30, etc.); He is Creator (John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2, 10; Rev. 3:14, etc.); He in virtue of His divinity has Pre-Existence (John 8:58; 13:3; etc.); He is the Preserver (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3, etc.); He is worthy of worship (John 5:23; Phil. 2:10; Heb. 1:6; Ps. 72:15, 17; Rev. 5:8-13, etc.), etc." (*ibid.*, p. 478) "It is simply impossible for learned men, much less 'ignorant,' to concoct a portraiture so perfect (and so far in advance even of Jewish conceptions) in Theocratic dignity" (*ibid.*, p. 515).

Deity and Humanity of the King

Jesus' qualifications for Kingship are found both in His deity and in His humanity.

Deity of the King

As *God*, Jesus possesses the power and authority requisite for the theocratic Kingship. George Peters summarizes, "He was a Son of David's, but yet far more than a Son, even David's Lord (being God-man—i.e. having in His own Person the real Theocratic Rulership united)" (*TTK*, 1:347). "We fully admit the Divinity of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 559). "...One who is infinitely

superior to Joshua, David, and Solomon” (*ibid.*, 2:146) “Zech. 14:5... ‘The Lord, my God shall come and all the saints with Him,’... That which is applied to the Messiah elsewhere is here referred to ‘Jehovah, my God,’ thus indicating the Divine lodged in the Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 187). “Now we come briefly to consider the great stumbling block in the way of all unbelief to the acceptance of the Messianic idea, viz., that of the Divinity of this Son of Man. Unbelief correctly asserts that what the New Test. declares of this Jesus cannot possibly be applied to a mere man; unbelief sees and acknowledges that the attributing to Him the power of forgiving sins, of judging the world, of raising the dead, of assigning rewards and punishments, as well as in the bestowal upon Him of titles, worship, honor, and glory that belong to God, is utterly incompatible with mere humanity. This confession, as far as it goes, is worthy of notice, and is a deserving rebuke to some professed believers who, under the influence of theory, endeavor to lessen the divine in the Master. In the consideration of so fundamental a point, upon which depends so much in the past and future history of the race, and around which cluster the dearest hopes of an evil burdened humanity, we should approach it with the resolve to allow the full force of all the proof given in its behalf to be candidly weighed. Passing by that which has been ably presented by Apologists, we confine ourselves only to that derived from the doctrine of the Kingdom, feeling assured that this is ample enough to stamp Jesus as God-Man. Let the student reflect upon the nature of this Theocratic Kingdom and he will see that, as covenanted and predicted, it necessarily includes as its promised King a God-man. Turn back to the ancient predictions (allowed even by unbelief to be such) respecting this Theocratic King and notice what He is to perform (e.g. to raise the dead, remove the curse, etc.), and reason at once decides that no mere man can be such a mighty King. Consider that the Theocracy in its direct meaning includes as its central conception that of God Himself acting as an earthly Ruler, and that the biblical portrayed purpose is to manifest this through the Davidic line in the Person of Jesus, and it follows that if God rules in and through Jesus, the Son of David, He must be in some way fully and closely identified with Jesus. The Theocratic idea is exhibited in the Person of Jesus, and hence the statements: ‘I and my Father are One; I am in the Father and the Father in Me’ (John 10:30, etc.), ‘He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,’ etc., which assume definitely that He is the Theocratic King in its highest sense, viz., in the identical one inaugurated at Mt. Sinai, when it was justly believed that God Himself was the King of the instituted Kingdom. This is repeated when He, from the depth of His Theocratic consciousness, declares ‘even as they honor the Father’ (John 5:23) etc. Being thus the Person in

whom the Theocracy is to be truly manifested, it is not surprising that Paul should say (Col. 1:19 and 2:9) 'that in Him should all fulness dwell,' that 'in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Being thus the contemplated Theocratic personage, He could not refute the charge brought against Him by the Jews (John 5:18; 10:36; 19:7) that by designating Himself the Son of God, he thus 'made Himself equal with God,' without doing violence to His Messiahship. Because Jesus is the Theocratic King, He is 'the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person' (Heb. 1:8), and the Kingdom itself is designated 'the Kingdom of Christ and of God' (Eph. 5:5), 'the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ' (Rev. 11:15); and He who is to reign forever is named by Isaiah, consistently, 'the Mighty God' (Syriac, the Mighty God of ages), 'The Everlasting Father' (Vulgate, 'the Father of the future age;' Lowth, 'the Father of the everlasting age;' Chaldee, 'the Man abiding forever'). That God should become incarnate, i.e. be united with humanity in the Person of Jesus is not only not incredible, but positively the most reasonable matter that can be presented to us when regarded in its true Theocratic relationship. Let the reader consider how the Theocratic conception as covenanted and predicted demands it; how this was done centuries before Jesus came; how all the prophets unite in giving Him a pure, exalted Theocratic position in the Kingdom; how in His own person He is represented as reigning as David's Son and yet as David's Lord; how the fulfillment of the continued overthrow of the Theocracy and the condition of the covenanted nation is a standing proof of its historical connection; how God is portrayed as made specially accessible and present in the person of the Messiah; and then how Jesus came as predicted, David's Son and also the Son of God; how He claimed and exhibited a sufficiency to insure us that He is indeed the Christ; how He, through the tender of the Kingdom, offered Himself as the Messiah; how His Christship was rejected; how then still retaining His right and privileges, confirmed by the power of God, He postponed the manifestation of the Kingdom and of His Messiahship to the Sec. Advent; how so many things now existent in Jew and Gentile, in Church and world, attest to and establish what He as Messiah declared, and when he has passed over the strictly connected series of events and has seen how requisite all this is to meet the purest and loftiest conception of Rulership that has ever been presented to mind or heart of man, is it possible that he, or any one, can for a moment suppose that a set of fishermen, or 'ignorant' disciples, or the most learned of the ancients, could concoct a Personage so symmetrical, so correspondent with covenant and promise, so perfectly agreeing with the highest form of government, with the World's need, and with a bridging

over the dark chasm between God and man, Heaven and Hades, Paradise and groaning Creation. No one who receives the Theocracy in its true Biblical sense can doubt the divinity of Jesus, the Theocratic King, because to do so would involve a contradiction—a fatal antagonism—for it would take out of the future Theocracy what even the past possessed—a God ruling. Hence the deep wisdom of the Apostles, the evidence of inspiration, in adopting the very language so admirably adapted to express the Theocratic-Davidic idea, i.e. in uniting with David's Son, to whom as a descendant the Kingdom is more specifically promised (both for identification and for a purposed union of the Divine), such a Lordship, Godship, etc., that in Him the pure conception of a Theocracy is retained. Consider, too, that this was done by men hostile to all idol or man worship, who were surrounded by those who were jealous of any lessening or misconstruction of the Messianic conception, and that therefore the language used can only be consistently explained on the basis of the Theocratic idea. Reflect also that this was done by persons and among persons who were zealous defenders of the unity of God, and who would have esteemed it sacrilegious to appropriate to man what belonged to God; and that, therefore, the portraiture of Jesus, as given by the Apostles, can only be appropriately reconciled with the Theocratic conception, which instead of destroying the unity of God actually upholds it, since it brings God the Ruler into oneness (as Jesus claimed) with David's Son, causing the majesty of heaven to be reflected and exerted in and through a visible Headship, thus mercifully and wonderfully accommodating itself to the needs, desires, and glory of Humanity. Let the student deeply ponder the original Theocratic idea, retaining its original meaning then associated in external manifestation through David's Son, and he will see the reason why passages which in the Old Test. are applied to God are in the New Test., unhesitatingly applied to Jesus (as e.g. Isa. 45:20; comp. with Rom. 14:10, 11; Isa. 40: 3 with Matt. 3:1, 3; Zech. 12:10 with John 19:34, 37, etc., etc.); why divine worship which belonged to God as the Theocratic Ruler is also claimed for Jesus Christ (as e.g. John 5:3; Matt. 28:19; Phil. 2:11; Rev. 5:13; Luke 24:52, etc.); why perfections which exclusively belong to God are without the least scruple attributed to Jesus (as e.g. John 5:21; Col. 1:17; Heb. 13:8, etc.) so that the declaration is made (John 16:15), 'all things that the Father hath are mine.' It was under the influence of this Theocratic conception viz., that the same Lord God who once acted as earthly Ruler would be inseparably identified with the person of Jesus, David's Son, that even creation (John 1:3, 10; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2, etc.) is ascribed to Him; that pre-existence is postulated (John 8:58; John 1:1; Col. 1:17, etc.) of Him; that the love, etc., rendered to Him

are at the same time bestowed upon the Father (John 5:23, etc., 1 John 2:23); that no one could know the Father saving the Son and him to whom the Son revealed Him (Matt. 11:27, etc., 1 John 1:18); and all this and more because (John 14:10) 'I am in the Father and the Father in Me.' The least reflection will show, that the Theocratic idea so impenetrates the New Test. portraiture of Jesus bringing forth such a union of the Theocratic God with David's Son—forming the one Theocratic King with one will, power, work, love, etc. (John 5:19-38, etc.)—and yet consistently placing the Son in view of the incorporation of David's line and descendant subordinately to the Father (John 5:19; 14:28, etc.), that it demands unreasonable credulity to imagine that the apostles through their own reason and to subserve their own purposes, created such a matchless Theocratic likeness, which, without a single flaw, combines the original Theocratic Ruler with the promised Theocratic King in David's line; and, without sacrificing the humanity or exalting it above the Fatherhood, blends the two together into an inseparable Oneness, forming the One Person Jesus the Christ; that in this unity, whoever sees the Son beholds also the Father. Such a conception so harmonious in all its details, so forcibly adapted to secure the end contemplated, and so perfectly in accord with God's Theocratic Purpose, is, as the Bible justly claims a divine one. Let the reader test this by contrasting it with those plans originated by man, as e.g. Plato's idea of an ideal government and more recently the notions entertained respecting a 'Universal Republic' or a 'Universal Monarchy.' Our opponents themselves concede (leaving out the moral, and only looking at the results) that if this portraiture is true, if it could be realized as expressed, it would undoubtedly bring forth the effects attributed to it. We know it to be true for the reasons, already assigned, flowing from the doctrine of the Kingdom, and which in every heir of this Kingdom and co-heir of this Theocratic King is confirmed by the experience of faith, and by the constant and continued fulfilling of events foretold by this Messiah" (*ibid.*, 3:529). "It is a gratifying fact that all the early Millenarian Fathers united in Jesus the Divine and Human (comp. Hagenbach's *His. Doc.*, sects. 65 and 66, Neander's *Ch. His., and Dog.*, Dorner's *Person of Christ*, Uhlman's *Sinlessness of Christ*, etc.), but it is not generally noticed that such a union is part, yea, the heart, of their Theocratic belief, viz., that Jesus being the destined Theocratic King, the Christ, is the One in and through whom God reigns. Priestley published a work entitled, *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ*, compiled from Original Writers, proving that the Christian Church was at first Unitarian (4 vols., 8vo, Birmingham, 1782). Against this assumption of Priestley's it is sufficient to say that the prevailing Millenarian view of the first centuries, which incor-

porated as its foundation principle the Theocratic ordering, necessarily made Jesus far more than man, even divine, in and through whom God ruled. This fact has very recently been strongly proven by Bev. Cook in his Boston lectures from extracts taken from the fathers, although he might have immensely strengthened these by showing their intimate and necessary relationship to the Millenarianism then held. A firm believer in the Theocratic Kingdom, as covenanted and predicted, cannot possibly be a Unitarian. A mass of Scripture, aside from the nature of the Kingdom, forbids it, as e.g. a single passage, Micah 5:1 (rendering given by Dr. Schaff in *The Person of Christ*, p. 200), 'But Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, too small to be among the thousands of Judah' (i.e. the central towns where the heads of thousands, or subordinate divisions of tribes resided) 'out of thee shall come forth unto me One who is to be the Ruler in Israel, whose origin is from the first of time, from the days of eternity.' Burton gives a mass of information in his *Testimony of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ*, Sears's *The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ*, Reubelt's *Scripture Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, Lewis's *Divine Human of the Scriptures*, Young's *Christ of History*, and others. The testimony of ancients, outside of Christianity, sustains the primitive view, so that e.g. Gibbon (*Decl. and Fall*, vol. 2, p. 9) does not question the early teaching of the Church on this subject, and refers to 'Libanius (who) praises Porphyry and Julian for confuting the folly of a sect, which styles a dead man of Palestine, God, and the Son of God. Socrates, *His. Eccles.* 3:23,' etc. (comp. also p. 305 and 315). When Pliny (*Epis. Pliny* 10, 97) says 'that the Christians were accustomed to sing hymns to Christ as to God;' when the leading objection of the Jews was to this assumption of the divine; when the apologists met such objections with reasons to sustain; when martyrs refused the application of divine to emperors and heathen gods, but joyfully acknowledged it in Jesus, we have sufficient evidence of early belief (comp. Van Oosterzee's art. 'The Son of Man' in *Princeton Review*, July, 1878). Pressense (*The Early Days of Christianity*, p. 62) remarks on the martyrdom of Stephen: 'His last prayer is addressed distinctly to Jesus Christ, and by his final homage he renders dying testimony to His divinity. It was fitting that this great truth should be thus proclaimed by the first of martyrs.' The Theocratic idea vindicates this worship, and hence we have John 5:23; Phil. 2:11; Rev. 5:13; 7:9; 15:6; Rom. 9:5, etc." (*ibid.*, p. 534) Dr. Alva McClain adds, "'Everlasting Father' (Is. 9:6)... the Son of God is the 'Father' of this succession of ages" (*GK*, p. 32). "...the first chapter of Hebrews where we are told that through His Son, God 'made the worlds' (1:2). Now it has often been pointed out that the Greek term here should be rendered 'ages.'... the Son of God, we

are told, is the Maker of this world, not only viewed from the standpoint of its vast extension in space, but also from the standpoint of the ages through which the world has passed and is yet to pass” (*ibid.*). “In the prophecies of Isaiah He is named ‘Immanuel,’ that is, ‘God with us’ (7:14; cf. Matt. 1:23)... Mighty God (9:6, ASV margin)... One who is ‘your God will come... he will come and save you’ (35:4)... ‘the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee’ (Zeph. 3:15, ASV)... Zechariah... these nations will come up to Jerusalem to ‘worship the King’ whose name is ‘Jehovah of hosts’ (14:16-17, ASV)... ‘Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God’ (Isa. 44:6)” (*ibid.*, p. 162). “In the words, ‘How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings,’ Christ reveals Himself as the God of Israel who, through the centuries of Old Testament history and to that present hour, had striven for the good of the nation, and through Israel for the ultimate good of all mankind... The beautiful figure of the sheltering wings is often used in the Old Testament of Jehovah’s care: ‘He shall cover thee with his feathers and under his wings shalt thou trust’ (Ps. 91:4)” (*ibid.*, p. 360). “I will say of **Jehovah**, He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in whom I trust. For he will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, And from the deadly pestilence. **He will cover thee with his pinions, And under his wings shalt thou take refuge:** His truth is a shield and a buckler” (Ps. 91:2-5). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! **How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings,** and you were unwilling” (Matt. 23:37). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! **How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,** and you would not have it” (Luke 13:34)!

As briefly outlined above by George Peters and Alva McClain, there are sufficient evidences in Scripture to prove beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus possesses full deity. In summary: He is the creator and sustainer of all things, He is the Savior and giver of things of God, He has authority to forgive sins, and is the judge of all. He is all-seeing, all-knowing and omnipresent. He was eternally preexistent. He never changes. It is proper to serve Him, pray to Him, give glory to Him and worship Him. He is not an angel; He is Lord, sovereign with His Father, the Son of God, God (as is His Father) and Jehovah. Throughout the remainder of this section *Deity of the King* we will explore the biblical evidences for Christ’s deity in some detail. Most of the material that follows in this section was compiled by this writer

during my six-month period of personal Bible study in 1984, as I was trying to ascertain for myself from Scripture alone just who Jesus is. The conclusions drawn from this study led me out of the Jehovah's Witness cult and into saving faith in the biblical Lord Jesus Christ. For a complete listing of all the passages of Scripture that convinced me that Jehovah's Witnesses are wrong in their identifying Jesus as Michael the archangel and that the historic, fully-God and fully-man view of Christ is correct, see the *The Deity of Christ* section of my study *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses*. Scripture quotations in this section are taken from the ASV, NASB, NIV and RSV, just as I collected and collated them in my original study in 1984.

Jesus is the Creator. "And God said, Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in **his** own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:26–27). "Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb: **I am Jehovah, that maketh all things**; that stretcheth forth the heavens **alone**; that spreadeth abroad the earth (who is with me)" (Isa. 44:24)? "**All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being**" (John 1:3). [If Jesus came into being, then according to this passage He must have created Himself.—*ed.*] "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of **God!** How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? For **from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.** To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:33–36). "There was **the true light which, coming into the world,** enlightens every man. He was in the world, and **the world was made through Him,** and the world did not know Him" (John 1:9–10). "and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in **God,** who **created all things**" (Eph. 3:9) "For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of **His beloved Son,** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. And He is the image of the invisible God, the **first-born** of all creation. **For by Him all things were created,** both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — **all things have been created by Him and for Him**" (Col. 1:13–16). "I also will make him my **first-born,** The **highest of the kings of the earth**" (Ps. 89:27). "And **Joseph**

called the name of the first-born Manasseh: For, said he, God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. **And the name of the second called he Ephraim:** For God hath made me fruitful in the land of my affliction" (Gen. 41:51–52). "They shall come with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and **Ephraim is my first-born**" (Jer. 31:9). [Being firstborn does not mean the first created, nor even necessarily the first one born.—*ed.*] "in these last days has spoken to us in **His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, **through whom also He made the world**" (Heb. 1:2). "**But of the Son He says, 'THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. THOU HAST LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, THY GOD, HATH ANOINTED THEE WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE THY COMPANIONS.'** And, '**THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS**'" (Heb. 1:8–10) "**Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Thy God, has anointed Thee With the oil of joy above Thy fellows**" (Ps. 45:6–7). "When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve **Jehovah**. He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: Thy years are throughout all generations. **Of old didst thou lay the foundation of the earth; And the heavens are the work of thy hands.** They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; As a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, And thy years shall have no end" (Ps. 102:22–27). "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider **Jesus**, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as **the builder of the house** has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but **the builder of all things is God**" (Heb. 3:1–4).

He is the Sustainer. "And He [**Jesus**] is before all things, and **in Him all things hold together**" (Col. 1:17). "And He [**Jesus**] is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and **upholds all things by the word of His power.** When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3)

He is the Savior. “I, even I, am **Jehovah**; and **besides me there is no saviour**” (Isa. 43:11). “Declare ye, and bring it forth; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath showed this from ancient time? who hath declared it of old? have not I, **Jehovah**? and **there is no God else besides me**, a just God and a **Saviour**; **there is none besides me**” (Isa. 45:21). “Yet I am **Jehovah** thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no god but me, and **besides me there is no saviour**” (Hos. 13:4). “but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of **God our Savior**; to Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and **Christ Jesus our Savior**” (Titus 1:3–4). “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of **our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**” (Titus 2:13) “But when the kindness of **God our Savior** and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through **Jesus Christ our Savior**” (Titus 3:4–6) “Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of **our God and Savior, Jesus Christ**” (2 Pet. 1:1)

He is the Giver of things of God. “But as many as received Him [**Jesus**], to them **He gave the right to become children of God**, even to **those who believe in His name, who were born** not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God**” (John 1:12–13). “**My sheep** hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and **I [Jesus] give eternal life to them**, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:27–28). “And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and **I [Jesus] will give to each one of you according to your deeds**” (Rev. 2:23).

He has authority to forgive sins. “And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, ‘My son, **your sins are forgiven.**’ But there were some of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘**Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?**’ And immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, “Your sins are forgiven”; or to say, “Arise, and take up your pallet and walk”? But in order that you may know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**’ — He said to the paralytic —” (Mark

2:5–10) “And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, ‘Who is this man who **speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone**’” (Luke 5:21)? “And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, ‘Who is this man who **speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?**’ But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, “Your sins have been forgiven you,” or to say, “Rise and walk”? But in order that you may know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,**’ — He said to the paralytic — ‘I say to you, rise, and take up your stretcher and go home’” (Luke 5:21–24). “And thus, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you **sin against Christ**” (1 Cor. 8:12). “And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as **God in Christ also has forgiven you**” (Eph. 4:32).

He has authority to judge men. “For **Jehovah is our judge**, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; he will save us” (Isa. 33:22). ““For not even **the Father** judges anyone, but He **has given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.** He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him”” (John 5:22–23). “For we must all appear before **the judgment seat of Christ**, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). (See our discussion of the judgment seat of Christ in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*, our discussion of Jesus’ judgment of the Gentiles who survive the Great Tribulation in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*, and our discussion of the Great White Throne judgment in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*.)

He is all-seeing. “then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and render unto every man according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even **thou [Jehovah] only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men**” (1 Kings. 8:39) ““And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that **I [Jesus] am He who searches the minds and hearts;** and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds”” (Rev. 2:23). “And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders **a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth**” (Rev. 5:6).

He is all-knowing (omniscient). “then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and render unto every man according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for **thou [Jehovah], even**

thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men” (1 Kings. 8:39) “And **Jesus knowing their thoughts** said, ‘Why are you thinking evil in your hearts’” (Matt. 9:4) “And **knowing their thoughts** He said to them, ‘Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand’” (Matt. 12:25). “And immediately **Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves**, said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts’” (Mark 2:8) “But **He knew what they were thinking**, and He said to the man with the withered hand, ‘Rise and come forward!’ And he rose and came forward” (Luke 6:8). “But **Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart**, took a child and stood him by His side” (Luke 9:47) “This He said, and after that He said to them, ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awaken him out of sleep’” (John 11:11). “His disciples said, ‘Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech. Now we know that **You know all things**, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God’” (John 16:29-30). “He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘**Lord, You know all things**; You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend My sheep’” (John 21:17). “that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God’s mystery, that is, **Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**” (Col. 2:2-3).

He is omnipresent. “For **where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst**” (Matt. 18:20). “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). “And if **Christ is in you**, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness” (Rom. 8:10). “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that **Jesus Christ is in you** — unless indeed you fail the test” (2 Cor. 13:5)?

He was eternally preexistent. “But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; **whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting**” (Mic. 5:2). “**In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God [Creation is not mentioned until verse three.—*ed.*]” (John 1:1). “And **He is before all things**, and in Him all things hold together” (Col. 1:17). “Without father,

without mother, without genealogy, **having neither beginning of days nor end of life**, but made **like the Son of God**, he abides a priest perpetually” (Heb. 7:3).

He never changes. “For **I, Jehovah, change not**; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed” (Mal. 3:6). “But **of the Son He says**, ‘**THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. THOU HAST LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, THY GOD, HATH ANOINTED THEE WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE THY COMPANIONS.**’ And, ‘**THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THEY WILL PERISH, BUT THOU REMAINEST; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD AS A GARMENT, AND AS A MANTLE THOU WILT ROLL THEM UP; AS A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT THOU ART THE SAME, AND THY YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END**’” (Heb. 1:8–12). “**Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever**” (Heb. 13:8).

It is proper to believe on Him. “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who **believes in Me** shall never thirst’” (John 6:35). “He who **believes in Me**, as the Scripture said, “From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water”” (John 7:38). “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life; he who **believes in Me** shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and **believes in Me** shall never die. Do you believe this’” (John 11:25–26)? “And Jesus cried out and said, ‘**He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me**’” (John 12:44). “I have come as light into the world, that everyone who **believes in Me** may not remain in darkness” (John 12:46). “Let not your heart be troubled; **believe in God, believe also in Me**” (John 14:1). “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who **believes in Me**, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father” (John 14:12). In Scripture, we are never told to believe on or trust in an angel. Believing on an angel would be idolatry.

It is proper to serve Him. “If anyone **serves Me**, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; **if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him**” (John 12:26). “**Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus**, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1) “Let a man regard us in this manner, as **servants of Christ**, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1). “and He died for all, that they

who live should no longer **live for** themselves, but for **Him who died and rose again on their behalf** (2 Cor. 5:15). “For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a **bond-servant of Christ**” (Gal. 1:10). “**Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus**, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons” (Phil. 1:1) “just as you learned it from **Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant**, who is a faithful **servant of Christ** on our behalf” (Col. 1:7) “knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. **It is the Lord Christ whom you serve**” (Col. 3:24). “**Epaphras**, who is one of your number, a **bondslave of Jesus Christ**, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God” (Col. 4:12). “In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good **servant of Christ Jesus**, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following” (1 Tim. 4:6). “**James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ**, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad, greetings” (James 1:1). “**Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ**, and brother of James, to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:1) “The Revelation of **Jesus Christ**, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to **His bond-servant John**” (Rev. 1:1)

It is proper to pray to Him. “If you **ask Me** anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:14). “And they went on stoning **Stephen** as **he called upon the Lord and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’** And falling on his knees, **he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them!’** And having said this, he fell asleep” (Acts 7:59–60). “and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind **all who call upon Thy name.**’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.’ And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, ‘Brother Saul, **the Lord Jesus**, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:14–17). “and immediately he began to proclaim **Jesus** in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is the Son of God.’ And all those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, ‘Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed **those who called on this name**, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief

priests” (Acts 9:20–21)? ““And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, **calling on His name.**” And it came about when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance, and I saw Him saying to me, “Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.” And I said, “**Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in Thee**”” (Acts 22:16–19). “that if you confess with your mouth **Jesus as Lord**, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same **Lord** is Lord of all, abounding in riches for **all who call upon Him**; for ‘WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED’” (Rom. 10:9–13). “to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with **all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, their Lord and ours” (1 Cor. 1:2) “Concerning this **I entreated the Lord three times** that it might depart from me. And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of **Christ** may dwell in me” (2 Cor. 12:8–9). “**I thank Christ Jesus our Lord**, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service” (1 Tim. 1:12) “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. **Come, Lord Jesus**” (Rev. 22:20).

It is proper to give glory to Him. “I am **Jehovah**, that is my name; and **my glory will I not give to another**, neither my praise unto graven images” (Isa. 42:8). “For mine own sake, for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should my name be profaned? and **my glory will I [Jehovah] not give to another**” (Isa. 48:11). “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a **son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him** dominion, and **glory**, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13–14). “And **the Word** became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld **His glory**, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). “For not even the Father judges anyone, but **He has given all judgment to the**

Son, in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” (John 5:22–23). “But when Jesus heard it, He said, ‘This sickness is not unto death, but **for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it**’” (John 11:4). “When therefore he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘**Now is the Son of Man glorified**, and God is glorified in Him; if God is glorified in Him, **God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately**’” (John 13:31–32). “But when He, **the Spirit of truth**, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. **He shall glorify Me [Jesus]**; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you” (John 16:13–15). “And now, **glorify Thou Me [Jesus] together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was**” (John 17:5). “**The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus**, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him” (Acts 3:13). “Therefore also **God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**” (Phil. 2:9) “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — **all things have been created by Him and for Him**” (Col. 1:16). “in order that **the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you**, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes. 1:12). “My brethren, do not hold your faith in **our glorious Lord Jesus Christ** with an attitude of personal favoritism” (James 2:1). “and from **Jesus Christ**, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; **to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen**” (Rev. 1:5–6). “And I looked, and **I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing**

and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’ And the four living creatures kept saying, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshiped” (Rev. 5:11–14).

It is proper to worship Him. “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, **magi** from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For **we** saw His star in the east, and **have come to worship Him**” (Matt. 2:1–2). “And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, ‘Go and make careful search for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, **that I [Herod] too may come and worship Him**” (Matt. 2:8). “And they [**the magi**] came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and **they fell down and worshiped Him**; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh” (Matt. 2:11). “Then **Jesus said** to him, ‘Begone, Satan! For it is written, “**YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY**”” (Matt. 4:10). “Thou shalt fear **Jehovah** thy God; and **him shalt thou serve**, and shalt swear by his name” (Deut. 6:13). “And **those who were in the boat worshiped Him**, saying, ‘You are certainly God’s Son” (Matt. 14:33)! “And the angel answered and said to **the women**, ‘Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going before you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.’ And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. And behold, **Jesus** met them and greeted them. And **they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him**” (Matt. 28:5–9). “But **the eleven disciples** proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which **Jesus** had designated. And **when they saw Him, they worshiped Him**; but some were doubtful” (Matt. 28:16–17). “**Jesus** heard that they had put him out; and finding him, He said, ‘Do you believe in **the Son of Man**?’ He answered and said, ‘And who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.’ And he said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And **he worshiped Him**” (John 9:35–38). “Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that **at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth**, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9–11). “And **when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, ‘AND LET ALL THE AN-**

GELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM” (Heb. 1:6). “And when He had taken the book, **the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb**, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints” (Rev. 5:8). “and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and **worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters”** (Rev. 14:7).

He is not an angel. “**God**, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in **His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; **having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.** For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘**THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE**’? And again, ‘**I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME**’? And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, ‘**AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.**’ And of the angels He says, ‘**WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE.**’ But of the Son He says, ‘**THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. THOU HAST LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, THY GOD, HATH ANOINTED THEE WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE THY COMPANIONS.**’ And, ‘**THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THEY WILL PERISH, BUT THOU REMAINEST; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD AS A GARMENT, AND AS A MANTLE THOU WILT ROLL THEM UP; AS A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT THOU ART THE SAME, AND THY YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.**’ But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘**SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET**’? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation” (Heb. 1:1–14)? “For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For **if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every**

transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. For **He did not subject to angels the world to come**, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.’ For **in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him.** But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (Heb. 2:1–8).

He is Lord. “For **Jehovah** your God, he **is** God of gods, and **Lord of lords**, the great God, the mighty, and the terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward” (Deut. 10:17). “For **the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath**” (Matt. 12:8). “Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.’ **Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God’**” (John 20:27–28)! “that if you **confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for **the same Lord is Lord of all**, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; for ‘**WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED**’” (Rom. 10:9–13). “And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered**; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:32). “Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus is accursed’; and **no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit**” (1 Cor. 12:3). “**There is** one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; **one Lord**, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:4–5) “Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are

in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9–11). “My brethren, do not hold your faith in **our glorious Lord Jesus Christ** with an attitude of personal favoritism” (James 2:1). “These will wage war against **the Lamb**, and the Lamb will overcome them, because **He is Lord of lords** and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful” (Rev. 17:14). “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called **The Word of God**. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**’” (Rev. 19:11–16).

He is Sovereign. “But when **the Son of Man** comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on **His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31). “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth**’” (Matt. 28:18). “He who comes from above is **above all**, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is **above all**” (John 3:31). “**The Father** loves the Son, and **has given all things into His hand**” (John 3:35). “**Jesus**, knowing that **the Father had given all things into His hands**, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God” (John 13:3) “**All things that the Father has are Mine**; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you” (John 16:15). “and **all things that are Mine** are Thine, and **Thine [the Father’s] are Mine [Jesus’]**; and I have been glorified in them” (John 17:10). “Therefore also **God** highly exalted Him, and **bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9–11). “in these last days has spoken to us in **His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things**, through whom also He made the world” (Heb. 1:2). “**THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.**’ For **in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him.** But now we do not

yet see all things subjected to him” (Heb. 2:8). “And there shall no longer be any curse; and **the throne [singular] of God and of the Lamb** shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him” (Rev. 22:3)

He claimed to be God, according to the Jews. “For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, **making Himself equal with God**” (John 5:18). “and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of **My hand**. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of **the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.**’ The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?’ The Jews answered Him, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because **You**, being a man, **make Yourself out to be God.**’ Jesus answered them, ‘Has it not been written in your Law, “I SAID, YOU ARE GODS”? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, “**You are blaspheming,**” because I said, “**I am the Son of God**”?’” (John 10:28–36)

He is God. “For **Jehovah** will judge his people, And repent himself for his servants; When he seeth that their power is gone, And there is none remaining, shut up or left at large. And he will say, Where are their gods, The rock in which they took refuge; Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink-offering? Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your protection. See now that *I*, even *I*, am he, And **there is no god with me:** I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; And there is none that can deliver out of my hand” (Deut. 32:36–39). “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his [Jesus’] name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **Mighty God**, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). “A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the **mighty God [Jehovah]**” (Isa. 10:21). “Ye are my witnesses, saith **Jehovah**, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: **before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me**” (Isa. 43:10). “Thus saith **Jehovah**, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: **I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God**” (Isa. 44:6). “Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called: I am he; **I [Jehovah] am the first, I also am the last**” (Isa. 48:12). “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; **I am**

the first and the last, and the living One; and **I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore**, and I have the keys of death and of Hades” (Rev. 1:17–18). “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: **The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life**, says this” (Rev. 2:8) “And He said to me, ‘It is done. **I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end**. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his **God** and he will be My son” (Rev. 21:6–7). “Behold, **I am coming quickly**, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. **I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end**. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. *I, Jesus*, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.’ He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus**” (Rev. 22:12–20). “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND **THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,**’ which translated means, ‘**GOD WITH US**” (Matt. 1:23). “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall **call his name Immanuel**” (Isa. 7:14). “The Son of Man will send forth **His angels**, and they will gather out of **His kingdom** all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness” (Matt. 13:41) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**” (John 1:1). “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**’ The Jews therefore said, ‘It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But **He was speaking of the temple of His body**” (John 2:19–21). “And **God raised Him up** again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power” (Acts 2:24). “**For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because**

He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also **was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God**” (John 5:18). “And so they were saying to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me, nor My Father; **if you knew Me, you would know My Father also**’” (John 8:19). “Jesus therefore said, ‘When you lift up **the Son of Man**, then you will know that **I am** He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me’” (John 8:28). “And **God** said to Moses, ‘**I AM WHO I AM**’; and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, “**I AM** has sent me to you”’” (Ex. 3:14). “**Jesus said to them**, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am.**’ **Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him**; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple” (John 8:58–59). There were five legal cases for stoning: 1) spirit mediums [Lev 20:27], 2) cursing (**blasphemy**) [Lev 24:10-23], 3) false prophets [Deut 13:5-10], 4) stubborn son [Deut 21:18-21], 5) adultery or rape [Deut 22:21-24, Lev 20:10]. “and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of **My hand**. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of **the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.**’ The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?’ The Jews answered Him, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but **for blasphemy; and because You**, being a man, **make Yourself out to be God**’” (John 10:28–33). “And Jesus cried out and said, ‘**He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me**’” (John 12:44). “From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that **I am** He” (John 13:19). “And **God** said to Moses, ‘**I AM WHO I AM**’; and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, “**I AM** has sent me to you”’” (Ex. 3:14). “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.’ Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how do you say, “Show us the Father”?’” (John 14:7–9) “**Greater love has no one than this**, that one lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). “Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth, and said to them, ‘Whom do you seek?’ They answered Him, ‘Jesus the Nazarene.’ **He said to them, ‘I am** He.’ And Judas also who was betraying Him, was standing with them. **When therefore He said to them, ‘I am** He,’ **they drew back, and fell to the ground**” (John 18:4–6). “Thomas answered and said to

Him, **‘My Lord and my God!’** Jesus said to him, ‘Because you have seen Me, have **you believed?** Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed” (John 20:28–29). “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood**” (Acts 20:28). “and to know **the love of Christ** which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to **all the fulness of God**” (Eph. 3:19). “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in **Christ Jesus**, who, although He **existed in the form of God**, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped” (Phil. 2:5–6) “**For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form**” (Col. 2:9) “but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in **the household of God**, which is **the church of the living God**, the pillar and support of the truth. And by common confession great is the **mystery of godliness**: He who was **revealed in the flesh**, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory” (1 Tim. 3:15–16). “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of **our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**” (Titus 2:13) “**And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature**, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become as **much better than the angels**, as **He has inherited a more excellent name than they**” (Heb. 1:3–4). “**But of the Son He says, ‘THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM’**” (Heb. 1:8). “**Thy throne, O God**, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom” (Ps. 45:6). “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider **Jesus**, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as **the builder of the house** has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but **the builder of all things is God**” (Heb. 3:1–4). “Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of **our God and Savior, Jesus Christ**” (2 Pet. 1:1) “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might **know Him who is true**, and **we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God** and eternal life” (1 John. 5:20). “And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from **the throne [singular] of God and of the Lamb**,

in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall no longer be any curse; and **the throne of God and of the Lamb** shall be in it, and **His** bond-servants shall serve **Him**; and they shall see **His face**, and **His name** shall be on their foreheads” (Rev. 22:1–4).

And, He is Jehovah. “Then shall **Jehovah** go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And **his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem** on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and **Jehovah** my God shall come, and **all the holy ones with thee**” (Zech. 14:3–5). “For **thus saith Jehovah** of hosts: After glory hath he sent me unto the nations which plundered you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall be a spoil to those that served them; and ye shall know that **Jehovah of hosts hath sent me**. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and **I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah**. And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and **I will dwell in the midst of thee**, and thou shalt know that **Jehovah of hosts has sent me** unto thee” (Zech. 2:8–11). “and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This **Jesus, who has been taken up** from you into heaven, **will come in just the same way** as you have watched Him go into heaven.’ Then they returned to Jerusalem from **the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem**, a Sabbath day’s journey away” (Acts 1:11–12). “But when **the Son of Man comes** in His glory, **and all the angels with Him**, then He will sit on His glorious throne” (Matt. 25:31). “so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at **the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**” (1 Thes. 3:13). “For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet, saying, **THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!’**” (Matt. 3:3; see also Mark 1:2-3, Luke 3:4, John 1:23) “**The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah**; make level in the desert a highway for our God” (Isa. 40:3). [The way was prepared for Jehovah; the

way was prepared for Jesus.—*ed.*] “Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, and said, ‘What are you willing to give me **to deliver Him [Jesus] up to you?**’ And they weighed out to him **thirty pieces of silver**” (Matt. 26:14–15). “And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my hire thirty pieces of silver. And **Jehovah** said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, **the goodly price that I was prized at by them.** And I took the **thirty pieces of silver**, and cast them unto the potter, in the house of Jehovah” (Zech. 11:12–13). “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; **For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS**” (Luke 1:76) “The voice of one that crieth, **Prepare ye** in the wilderness **the way of Jehovah**; make level in the desert a highway for our God” (Isa. 40:3). “But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were crying out in the temple and saying, ‘**Hosanna to the Son of David,**’ they became indignant, and said to Him, ‘Do You hear what these are saying?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Yes; have you never read, “**OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABES THOU HAST PREPARED PRAISE FOR THYSELF**?”’” (Matt. 21:15–16) “O **Jehovah**, our Lord, How excellent is thy name in all the earth, Who hast set thy glory upon the heavens! **Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou established strength**, Because of thine adversaries, That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger” (Ps. 8:1–2). “And I am no more in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy **Father**, keep them in **Thy name, the name which Thou hast given Me**, that they may be one, even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in **Thy name which Thou hast given Me**; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled” (John 17:11–12). “that if you **confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘**WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.**’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for **the same Lord** is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; for ‘**WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED**’” (Rom. 10:9–13). “And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered**; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:32). “Therefore

also God highly exalted Him, and **bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**” (Phil. 2:9) “having become as much better than **the angels**, as **He has inherited a more excellent name than they**” (Heb. 1:4). “**But of the Son He says, ‘THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. THOU HAST LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, THY GOD, HATH ANOINTED THEE WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE THY COMPANIONS.’ And, ‘THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS’**” (Heb. 1:8–10) “When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve **Jehovah**. He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: Thy years are throughout all generations. **Of old didst thou lay the foundation of the earth; And the heavens are the work of thy hands**” (Ps. 102:22–25). “**BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him [Jesus], even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.** Even so. Amen” (Rev. 1:7). “The burden of the word of **Jehovah** concerning Israel... **they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him**, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born” (Zech. 12:1–10). “In various places in the Old Test. where God is spoken of (as e.g. Zech. 14:3, 5; Joel 2:32; Ps. 45:6), it is applied in the New Test. to Jesus... the simple fact that the Theocratic King Himself—which Jesus essentially is—can be no other than Jehovah, itself fully and amply establishes the Divinity of Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:483). “Lange (*Com. Rev.*, p. 406) justly observes: ‘In the Coming of Christ God shall perfectly manifest Himself as Jehovah, the Covenant God: faithful to Himself; faithful to His people; faithful to His justice toward all’” (*ibid.*, p. 537).

Summarizing, then, Jesus’ identity, particularly as it relates to His deity, incorporating the above passages together with a few others that include His humanity (so as to demonstrate that His deity and His humanity are not mutually exclusive): Jesus is from everlasting (Mic. 5:2). He was in the beginning (John 1:1). He is before all things (Col. 1:17). He had glory with the Father before the world was (John 17:5). He existed in the form of God (Phil. 2:6). He was God (John 1:1). He is the Firstborn of all creation (for all things were made by Him and for Him; Col. 1:15-16). Through Him are all things (Heb 1:2). All things were made by Him (Col. 1:16). God attributes Jehovah’s creative works to Him (Heb 1:8, 10). All things were cre-

ated by Him and for Him (Col. 1:16). He made man in His own image (Gen. 1:26-27). The Father sent Him (John 6:57). He sought not His own will, but that of His Father who sent Him (John 6:38). The way was prepared for Jehovah, then Christ came (Matt. 3:3). He was Immanuel—God With Us (Matt. 1:23). All the angels of God worship Him (Heb. 1:6). The magi worshiped Him (Matt. 2:11). He is the Son of God (John 10:36). He who has seen Him has seen the Father (John 14:7-9). The Father was greater than He (spoken by Jesus in His humanity; John 14:28). He could do nothing of Himself (John 5:19). He did nothing of Himself (John 8:28). His Father gave Him the words which He spoke (John 12:49). (In His humanity) He knew not the day nor the hour of the end (Matt. 24:36). A cured blind man worshiped Him (John 9:38). He would raise up His body (John 2:19, 21). No one has greater love than Him (John 15:13). He was one with the Father (John 10:28-33). The Jews believed that He made Himself equal with God (John 5:18). He forgives sins against God (Luke 5:24). He gave men power to be born of God (John 1:12-13). Those in the boat worshiped Him (Matt. 14:33). His eleven disciples worshiped Him (Matt. 28:16-17). The Father's name has been given to Him (John 17:11-12). He is heir of all things (Heb. 1:2). God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:24). He raised His body from the dead (John 2:19-21). He ascended to His God (John 20:17). He appeared in the presence of God (Heb. 9:24). He sat down at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19). God highly exalted Him (Phil. 2:9). God glorified Him (Acts 3:13). He is not an angel (Heb. 1 & 2). He was made better than the angels (Heb. 1:4). God made Him Lord and Christ (John 2:36). All men should honor Him even as they do the Father (John 5:22-23). He is the First and the Last, as is Jehovah (Isaiah 44:6, Rev. 1:17-18). In Him dwells all the fulness of Deity in bodily form (Col. 2:9). He is the exact representation of God's nature (Heb. 1:3). He is above all (John 3:31). He sustains all things (Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3). He is eternal Father (Isaiah 9:6). He is Mighty God (Isaiah 9:6). All things that are the Father's are His (John 16:15). All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Him (Matt. 28:18). The Father has given Him power over all flesh (John 17:2). He is mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5-6). He is in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18). He is Lord of lords (Rev. 17:14). "Whoever calls upon the name of Jehovah will be saved" applies to calling on Him (Rom. 10:9, 11-13). And, He is the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb. 13:8).

Humanity of the King

As *man*, Jesus identifies with humanity and qualifies for the Davidic throne.

Jesus is as much fully human as He is fully God. “It is as heretical to deny Christ’s humanity as it is to deny His deity” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:253).

He became human at His incarnation. “Since then the children share in **flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same**, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Therefore, **He had to be made like His brethren in all things**, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:14-17). “Therefore, **when He comes into the world**, He says, ‘SACRIFICE AND OFFERING THOU HAST NOT DESIRED, BUT A **BODY THOU HAST PREPARED FOR ME**’” (Heb. 10:5) “And **the Word became flesh**, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14) “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that **Jesus Christ has come in the flesh** is from God” (1 John. 4:2) “In **the days of His flesh**, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety” (Heb. 5:7). “The Christ, properly estimated from the Incarnation, has a history which must comport with the covenants and prophecies” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:562). “The Incarnation was not the subtraction of deity; it was the addition of humanity” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:279). “...an unorthodox assumption, namely, that the divine nature became human in the Incarnation. The Eternal did not become temporal, nor did the divine nature become human at the Incarnation any more than the human nature became divine. As a matter of fact, this is the monophysite heresy condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 454: It is a confusion of the two natures of Christ. In the Incarnation, the divine nature did not become a human nature or vice versa. Rather, the divine person—the second person of the Trinity—became human; that is, He assumed a human nature in addition to His divine nature... It is as impossible for God to become man as it is for an infinite to become a finite or an uncreated to become created. As Athanasius (c. 293-373) would say, the Incarnation was not the subtraction of Deity, but the addition of humanity. God the Son did not change His divine nature; rather, He added a distinct human nature to it” (*ibid.*, 2:109). “He who suffered was the God-man, yet He did not suffer as God, but as man” (*ibid.*, p. 122). “Christ was infinite and uncreated in His divine nature, but He was finite and created in His human nature” (*ibid.*, p. 178). “The divine nature possessed by Christ did not suffer

or die: God is impassible and, hence, incapable of undergoing suffering. Only the Son became incarnated in a human nature; thus, only the Son, not the Father or the Spirit, suffered on the cross” (*ibid.*, p. 296).

He was resurrected bodily. “for **just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**” (Matt. 12:40). “And he said to them, ‘Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. **He has risen**; He is not here; behold, **here is the place where they laid Him**” (Mark 16:6). “but when they entered, **they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus**” (Luke 24:3). “**See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have**” (Luke 24:39). “**Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’** The Jews therefore said, ‘It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But **He was speaking of the temple of His body**” (John 2:19-21). “Then **He said to Thomas, ‘Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing**” (John 20:27). “And as for the fact that **He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to decay**, He has spoken in this way: “I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.” Therefore He also says in another Psalm, “**Thou wilt not allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.**” For **David**, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, **fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers, and underwent decay; but He whom God raised did not undergo decay**” (Acts 13:34-37) “**For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption**” (Ps. 16:10) “**For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form,**” (Col. 2:9) “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**” (1 Tim. 2:5) “If Nesbit, Robinson, and Hodge are right, then the body of Jesus might have remained in the sepulchre untouched, and its removal, under the idea of resurrecting power, was simply a deception... a re-creation... God preserves the idea... This is the resurrection of *an idea*... Strange how far men will proceed with the Scriptures in order to establish a favorite theory, to which the former must bend” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:230). “The resurrection of Jesus is a stumbling-block to all purely spiritual theories” (*ibid.*, p. 231). “The views of the Gnostics relating to matter, and the consequent rejection of this doctrine, has influenced many to imitate Hymenaeus and Philetus” (*ibid.*). “If... no particles of the body of Jesus were needed in the resurrection, the empty

sepulchre was merely a pious deception, and the proof given to Thomas of a resurrection was a mere pious fraud. No! The Record is too explicit” (*ibid.*, p. 232). “When we see Christ’s body, the body itself, raised up so that it should not experience corruption; when we consider this requisite to prove His resurrecting power over death itself; when we contemplate the assurance that His resurrection is a pledge, the first fruits, of our own, then we are satisfied, and willing to remain in ignorance of its *modus operandi*, awaiting its glorious power” (*ibid.*, p. 240). “Such a union of natures, as was sustained before His death and continued unimpaired after it, evermore remains. This is a covenanted necessity, for David’s Son, and no other, is the appointed King. Therefore the same union is still so preserved, the vital relationship of the two natures is still so continued, that we have the same Divine-Human Jesus to-day and evermore. The same Jesus that the disciples saw ascend to heaven shall come again in like manner, unchanged. The same Son of David that ascended must also descend, or else the covenant cannot be realized. Indeed the entire tenor of the Word evinces this, that since his ascension there has been no conversion of human nature into the Divine (just as little as the opposite advocated by some, that in the incarnation the divine was converted into the human—a transmutation dogma doing violence to the Infinite), although Augustine rashly says: ‘God became man that man may become God.’ A glorification was indeed experienced, but this did not destroy the human, just as the glorification of the saints does not change the personality and identity of their humanity. This is the more essential to notice, since eminent men overlooking the covenant connection, teach the contrary” (*ibid.*, 3:538). “God’s own oath-bound covenant, in order to be realized, positively demands the perpetuation of David’s descendant. The old opinion of Origen (Hagenbach, vol. 1, p. 177) that ‘the humanity of Jesus ceased to exist after His exaltation;’ inflicts a deadly blow to covenant promise made to David’s Son” (*ibid.*, p. 539). “It is now a ‘glorious body’ in its nature, a body of flesh and bones (but without blood) in its structure” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:91). “The resurrection body of Christ never becomes omnipresent” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 269). “If Jesus’ resurrection body was not really the same material body of flesh and bones in which He died, then He cannot be exonerated from the charge of deception” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:619). “He [Jesus] could have stepped into another dimension in His physical body” (*ibid.*, 4:278). “Resuscitated corpses die again; Jesus’ resurrection body was immortal... Jesus was the first to be raised in an immortal body... The Resurrection was *more* than a reanimation of a material corpse, but not *less*” (*ibid.*, p. 282). “With the exception of scattered unorthodox views (such as Origen’s), the earliest Fathers affirmed

that Jesus rose in the same body of flesh in which He was crucified” (*ibid.*, p. 285). “A denial of Christ’s literal reign is, in effect, a denial of His literal resurrection body” (*ibid.*, 4:535). “Jesus was the first to receive a permanent, immortal resurrection body (1 Cor. 15:20)” (*ibid.*, p. 677).

He is human today. “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a **son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13–14). “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; **touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have**” (Luke 24:39). “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**’ The Jews therefore said, ‘It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But **He was speaking of the temple of His body**” (John 2:19–21). “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, **God** is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because **He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead**” (Acts 17:30–31). “For **in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form**” (Col. 2:9) “For **there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus**” (1 Tim. 2:5) “and in the middle of the lampstands one like a **son of man**, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle” (Rev. 1:13). “The tendency of many Theologians is to exalt the divinity of Jesus to the almost total exclusion of the humanity, just as if the latter had performed its function and was not destined to remain in the future an important and essential factor in Redemption” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:562). “In the effort to exalt the divine, too little stress has been laid on the human” (*ibid.*, p. 565). “...the early church faith... insists upon the human maintaining its distinctive and enduring relationship in the Christship of Jesus” (*ibid.*).

And, *He will be human during His reign as Davidic King.* (See our discussion of the King reigning as the *Son of Man* in our section *Titles of the King* below.)

Deity and Humanity Combined

As both God and man, Jesus possesses *deity and humanity combined*. “And He said to them, ‘How is it that they say the Christ is David’s **son**? For David himself says in the book of Psalms, “The Lord said to my **Lord**, ‘Sit

at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet” David therefore calls Him “**Lord**,” and how is He his **son**” (Luke 20:41-44)? “Jehovah saith unto **my [David’s] Lord**, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Ps. 110:1). “For **in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form**” (Col. 2:9) “For **there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus**” (1 Tim. 2:5) “And I turned to see the **voice** that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like a **son of man**, clothed in a robe reaching to the **feet**, and girded across His **breast** with a golden girdle. And His **head** and His **hair** were white like white wool, like snow; and His **eyes** were like a flame of fire; and His **feet** were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His **voice** was like the sound of many waters. And in His right **hand** He held seven stars; and out of His **mouth** came a sharp two-edged sword; **and His face was like the sun shining in its strength**” (Rev. 1:12–16). “The physical body of Jesus no longer veils the shining brightness of the glory” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 610). “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star**” (Rev. 22:16). “...Jesus Who, in His humanity, is the root and offspring of David, but as to His deity, He is the *Shechinah* Glory, as seen in the brightness and visibility of the light of the morning star” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 538). “The Theocracy, by incorporating the Davidic kingship, embraces, as the grand instrumentality for its future re-establishment in sublime power and glory, the Divine-Human, now united in Jesus, the Messiah” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:559). “In His Divine capacity He is represented as [now—*ed.*] reigning, but this reign is not the reign of promise;—the latter is confined to a special covenanted outward visible manifestation of the human in conjunction with the Divine, in an externally Theocratic ordering” (*ibid.*, p. 560). “When Christ assumes the Kingdom at the time appointed, in view of His being the predicted seed of David, this does not by any means cause Him to lay aside the Sovereignty that He has with the Father over the universe. As Divine He is with the Father evermore, but as the Divine-human, He manifests himself (and the Father through Him) on earth in a specified form of reigning adapted to humanity. Hence the predicted Kingdom is something that pertains not merely to the Divine but to ‘the Christ,’ i.e. the Divine-human united” (*ibid.*). “Two extremes are to be avoided: on the one hand to lay all stress on the Divine, and making, in this Kingdom, the human too subordinate; and on the other hand pressing the human to the exclusion of the Divine. Both are firmly and eternally united”

(*ibid.*). “When again present on earth, taking the Kingdom as Son of Man, this does not forbid His being, through the all-pervading attributes ascribed to Him, in heaven or in any part of the universe” (*ibid.*). “The Divine has elevated the human, held in conjunction for the pre-ordained Theocratic rule, to the Father’s throne, i.e. ‘the Christ,’ the Divine-Human united in one Person is ‘set down with my Father in His throne,’ and that in virtue of His overcoming” (*ibid.*, p. 563). “...the God-Man as Theocratic King, He is represented in the latter capacity as waiting, ‘expecting till His enemies shall be made His footstool,’ etc.” (*ibid.*) “...the Divine Sovereignty... in the Theocratic form, which in its initiatory form was separated in its Rulership by two persons (i.e. God and David) but is now happily conjoined—making it thus efficacious, irresistible, and ever-enduring—in one, i.e., ‘the Christ’” (*ibid.*, p. 577). “We plainly prove from the Scriptures, that the restored Theocracy, as predicted, demands a God-man, a divine-human person to sit on David’s throne and rule over his kingdom... a Theocracy brought to its perfected state, bringing God and man in union in a plan of government, necessarily implies it, which is distinctly affirmed by the duration, extent, works, power, results, etc. of His reign” (*ibid.*, 3:417). “...Jesus the Christ, the union of the divine with the human, thus restoring the presence of God, bridging over the chasm now existing between the world and God, and bringing to man in all his relations the deliverance that he needs” (*ibid.*, p. 493). “...a yearning of humanity to have the divine to reveal itself in an accessible form to man, joining the Infinite and the Finite in a recognizable manner... (1) the Theocracy embraced the idea of God Himself ruling; and (2) this was co-joined in the covenant and promises to be realized in David’s Son; (3) this led to the production of the fact; and (4) this was acknowledged by the chief priests when they charged Jesus with blasphemy because He claimed to be this Son, ‘the Christ.’ There is a logical and historical connection” (*ibid.*, p. 533). “A Theocracy presided over by a real Theocratic King, manifested in and through a vital union of God with man, imperatively requires a God-man” (*ibid.*). “Indeed, if Jesus is viewed, as, in justice to Himself and the Record, He ought to be, in the light of this Theocratic position, His Divine-Human appears with an increased intensity and lustre that is overwhelming” (*ibid.*). “The remarkable and most forcible feature comes forth, that what was once separated in this Theocratic Kingdom is united in the person of this King. When the Theocracy was first established, the earthly Ruler (i.e., God acting as such) was separate (i.e. in personality) from the subordinate human ruler (as e.g. God was separate and distinct from the subordinate ruler David), but in this revived form it is God’s Purpose to have both joined, firmly united in the same person... In-

spiration alone could produce such a Theocratic Plan, so glorious, complete, and adapted to a perfect rule” (*ibid.*, p. 537). “This again brings out prominently the doctrine respecting the Person of Christ—a significant one too as the day is approaching. Our view rejects on the one side the old opinion, revamped by modern Rationalism that Christ is a mere man, for the acts that He performs, the new Creation, the Supernatural, the universal judging, the resurrection power exerted, etc., prove Him to be more than man, the Son of God in the highest sense. It rejects on the other hand the Gnostic idea, and its modern philosophical tendency, which either virtually ignores or despises the human in Christ, or else makes it play a very subordinate part in His history and that of Redemption, bringing forward the divine in an exclusive onesided manner. Looking only at the covenants, the work of Redemption proceeds on the ground that Jesus is man, proper man, of the seed of David, thus identified with the race and of the same nature with Adam. Coming necessarily in the elect line, He professes complete humanity, for His birth, growth, expansion of intellectual and moral powers, eating, drinking, temptation, life, sufferings, and death—all indicate this. But looking at the work which is to be performed, the Supernatural connected with Him, the portrayal of His offices, attributes, power, etc., we apprehend one possessing in connection with the human, a divine nature. Both are united to form a Saviour capable of performing in all respects the great work of Redemption, which is so intimately connected with a Theocratic ordering, with the precious principles of moral and civil government, with the purity and glory of God Himself, and with the highest interests of man and the race” (*ibid.*). “The idea of humanity united with the divine and realized in Christ, is the Key to Protestant theology... It is the goal toward which all things are tending—the culmination of God’s Purpose in government and restitution” (*ibid.*, p. 539). “In this Theocratic representation alone, do we find the chasm between the Infinite and Finite completely and satisfactorily filled. According to ‘the sure mercies of David’ the Finite ever remains with the Infinite, and it is the pleasure of the Infinite to glorify, and manifest itself through, the Finite” (*ibid.*, p. 540). “Jesus... He must indeed be, as has been abundantly proven, David’s Son, and thus Human; but He must also be God, and thus able to rule Theocratically. The prophets insist upon this human nature, and they press it as so essential that all men, Jews and Gentiles, have fully admitted that ‘the Messiah’ must be a descendant of David’s. This Messiah is to be the Head of the restored Theocracy. But see how the same prophets describe this Ruler as ‘God,’ as ‘the Lord God,’ etc., and bestow upon Him—the Coming One—the title, dignity, honor, and glory of God Himself. A multitude of passages which, similar to Zeph. 3:15,

17, declare that when this Kingdom is set up ‘the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee,’ ‘the Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty,’ clearly show that this Messiah is a God-man. The student will find this an exceeding rich vein from which to adduce the divinity of ‘the Christ,’ for the Lord God that cometh in vengeance and for redemption is this self-same appointed Messiah. Now, why do the prophets bring forth this grand conception as if it was a matter so plain that it needs no explanation? Simply because it is rooted and grounded in the Theocratic conception, for no Theocracy can be restored without God being its acknowledged earthly Ruler” (*ibid.*, p. 601). Chafer adds, “The Bible presents many contrasts, but none more striking than that one Person should be at the same time very God and very man. Illustrations from the Scriptures of these contrasts are many: He was weary, yet He called the weary to Himself for rest. He was hungry, yet He was ‘the bread of life.’ He was thirsty, yet He was ‘the water of life.’ He was in an agony, yet He healed all manner of disease and soothed every pain. He ‘grew, and waxed strong in spirit,’ yet He was from all eternity. He was tempted, yet He, as God, could not be tempted. He became self-limited in knowledge, yet He was the wisdom of God. He said (with reference to His humiliation, being made for a little time lower than the angels), ‘My Father is greater than I,’ yet He also said, ‘He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,’ and, ‘I and my Father are one.’ He prayed, yet He answered prayer. He wept at the tomb, yet He called the dead to arise. He asked, ‘Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?’ yet He ‘needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.’ He said, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ yet it was the very God to whom He cried who was at that moment ‘in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.’ He died, yet He is eternal life. He was God’s ideal man, and man’s ideal God” (*MBT*, 12%). “No theological account of the Messianic King, as He is presented in the Old Testament prophets, can be true which fails to give due place to both the human and divine elements in His nature, and also to both the earthly and heavenly aspects of His origination” (McClain, *GK*, p. 164). “‘...The LORD said unto my Lord...’ God’s Messianic King must be both human and divine: ‘If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?’” (*ibid.*, p. 356)? “Only if one and the same person, who was both God and man, died for our sin, can He truly be mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5)” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:296). “We must distinguish between what Jesus knew *as God* (everything) and what He knew *as man* (not everything)” (*ibid.*, p. 307). “The person of Jesus, then, had infinite knowledge only in His infinite nature. As God, He knew all things; as man, Jesus

grew in knowledge (Luke 2:52). The same applies to His other attributes; for example, He was omnipotent as God but limited as man” (*ibid.*, 3:423).

While holding fast to all that we’ve said above, we readily admit also that *our fully fathoming Jesus’ Person in our finite and (presently) imperfect state is not possible*. “We are not of those who think that the Person of Christ can be fully explained. He portrays Himself as a mystery, connected with the incomprehensible, revealed only to a few, and then only in some of His features. Much pertaining to Christ is still unknown, and has been the subject of controversy and impotent discussion. Hence the author has little sympathy with a class of writers who, in their exactness to define the Person of Christ rush to opposite extremes: the one party, while acknowledging the union of the divine-human, have the human completely absorbed in the divine; the other with equal preciseness making all human. Others receive, justly, all that is recorded, and therefore cleave to Jesus as ‘the Christ,’ being constituted such by a permanent union of the divine-human, both existing in ever-enduring harmony. Man is himself, in some respects, a mystery, and so long as it has been found impracticable to explain man (as e.g. union of soul and body) consistently and satisfactorily, it would be better (as indicative of modesty) to avoid attempting an accurate explanation of ‘the Christ.’ It is painful to read the varied and contradictory statements given in the writings of fallible men concerning Him, who, in the very nature of the case, being man and above man—man united with the Divine Mystery (God, the Incomprehensible)—is in a higher sense beyond our comprehension. We must rest satisfied with the description given of Him in the Word (which some writers portray with force and depth), without attempting to explain what the Bible has left indefinite and unknown” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:561).

Also requisite for Jesus’ theocratic Kingship is His *submissiveness*. “and you belong to Christ; and **Christ belongs to God**” (1 Cor. 3:23). “But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and **God is the head of Christ**” (1 Cor. 11:3). “then comes **the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father**, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But **when He says, ‘All things are put in subjection,’ it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all**” (1 Cor. 15:24-28). “and

that every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father**" (Phil. 2:11). "Blessed be **the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3) "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of **My God**, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of **My God**, and the name of the city of **My God**, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from **My God**, and My new name" (Rev. 3:12). "As our argument of the specific Theocratic-Davidic Rulership involves, this sitting at the right hand of the Father embraces the inference, that being the destined Representative Ruler, He is inferior in rank to the Father. This is fully admitted by our opponents (as e.g. Knapp, *Ch. Theol.*, p. 355), who tell us that He does not possess 'full equality in rank or dignity.' The reason underlying this, is because this Kingdom is something separate and distinct from the Divine Sovereignty, being a specific form of Government under the Headship of a Representative, given to David's Son, who acts only in the predicted and covenanted Theocratic capacity, and, therefore, must necessarily ever be subordinate to the Father as Paul teaches, 1 Cor. 15:27" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:542). "He 'emptied himself, taking the form of a servant' (Phil. 2:7, ASV). During the days of His flesh He was the perfect Servant of Jehovah, doing nothing of Himself but always speaking and acting under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit" (McClain, *GK*, p. 314). "As Son, He is eternally submissive to the Father" (Geisler, *ST*, 2:597)

For Jesus to become fully man, thereby acquiring eligibility for the Davidic throne, His *incarnation* was required. As to the *timing* of the incarnation, it was prophesied to occur *while the temple was still standing*. "Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem **unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks**: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And **after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary**; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he

shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:24–27). “Messiah was to come while the temple was still standing within the weeks designated by Daniel (9:24-27)” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:414) It occurred *during the middle age of the world*. “the incarnation as taking place in the middle age of the world” (*ibid.*, p. 132) (For a more complete discussion of the timing of the incarnation, see our discussion of Daniel’s seventy weeks in our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*.) As to the *ethnicity* of the incarnation, Messiah is a *Jew*. “who are **Israelites**, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and **from whom is the Christ according to the flesh**, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen” (Rom. 9:4-5). (See a detailed discussion of Jesus’ genealogy in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*.) Jesus’ ethnic connection to the Jewish race ensures the race’s preservation and blessing, not only in the Jewish Person of Christ, but also in the believing Jewish remnant. As to the *wonder* of the incarnation, it is *marvelous*. “Well may we ask those faithless ones who will not believe in the personal Advent of Jesus and His reign with His saints on earth, to look at the First Advent. Is our doctrine more astounding or more testing to faith and reason than that God should humble Himself in the child Jesus, that this Messiah should suffer and die? Our doctrine has nothing so amazing, nothing so humiliating, and consequently those who accept of the facts of the First Advent are inexcusable when they refuse credence to the alleged facts of the Second, when all the latter speak of a coming honor, dominion, and glory” (*ibid.*, p. 218). “It is not a marvel that He should come in renovating judgments to the earth: the marvel must ever be that He, the King of Glory, should bow the heavens and come down to this earth as an unresisting Lamb” (Chafer, *KHP*, 89%). Yet as marvelous as Jesus’ First Advent was, *His Second Advent will be immensely more glorious*. “Exceedingly precious as the First is, the Second exceeds it in glory, and, therefore, the latter is pre-eminently ‘the blessed hope’” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:249). (See our discussion of the glory of Jesus’ Second Advent in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.) As to the *purpose* of the incarnation, it is multifaceted. However, we must be careful to restrict the purposes of the incarnation to those explicitly taught in Scripture, lest we mistakenly attribute purposes of Jesus’ Second Advent (such as reigning from David’s throne) to His First Advent. One purpose of the incarnation was to *reveal God to man*. “No man has seen **God** at any time; **the only begotten God, who is in**

the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him” (John 1:18). “**God**, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days **has spoken to us in His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world” (Heb. 1:1–2). “And by common confession great is the mystery of **godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh**, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory” (1 Tim. 3:16). A second purpose was to *provide atonement for sin*. “just as **the Son of Man** did not **come** to be served, but to serve, and **to give His life a ransom for many**” (Matt. 20:28; also Mark 10:45). “These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, ‘Behold, **the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**’” (John 1:28–29)! “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood**” (Acts 20:28). “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of **our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us**, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds” (Titus 2:13–14). “For **Christ** also **died for sins once for all**, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18) A third purpose was to *reveal the gospel*. “**Come to Me**, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). “Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life**” (John 5:24). “Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who believes has eternal life**” (John 6:47). “**He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day**” (John 6:54). “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for **the gospel** according to the power of **God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**” (2 Tim. 1:8–10) A fourth purpose was to *prepare a suitable King/High Priest for the Kingdom*. “And **behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and**

will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:31–33). “In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, **He learned obedience from the things which He suffered**. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a **high priest** according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 5:7–10). “By this incarnation alone have we the Theocratic relationship, as promised, fully united and sustained in one person. By it God and David’s descendant are inseparably united, giving the Kingdom an unchangeable Head—in brief, bestowing the very characteristics, attributes, etc., so requisite to carry out the proposed Plan” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:478). “The simple fact is, that the philosophical truth lying at the basis of the Incarnation is found not merely in the provision made for our salvation in the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of this Jesus, but in the bestowal of the covenanted requirements in order that He might be properly constituted Theocratic King, and in what that humanity has yet to perform, in fulfillment of covenanted promises, in the ages to come. To view only what has been done and what is now progressing, is to see one side of the truth; but to look in addition at what shall be done in the future, and to combine these, is to grasp the whole truth” (*ibid.*, p. 561).

Jesus’ fitness for the Kingship required His *innocence*. “And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but **this man has done nothing wrong**” (Luke 23:41). “Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began praising God, saying, ‘**Certainly this man was innocent**’” (Luke 23:47). “And Pilate came out again, and said to them, ‘Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that **I find no guilt in Him**’” (John 19:4). “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet **without sin**” (Heb. 4:15). “For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, **innocent**, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens” (Heb. 7:26) “knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb **unblemished and spotless**, the blood of Christ” (1 Pet. 1:18–19). “For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, **WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS**

MOUTH” (1 Pet. 2:21–22) “He was declared innocent six times by both Pilate and Herod” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 260).

His *obedience* to the Father was also required. “And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘My **Father**, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet **not as I will, but as Thou wilt**’” (Matt. 26:39). “Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing**; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner’” (John 5:19). “For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through **the obedience of the One** the many will be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19). “Although He was a Son, **He learned obedience from the things which He suffered**” (Heb. 5:8). “Keeping in view the goal of Theocratic government and its requirements, we find in the honorable obedience of Christ the most ample and satisfactory assurance that in His occupancy of the Davidic throne and Kingdom, He will indeed be a truthful and stable Representative of God” (*ibid.*, p. 584).

His *character* is befitting a theocratic King. “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called **Faithful and True**; and in righteousness He judges and wages war” (Rev. 19:11). “The life of Jesus on earth has been highly eulogized even by unbelief, so that He is represented, by those unwilling to accept of His claims to the Divine and Supernatural, as ‘the ideal of Humanity,’ ‘the Ideal Man,’ ‘the man pre-eminent,’ etc. We accept of this testimony as far as it goes, and add to it, that if we consider the covenanted and predicted claims of Jesus to the Theocratic ordering, we find in that life abundant evidence, cumulative in fact, that in every particular this Son of David acted and lived in the consciousness of His ultimate Theocratic position, so that everything in Him, and coming from Him, was eminently worthy of the Theocratic King. Thus e.g. the contrast between His condition (one of poverty) and the vast extent of His knowledge, the ability exhibited in meeting and confounding the representative and intelligent men of the nation, the high culture and taste manifested in His teaching so that they ever have commended themselves for beauty and force to reason, the exalted sentiments so far in advance of the age proceeding from ‘the carpenter,’ the dignity and nobleness of His character, the remarkable adhesion to His principles and aims irrespective of a threatened death, the conduct at the trial and crucifixion, the high virtue, morality, and piety inculcated compared with the teaching then extant, His public and private life contrasted with that of Reformers and great men, the authority assumed and sustained in connection with an exceeding tender-

ness of spirit and forgiveness—these are points we love to contemplate as indicative of the high and noble character of the King. The superiority of Jesus as a man, as eminent Apologists have noticed, developed at a time when gross impurity and corruption was prevalent, developed in antagonism to national pride and prejudice, is a stepping-stone to the acknowledgment of the full Theocratic idea—of something allied with Him which elevates and exalts His humanity, which—fortified by the purest life and sealed by the noblest death—establishes His claim to Oneness with the Father, constituting Him the needed perfect Redeemer, and “The Faithful and True” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:535).

His character was, in fact, developed and demonstrated to the extent of *perfection*, thus qualifying Him to be a perfect King. “And having been **made perfect**, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation” (Heb. 5:9) “For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints **a Son, made perfect forever**” (Heb. 7:28). “In conversation with Rev. Dr. Rodgers on this point, he suggested that one reason why the sinfulness of the ablest and most highly honored of the Theocratic Kings (as e.g. David and Solomon) is so plainly recorded in Scripture, arises from the fact that thus is shown (1) the failure of mere mortals, through infirmity, to sustain the position perfectly, and (2) to evidence, by way of contrast through trial, the perfection of Jesus as Theocratic King” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:584). “...gather out a people who, like the Master, shall be made perfect under temptation and trial” (*ibid.*, p. 701). “Cicero once said, in reference to human character, that if perfect excellence could exist in one person, the world would bow down and worship. But, as has been remarked (by Lord, *Blessed Hope*, p. 16), this was not verified in the Advent of Jesus, when perfect excellence had visible embodiment. The world is not inclined to such worship; human nature finds it too reproachful and self-denying” (*ibid.*, 2:729).

Also demonstrating His fitness for theocratic Kingship were His *miracles*. “And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, ‘Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such **miracles** as these **performed by His hands**’” (Mark 6:2)? “Men of Israel, listen to these words: **Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him** in your midst, just as you yourselves know —” (Acts 2:22) “How can the covenanted promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to inherit the land personally be realized without resurrection, and who so able to perform this as a Messiah that has vindicated His power over the grave, like

Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:419)? “If Christ is the One who is to restore or renew all things, as the prophets all testify, then when He comes even in humiliation it is of moment that this miraculous power, alleged to be lodged in Him, should be in some way evidenced to influence faith in Him” (*ibid.*, p. 473). “If He is the Messiah at all, He must exhibit the earnest, at least, of Messianic power so that we may have confidence in Him and in His ability to consummate the predicted Messianic times” (*ibid.*, p. 514). “The conditionality attached to the offer of the Kingdom, its postponement, etc., also explains the refusal of Jesus to perform miraculous signs when solicited in attestation of His being ‘the Messiah’ (Matt. 16:1, etc.), and which some of these writers assume as proof that the Messiahship was in a manner forced upon Jesus reluctantly by a chain of circumstances. The condition of repentance imposed does not require miraculous signs to establish its validity or enforce its obligation (and hence John the Baptist the special preacher of it, performs none), for it is based upon the recorded law of God and the responsive moral nature of man. Jesus having given a sufficiency to indicate His Supernatural endowments—such as necessarily belong to a Messiah—it would, in view of the foreseen rejection, the moral freedom of the nation, and the postponement of the Kingdom, have been premature and ill-timed to have given unrepentant and unbelieving Jews the direct testimonies, as demanded, of Messiahship, for it would have ignored the condition first of all imposed, viz., repent. Had they repented the wonderful signs of Messiahship would have legitimately followed in the mighty work then undertaken, but unrepentant the Kingdom was no longer nigh, and they had no claim upon the Messiah. The refusal is therefore grounded upon the moral relations that the nation sustained to the Messiah. Again: the theory of ‘natural’ explanation (Paulus, etc.), which endeavors to preserve a few fragments of the Gospels by eliminating the miraculous and Supernatural under the plea that we have an exaggerated statement which must be explained by natural causes, is (aside from its outrageous exegetical character) clearly shown to be untenable, because it vitiates the central idea of the Messianic conception a Messiah according to the prophetic and Jewish notion who had the Supernatural closely allied with, and really possessed by, Him. For no one else, it was correctly believed, could possibly introduce the mighty changes and blessings of the Messianic Kingdom. Hence to place any other construction upon the language of the New Test. than it plainly in its grammatical construction requires, in order to emasculate the marvelous, is simply to deny its Messianic belief, its Messianic Kingdom, its Theocratic King. For the veritable Christ of the promised Kingdom must correspond with the covenanted and predicted King, and hence the writers

correctly represent the Supernatural as connected with the Person of this Messiah. It follows, therefore, that the most foolish and inconsistent of all attacks upon the Messiahship, is to explain the language intended to convey the notion of the miraculous to denote something else, because the removal of the Supernatural by this means has no affinity with the design of the Gospels, with the ideas then current, with the prophetic word that preceded, and with the Kingdom of God that was then universally believed” (*ibid.*, p. 520). “The efforts made to separate the Christ of the Gospels from the Supernatural and miraculous by a host of past and present writers is simply a historical and illogical outrage, seeing (1) that the latter is so connected and interwoven with all that pertains to Jesus (in birth, life, death, etc.) that it cannot be separated from Him without the greatest violence; (2) that such a separation can only be effected at a lawful sacrifice of Christ’s character, claims, designs etc.; (3) that it virtually makes—no matter what eulogies are given to soften it—Jesus the Christ a deceiver and impostor; (4) that it utterly destroys the veracity and authority of ‘the Christ,’ leaving us simply a man with noble but mistaken aspirations, who by the force of his mind and the things inculcated, aided by circumstances, worked a religious revolution in society; (5) that it leaves us a mere caricature of the scriptural Christ, for whose teaching, actions, and claims we are constantly to apologize, making them either an accommodation to the spirit of the age, or a remnant of superstition, or a misrepresentation of the evangelists, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 521) “...the miracles... It is nowhere suggested that they were given to accredit the teaching; their evidential purpose was solely and altogether to accredit the Teacher” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 41).

And finally, His *suffering* qualified Him to be a sympathetic and merciful King/Priest. “Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. **He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:** and as one from whom men hide their face he was **despised**; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him **stricken, smitten** of God, and **afflicted**. But he was **wounded** for our transgressions, he was **bruised** for our iniquities; the **chastisement** of our peace was upon him; and with his **stripes** we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. **He was oppressed**, yet when he was **afflicted** he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is

dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By **oppression** and **judgment** he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased Jehovah to **bruise** him; he hath put him to **grief**: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the **travail** of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because **he poured out his soul unto death**, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:1–12). “For **since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able** to come to the aid of those who are tempted” (Heb. 2:18). “Although He was a Son, **He learned obedience from the things which He suffered**” (Heb. 5:8). “Therefore **Jesus** also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, **suffered** outside the gate” (Heb. 13:12). “For you have been called for this purpose, since **Christ also suffered for you**, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps” (1 Pet. 2:21) “Therefore, since **Christ has suffered in the flesh**, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin” (1 Pet. 4:1) “...Isaiah opening his 53rd chapter with the exclamation, ‘Who hath believed our report?’ i.e., the report of a Messianic King who must suffer and die under the hand of Jehovah” (McClain, *GK*, p. 168).

Career of the King

The career of Jesus, including His incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, glorification, present session and return perfectly prepares Him for the proper exercise of His Kingship.

Jesus’ *incarnation* provided His identification and solidarity with humanity and prepared the human body that would qualify Him to sit on David’s throne. (See our discussion of Jesus’ incarnation in our section *Qualifications of the King* above.)

His *life*, including His perfect observance of the Mosaic Law, His fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, His teaching and His miracles also prepared Him for theocratic Kingship. He *observed the Mosaic Law perfectly*. “For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made

sinners, even so through **the obedience of the One** the many will be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19). “But when the fulness of the time came, **God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, **born under the Law**, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4–5). (See our discussion of Jesus’ innocence in our section *Qualifications of the King* above.) He *fulfilled the Law and the Prophets*. “**Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill**” (Matt. 5:17). “**For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled** in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:3–4). “**having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross**” (Col. 2:14). He *taught* regarding the Kingdom and the intervening Church Age. (See our discussion of His announcement and offer of the Kingdom in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*, and see our discussion of how His teaching changed following His rejection in our chapter *Rejection of the King*.) His *miracles* demonstrated that He had the supernatural ability required to usher in and administer the Kingdom. (See our discussion of Jesus’ miracles in our section *Qualifications of the King* above.)

Jesus’ *death*, foretold in the Old Testament, fulfilled the legal requirement for justifying sinners:

Regarding the *fact* of Christ’s death, “And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, INTO THY HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.’ And having said this, **He breathed His last**” (Luke 23:46). “For while we were still helpless, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly**” (Rom. 5:6). “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1–4) “For **Christ also died for sins once for all**, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18)

His death was *foretold in the Old Testament*. “Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he

grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that **he was cut off out of the land of the living** for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made **his grave** with the wicked, and with a rich man in **his death**; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because **he poured out his soul unto death**, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:1–12). “Then **after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off** and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined” (Dan. 9:26). “Two major events are said to take place after the sixty-ninth week and before the seventieth week: the cutting off of the Messiah and the destruction of the city and the temple in Jerusalem. These two events did not take place in the seventieth week, for that is not introduced to us until verse twenty-seven, but in an interval between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 248).

His death was therefore *inevitable*. “The death of the Messiah was inevitable, and even if Israel had accepted the Messiah, He still would have been crucified by the Romans on the same basis: treason against Rome” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 395). “Christ would have died even if Israel had ac-

cepted Him. The nation would have proclaimed Jesus as their King, which would have been viewed by Rome as a rebellion against Caesar. Jesus would then have been arrested, tried, and crucified for treason against Rome, as was the case anyway. Three days later, following His resurrection, He would have dispensed with Rome and set up the Messianic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 624).

Regarding the *timing* of Jesus’ death, it was *determined by Jesus*. “For this reason the Father loves Me, because **I lay down My life** that I may take it again. **No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down**, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father” (John 10:17–18). “One of the declarations of Jesus previous to His death was, ‘I lay down my life that I might take it again; no one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again,’ (John 10:17, 18). While His death was desired by Jew and consented to by Roman, while both incurred guilt in engaging in the act and persisting to the end, yet Jesus, according to the record, in virtue of the power lodged within Him, chose for Himself the moment when He should yield up His spirit to the efforts of His executioners. This was done, as we are informed for two reasons: (1) This voluntary yielding of His life is essential to His nature as God-man—nothing being able to occur without the permission of the Divine within Him... Notwithstanding the thirst and pangs endured, the sufferings were not, at the moment of death, sufficient in themselves to cause death as is seen by the surviving of the malefactors, the frequent lingering, long-continued death of crucified persons (the extremities and not the vital parts being first attacked, etc.), the crying out with a loud voice indicative of strength just previous to expiring, and the marveling of Pilate, when His body was requested by Joseph, that He was already dead, it being so remarkable and unexpected... (2) But now appears the Supernatural, the Divine in the very act of dying, in a most intensely interesting form, viz., in fulfilling the type of Himself. Consider when Jesus died, at the ninth Jewish hour or at three o’clock in the afternoon, at the very hour that the sacrifice should be offered at the temple at the very time selected and observed for the slaying of the Paschal Lamb. Was it a mere coincidence that Jesus died at the very time that the Paschal Lamb, the alleged and significant type of Himself, was slain? Was it an artful presentation of the writers of the Gospels to influence belief in the Messiah? If the latter why then do they not point out the relation that the one sustains to the other, and praise the same?... it is wisely and grandly left to speak for itself” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:480).

The *purpose* of Jesus' death was *to render God propitious toward sinners*. "whom God displayed publicly as **a propitiation in His blood** through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He **passed over the sins** previously committed" (Rom. 3:25) "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, **to make propitiation for the sins of the people**" (Heb. 2:17). "and **He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world**" (1 John. 2:2). "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent **His Son to be the propitiation for our sins**" (1 John. 4:10). "The death of Jesus... Separated from the Divine Purpose which it is to subserve, detached from the Kingdom which it is designed to secure, it necessarily loses much of its meaning and expressiveness" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:482). "Since no other freedom to act in behalf of sinners has been secured, it is to be concluded that all God has ever done or will do for sinful men is wrought on the sole basis of Christ's death" (Chafer, *D*, 62%).

The *accomplishments* of Jesus' death are many. First, it *confirmed Israel's continuing role in the plan of God*. "It was Jewish blood that was shed on Calvary" [quoting Horatius Bonar, 'The Jew,' *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, July, 1870, pp. 209-211] (Horner, *FI*, p. 9) Second, it *made atonement for sin*. "just as **the Son of Man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to **give His life a ransom for many**" (Matt. 20:28). "For **the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all**; but the life that He lives, He lives to God" (Rom. 6:10). "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to **offer up sacrifices**, first for His own sins, and then **for the sins of the people**, because **this He did once for all when He offered up Himself**" (Heb. 7:26-27). Third, it *abrogated the Mosaic Covenant*. "Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that **the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives**? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brethren, **you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ**, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God" (Rom. 7:1-

4). “This abrogation by Christ was of the Mosaic economy (Rom. 7:1-4), and not the covenants of promise in which the land is integral” (Horner, *FI*, p. 242). And fourth, together with His resurrection, it is *the basis upon which all Kingdom promises depend*. “For the Son of God, **Christ Jesus**, who was preached among you by us — by me and Silvanus and Timothy — was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. For **as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes**; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us” (2 Cor. 1:19–20). “True Judaism looked forward, having the covenants and promises, even to the sacrificial death of the Messiah, and the death of Jesus is no separation from but a confirmation of the Judaic essence, for the Salvation promised through this Messiah is identical with that proclaimed by Judaism” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:279).

And, the *value* of Jesus’ death is infinite. “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of **God** which He purchased with **His own blood**” (Acts 1:20). “For if while we were enemies, **we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Rom. 5:10). “For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him **to reconcile all things to Himself**, having made peace **through the blood of His cross**; through Him, I say, **whether things on earth or things in heaven**” (Col. 1:19-20). “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through **the blood of the eternal covenant**, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21). “The sacrifice made by Christ on the cross, is more fully and effectively presented in this Kingdom. Instead of confining its efficacy to the present dispensation and making it, after this age ends, something of the past, its efficiency and power is constantly and ever more exerted... so long as inheritance, glorification and rulership lasts, will the procuring cause be esteemed and lauded... The work of Christ in all its fulness, even that relating to the sacrifice already made, cannot be properly estimated unless we notice the end that God purposes in this Theocratic Kingdom... Human depravity is incapable of erecting such a Kingdom, and as history sadly attests, is incapable of sustaining it when erected. Hence before its re-establishment, a sure foundation must be laid against sin; and this is done in the sacrifice made for sin, in the gathering out of those who avail themselves of it and are therefore accounted worthy to enter into and inherit or participate in the Kingdom, as well as in the executive, legislative, and judicial power, that

will be exerted by this King when the period arrives for the Kingdom to be revealed. It will not, cannot be exhibited, until it comes with a mighty preponderating, overwhelming, irresistible manifested righteousness which easily crushes all opposition, and insures stability and perpetuity” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:455). “Since, in that death, His infinite love and power are released from restraint by the accomplishment of every judgment which His righteousness could demand against the sinner, God is more advantaged by the death of Christ than all the world combined” (Chafer, *MBT*, 14%). “There was no temporizing or partial dealing with sin at the cross. This great issue between God and man was there dealt with in a manner which is satisfying even to the infinite holiness of God, and the only question that remains is whether man is satisfied with the thing which satisfies God. To accept the work of Christ for us is to believe upon the Saviour to the saving of the soul” (*ibid.*, 48%). “As the God-man, His death had infinite value and, therefore, could restore the honor due to an infinitely holy God” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:206). “Being by nature the infinite God, Christ’s death had infinite value, even though His suffering and death occurred in a finite amount of time” (*ibid.*, 4:403).

Jesus’ *burial* was prophesied by Him and is an integral component of the gospel. “for **just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**” (Matt. 12:40). “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1–4) “Jonah was three days and nights in the fish’s belly, owing to unbelief, so Jesus, for the same period, was in the grave because of Jewish unbelief” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:380).

Jesus’ *resurrection* was foretold in the Old Testament. “Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring **the sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest** unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah, to be accepted for you: **on the morrow after the sabbath** the priest shall wave it” (Lev. 23:10–11). “For **thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption**” (Ps. 16:10). “Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he grew up

before him as a tender plant... By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that **he was cut off out of the land of the living** for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made **his grave** with the wicked, and with a rich man in **his death**; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, **he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:** by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore **will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death,** and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:1–12). “Brethren, I may confidently say to you **regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.** And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE, **he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.** This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: “THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.” Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:29-36). “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that **He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures**” (1 Cor. 15:1–4) “But now **Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep**” (1 Cor. 15:20). “...in the Old Testament as the ‘EIGHTH DAY,’ or the ‘DAY AFTER THE SABBATH.’ ‘Ye shall bring a sheaf of the “FIRST-FRUITS” of your harvest unto the priest, and he shall wave the

sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the “MORROW AFTER THE SABBATH” the priest shall wave it.’ Lev. 23:10-11. What did that ‘First Fruits’ typify? Read 1 Cor. 15:20—“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the “FIRST-FRUITS” of them that slept.’ When did Christ rise from the dead and become the ‘FIRST-FRUITS?’ Not on the ‘Sabbath,’ for He lay dead in the tomb on that day, but on the ‘FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK,’ on the ‘MORROW AFTER THE SABBATH’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 31).

His resurrection *became a fact of history* in the New Testament. “And he said to them, ‘Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. **He has risen**; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him” (Mark 16:6). “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that **He was raised on the third day** according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1-4) “The number of witnesses, if sufficient to establish the fact, is of no moment, seeing that the Word wisely depends—thus acknowledging the force of reason—for its reception to [on—*ed.*] its undoubted relationship to the Divine Purpose, and to its perfect adaptedness to obtain for us the promised blessings” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:482). “...the most significant miracle in the New Testament, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:608). “The very fact that they persecuted the witnesses to the Resurrection, rather than disproving them, is evidence that what the disciples witnessed was real” (*ibid.*, p. 624).

It was a *bodily* resurrection. (See our discussion of Jesus’ bodily resurrection in our section *Humanity of the King* above.)

Together with His death, Jesus’ resurrection is *the basis upon which all Kingdom promises depend*. “One of the doctrinal defects of the Reformation was, that the resurrection of Christ was not made sufficiently prominent as compared with His sacrificial death, while in the apostolic preaching the Crucified and the Risen held equal place. And this feature extended finally in an undue exaltation of the intermediate state, until the resurrection is almost practically ignored as of comparative little consequence to the honor, glory, etc., of the deceased saint. To appreciate the force and pertinency of the resurrection, there must be a return to the scriptural presentation of the matter” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:228). “Keeping before us the design of the Gospels, it is essential that each one should specify the resurrection of Jesus, for that is the culminating fact which makes the Mes-

sianic fulfillment possible” (*ibid.*, 3:358). “The resurrection of Christ, however, proclaimed His victory over Satan and the kingdom of darkness, just as it guaranteed the eventual establishment of His kingdom here on the earth—that realm over which the prince of darkness now rules” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 261). It gives us *assurance of future resurrections*. **“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words”** (1 Thes. 4:13–18). “the resurrection... that the deliverance of man from the power of death, if it really took place, is thus secured, and that we have no knowledge of any other Plan given in all the writings possessed by the world that proposes the same” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:482).

Jesus’ *ascension* translated the Son of Man from earth to heaven. “Jesus said to her, ‘Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, **“I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God”**’” (John 20:17). “No one has ever gone into heaven [bodily] except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man’ ([John] 3:13)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:295). The *purpose* of the ascension was to *exalt the Son of Man, so Jesus could sit with the Father on His throne*, “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as **I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne**” (Rev. 3:21). “The Word says that He is ‘set down with my Father on His throne,’ indicating great exaltation, but contrasted still with the ‘my throne,’ which in a special manner belongs to Him as Son of Man” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:614) “He was exalted *as Man* to sit down ‘on the right hand of the Majesty on high.’ This was not the throne of David transferred somehow from earth to heaven, as some have mistakenly supposed, but God the Father’s own throne in the Universal Kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 34). *so Jesus could prepare a home for His bride*, “In My Father’s house are many **dwelling places**; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will**

come again, and receive you to Myself; that **where I am**, there you may be also” (John 14:2-3). “His ascension was necessary to complete the work of salvation by preparing a place for His bride” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:168). and so *Jesus could intercede for His bride*. “who is the one who condemns? **Christ Jesus is He** who died, yes, rather **who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us**” (Rom. 8:34). (See our discussion of Jesus’ present session below.)

His career included His *glorification*. “These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, ‘Father, the hour has come; **glorify Thy Son**, that the Son may glorify Thee” (John 17:1) “And now, **glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was**” (John 17:5). “And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**” (Phil. 2:8–9) “And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, **Taken up in glory**” (1 Tim. 3:16). “seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings **of Christ** and **the glories** to follow” (1 Pet. 1:11). “And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like **a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength**” (Rev. 1:12–16). “As the Son of Man He had an acquired glory, a name above every name is given unto Him because of His obedience unto death” (Chafer, *KHP*, 90%). (See also our section *Glory of the King* below.)

All power and authority were given to Him. “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth**’” (Matt. 28:18). “And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of **Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and**

authorities and powers had been subjected to Him” (1 Pet. 3:21-22). “Christ, now, in virtue of His divine nature, has absolute control over all nations, over the church, etc., but He only exerts that Sovereignty as God in Providence, etc., not as the Son of Man, David’s Son, in His human nature. That nature is also highly, immeasurably exalted because of its union with the Divine, and of its being intended for the coming visible Theocratic Government to be the Representative Ruler of God. This Rulership now belongs to David’s Son, is His both by right of covenanted birth and obedience, but is not yet realized and will not be until the establishment of the Kingdom. For, we have no distinctive announcement of its actual participation in reigning as covenanted until the Second Advent, at which time it is plainly and specifically stated that He reigns not merely as the Son of God, but really and truly as the Son of Man” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:596). “Indeed, if we refer to the covenant, this must be the case, for the Kingdom directly covenanted to David’s Son is not a reign over other worlds, over the universe, or over the church as a church—is not even a reign in the third heaven, or some place outside of this earth—but is pointedly stated to be a reign over David’s Kingdom, which is extended to embrace the whole earth. To say then, whatever may be the honored position of Jesus in heaven, that He now is reigning in the covenanted, predicted Kingdom of promise, is directly opposed to God’s oath-bound covenant. This gives us then the proper idea of Christ’s relationship to the church. As Divine, One with the Father, the church is under His care and protection; as Son of Man He sustains a Headship over the church; as the future revealed King, His interest in the church is deep and abiding” (*ibid.*).

Regarding His *present session*, He is Head of the church, High Priest, Mediator and Advocate. “It is well too in this discussion to keep constantly in view that ‘the Christ,’ in His exaltation, at present sustains to us the relationship of Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate. Mercy and forbearance are characteristic of His waiting and expecting position now; mercy and wrath of His Sec. Coming” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:563). He is *Head of the church*. “For the husband is the head of the wife, as **Christ also is the head of the church**, He Himself being the Savior of **the body**” (Eph. 5:23). “**He is also head of the body, the church**; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything” (Col. 1:18). He is the church’s *High Priest*. “Now the main point in what has been said is this: **we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary**, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man” (Heb. 8:1–2). He is *Mediator* between

God and man. “For **there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus**” (1 Tim. 2:5) And, He is the church’s *Advocate*. “who is the one who condemns? **Christ Jesus is He** who died, yes, rather **who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us**” (Rom. 8:34). “My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And **if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous**” (1 John. 2:1) “The truth concerning the priestly ministry of Christ in Heaven does not make it easy for the Christian to sin. On the contrary, these very things are written that we be not sinning (1 John 2:1); for no one can sin carelessly who considers the necessary pleading which his sin imposes upon the Advocate” (Chafer, *MBT*, 18%). (See also our discussion of the church in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

His career also includes His *return*. We’ll discuss His return in detail in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.

And finally, He will *exercise His power and authority* at His Second Coming. We’ll discuss this exercising of His power and authority in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.

Offices of the King

Throughout His career Jesus holds in turn the three *offices* of Prophet, Priest and King. “And He said to them, ‘What things?’ And they said to Him, ‘The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a **prophet** mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people’” (Luke 24:19) “And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high **priest** according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 5:9–10). “Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘So You are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say correctly that I am a **king**. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice’” (John 18:37). “From the Fall in Eden to the Cross, He was a ‘Prophet.’ He is now a ‘High Priest’ and when He comes again He will be a ‘King’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 19). “Christ holds three offices: prophet, priest, and king. However, He does not function in all these offices simultaneously. Rather, the functioning of these three offices is to be carried out in chronological sequence. During His ministry on earth at His first coming, Christ functioned in His office of a prophet. However, this ceased at the time of His death. Since His death and resurrection, and until He returns, Christ is functioning in His office of a priest. This duty will cease at the second coming of Christ. Jesus has never yet functioned in His office of a king. For Him to do so, there must be the

re-establishment of the Davidic throne, upon which Christ will sit to rule as king over Israel and king of the world. This duty will begin at the second coming” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 804).

Titles of the King

In Scripture Jesus is given a number of unique *titles* that are descriptive of His Person and of His past, present and future work. “The titles of Messiah, Christ, Lord, and King, whatever applicability they may have to the present, have reference to this specific appointed work of rebuilding the fallen tabernacle of David and reigning over it, bringing all nations, through it, in willing subjection to His worldwide dominion” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:454).

He is *Immanuel*. “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name **Immanuel**” (Isa. 7:14). “**BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL, which translated means, ‘GOD WITH US’**” (Matt. 1:23). “Hence, too, arises the significance of the name ‘Immanuel,’ given Matt. 1:23, to the Son of Man. Keeping before us the demands of the covenant, and regarding the time of Christ’s Sec. Coming as one of trouble (comp. e.g. Isa. 7:13, 14 and Matt. 1:23 with Zech. 14, and Rev. 19) so that He is the Deliverer, we are assured that the main fulfillment spoken of by Matthew is still future. In this future Theocratic rule, He will pre-eminently be ‘God with us.’ The name is expressive of this covenanted Kingly position by which we obtain in our very midst a powerful, majestic, almighty Ruler, who evidences the same by perfected salvation and government. Some, as Jerome, think the name denotes divine aid and protection; others, as Irenaeus, the assumption of human nature by God, but while these ideas may be derived from it, it certainly has a deeper reference in that it recalls, and compresses into a single word, the covenanted Theocratic Kingdom in which, as its leading characteristic, God shall be truly and really with us. The name is indicative of the fulfillment of covenanted promises in the Person of Christ; and, therefore, in its fulness of meaning is yet to be verified. If significant of (as Jones, *Notes*, p. 40) ‘the incarnate relation of Jehovah to His people,’ this will appear still more impressively when this same Jesus returns to manifest and exert His royal prerogatives” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:542).

He is *the Son of God*. “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, **the Son of God.**’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see **the Son of Man** sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven’” (Matt.

26:63-64). “Matt. 26:63, 64. The High Priest uses the one, asking ‘whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God?’ Jesus, purposely to identify Himself with the covenants and the prediction of Daniel, employs in His answer the other, the ‘Son of Man.’...Uninspired men could not have kept up such a considerate and wonderful unity” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:562). “Miraculous, creative, divine power is lodged in Him because He is the Son of God; but Judgeship, the revelation of Kingship—for He judges as King—appertains to Him ‘because He is the Son of Man’” (*ibid.*). “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the **Son of God**” (Mark 1:1). “And whenever the unclean spirits beheld Him, they would fall down before Him and cry out, saying, ‘You are the **Son of God**’” (Mark 3:11)! “And **the angel** answered and **said** to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason **the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God**’” (Luke 1:35). “the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the **son of God**” (Luke 3:38). “do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because **I said, ‘I am the Son of God**’” (John 10:36)? “But when Jesus heard it, He said, ‘This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the **Son of God** may be glorified by it’” (John 11:4). “The Jews answered him, ‘We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the **Son of God**’” (John 19:7). “but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is **the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). “who was declared the **Son of God** with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 1:4) “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the **Son of God**, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me” (Gal. 2:20). “until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the **Son of God**, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the **Son of God**, let us hold fast our confession” (Heb. 4:14). “the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The **Son of God** appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John. 3:8). “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the **Son of God**, God abides in him, and he in God” (1 John. 4:15). “He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the **Son of God** does not have the life” (1 John. 5:12). “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the **Son of God**, in order that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John. 5:13). “And we know that

the **Son of God** has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life” (1 John. 5:20). “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The **Son of God**, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this” (Rev. 2:18) (See also Matt. 4:3, 6; 8:29; 27:40, 43, 54; Mark 15:39; Luke 4:3, 9; 4:41; 22:70; John 1:34, 49; 3:18; 5:25; 11:27; Acts 8:37; 9:20; 2 Cor. 1:19; Heb. 6:6; 7:3; 10:29 and 1 John 5:5, 10.) “As if purposely to guard us against the error which is so largely prevalent, the phrase ‘Son of God’ is not employed in direct connection with the Kingdom of heaven to be set up on earth. Indeed, our argument thus far indicates that such a declaration, as e.g. that the Kingdom is given to Jesus in view of His being the Son of God, would be utterly opposed to the Abrahamic-Davidic covenant, for it would virtually then be saying that God gives the Kingdom to God, phraseology so hostile to propriety that the Spirit avoids it. The correspondence thus happily maintained between the requirements of the covenant (and that which is inherent with God) and the language of the New Test., is one of those indirect, but really powerful, proofs of the inspiration of the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 561).

He is *the Son of Man*. Jesus the theocratic King is to reign as the Son of Man. “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a **son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed**” (Dan. 7:13-14). “Daniel, in the passage designated, does not speak of humiliation, but of exaltation, and with the period of Christ’s highest glory the title is associated as various Scriptures testify” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:567). “But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, **until the Son of Man comes**” (Matt. 10:23). “**The Son of Man** will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of **His kingdom** all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness” (Matt. 13:41) “For **the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds**. Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see **the Son of Man** coming in His kingdom” (Matt. 16:27-28). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when**

the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28). “**For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt. 24:27). “**and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:30). “**For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah**” (Matt. 24:37). “**and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt. 24:39). “**For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will**” (Matt. 24:44). “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31). “**Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven’**” (Matt. 26:64). “**For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels**” (Mark 8:38). “**And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**” (Mark 13:26). “**And Jesus said, ‘I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven’**” (Mark 14:62). “**For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels**” (Luke 9:26). “**You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect**” (Luke 12:40). “**For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day**” (Luke 17:24). “**And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man**” (Luke 17:26) “**It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed**” (Luke 17:30). “**I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth**” (Luke 18:8)? “**And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**” (Luke 21:27). “**and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man**” (John 5:27). “**Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent,**

because **He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead**” (Acts 17:30–31). “For **He did not subject to angels the world to come**, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘What is **man**, that Thou rememberest him? Or **the son of man**, that Thou art concerned about him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; **Thou** hast crowned him with glory and honor, And **hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.**’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (Heb. 2:5-8). “and in the middle of the lampstands one like a **son of man**, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle” (Rev. 1:13). “And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a **son of man**, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand” (Rev. 14:14). “**I, Jesus**, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **I am the root and the offspring of David**, the bright morning star” (Rev. 22:16). “The Kingdom is promised to the Son of Man, and He must first come as man” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:250). “The Kingdom is never promised to the Son of God, but invariably to the Son of Man, because it is not the Divinity but the Humanity that is brought into covenanted relationship with God. No! The resurrection and the subsequent glorification has not stripped Him of His Humanity or of His earthly relations. They only qualify Him the better to carry out the promises relating to that Humanity. He is to-day David’s Son, the covenanted Seed, who shall fulfill the promises. To-day He glories in the message that He sends us (Rev. 22:16), ‘I am (continues to be) the root and offspring of David’” (*ibid.*, p. 339). “Why do they practically ignore the Humanity of Jesus and lay all stress upon the Divinity, not noticing that this Kingdom is given to David’s Son, the Son of Man by covenant, and that the Divine is superadded to the Human, thus rendering His reign more exalted, glorious, and necessarily Theocratic? Why do they not observe, what all the prophets declare, that the Davidic is used as the leverage or foundation of Christ’s world-wide dominion? Why not see that this Kingdom is one exclusively of promise, and is given to the Man Jesus, and has no reference, as covenanted, whatever to the Divine Sovereignty lodged in the Godhead? Why not notice that this Kingdom is Divine as well as Civil—a perfect, complete Theocracy” (*ibid.*, p. 348)? “Through all the Scriptures, as will be shown hereafter, there is a carefully drawn distinction between what belongs to Jesus Christ

because of His relationship as God, and what pertains to Him by promise, by right, by inheritance, by the redemptive work that He is accomplishing because of His Messiahship as David's Son, the promised Theocratic King" (*ibid.*, p. 349). "The Kingdom is never promised to Him as 'the Son of God' but as (the covenants and predictions demand it) 'the Son of Man' or 'the Son of David'" (*ibid.*, p. 559). "The predicate 'Son of Man' is bestowed to identify Him as truly coming in the covenanted and Theocratic order" (*ibid.*, p. 562). "the true reason for its usage appears to be the following: it is the peculiar, distinctive, predicted name of the Messiah given to Him in virtue of His covenanted relationship to the Kingdom. This is clearly seen, (1) by the covenant designating the Man, pre-eminently, of the seed of David to whom the Kingdom rightfully belongs; (2) by the fact that the Kingdom is promised to such an one in the way of identification and realization by David and others, and hence is, and properly must be, adopted by Jesus; (3) by the invariable linking of the name with the reception of the Kingdom by Jesus Himself, as e.g. Matt. 25:31-34; Matt. 16:27, 28, etc.; (4) by the remarkable—but too much overlooked—scriptural fact, that the Kingdom, when specifically promised, is always promised to the humanity of Jesus, i.e. to Him as 'the Son of Man,' and not to His Divine nature, i.e. to Him as 'the Son of God.' This naturally results from the covenant specifying Him as the Son of David to whom alone the Kingdom is promised. Of course, as the Kingdom is also God's, being a Theocracy, the Divine is united with this inheriting, but for the purpose of identification and consistency with solemn covenant declarations, Jesus selects the very title which accords with both covenant and prophecy, and which, most directly indicates His covenant connection with the Kingdom itself. The reader is only reminded that it is so far sweeping in its range that it also embraces, aside from the distinctive reference to the seedship of Abraham and David (indicative of covenanted relationship to the Kingdom), a second headship of the human family in the person of a Second Adam, made such by the Redemptive process" (*ibid.*, p. 566). "That the name simply denotes the human nature of Christ is not sufficient, because it was not necessary to assume such a title to prove that He had a human body, but it was requisite to identify Him as the specific Man intended by the covenant" (*ibid.*). "As presented by the prophets, it will be found that the phrase is not used to designate the divine nature of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 567) "The very assumption of this name... evidences... that 'He was conscious of being originally and essentially different from man, and infinitely more.' This is true, but to it we must add, that Omniscience gave Him this very title in the covenanted line and Theocratic Purpose, seeing that in Him, as David's Son, God—the Di-

vine—would thus draw nigh to man in man” (*ibid.*). “...the phrase ‘the Son of Man’... the idea of God ruling in and through humanity. Dr. Schaff (*The Person of Christ*), therefore, correctly makes the title ‘Son of Man’ one of elevation, dignity, instead of one of humiliation” (*ibid.*, p. 568) “...a reign which is to be manifested in and through a Son of Man in a purely Theocratic manner, i.e. God in and through David’s Son condescending to act in the capacity of an earthly Ruler, which is the primary and true meaning of a Theocratic ordering as once witnessed and as covenanted... Let it be repeated: it is not the Divine Sonship that constitutes ‘the Christ’ (although an essential element), and it is not the Davidic Sonship that constitutes Him ‘the Messiah’ (although essentially requisite), but it is the two inseparably united that makes Him ‘the Christ’” (*ibid.*, p. 569). “Just as at the First Advent by the Incarnation the Christ is brought into direct relationship with humanity and from thence sustains His covenanted position in this particular, so also at the Sec. Advent by the Incarnation, as continued in ‘the Son of Man,’ ‘the Christ,’ in the inherited throne and Kingdom, is brought into direct Theocratic relationship with humanity, and from this revealed position exerts His power in behalf of that humanity with which He is identified” (*ibid.*, p. 574). “...the Kingdom being promised to the human nature of Jesus and not merely to the Divine... many... ascribe this Kingdom solely to the Divine nature” (*ibid.*, p. 582). “It is the distinctive Son of David to whom this Kingdom belongs by covenanted Divine right. He only confirms His right and title to it, as the Representative Ruler in such a Theocratic Kingdom, by the life and death which He manifested” (*ibid.*). “Barbour... his making the present time the period when ‘the Son of Man’ is actually personally present, is a perversion of the phrase ‘Son of Man’ (which is expressive, not of a spiritual presence, but of His humanity)” (*ibid.*, 2:351) “John 5:22, 23, and in verse 27 it is added: ‘and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.’ Why the Son of Man? Because to this Son of Man as David’s Son is promised the Kingdom, and Judgeship being included in the promised Theocratic-Davidic government, the Father only judges through this Son” (*ibid.*, p. 352). “Mede’s argument... ‘this expression of the “Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven” so often inculcated in the New Test., is taken from, and hath reference to, the prophecy of Daniel, being nowhere else found in the Old Test.’ (*Works*, b. 4., epis. 16)” (*ibid.*, p. 365). “Jesus, as the Christ, being covenanted in the Davidic line, requisite stress, for purpose of identification and faith, must also be laid on the human side of Christ” (*ibid.*, 3:512) “He comes and reigns as ‘Son of Man,’ as David’s Son” (*ibid.*, p. 553) “The terms ‘kingdom of heaven’ and ‘Son of man,’ used by Christ in preaching the

Kingdom, acquire their significance solely in relation to the Old Testament prophetic concept” (McClain, *GK*, p. 279). “Daniel... ‘...the God of heaven set up a kingdom...’ (2:44, ASV)... Daniel 7... ‘...with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man’... Read in the light of its evident Old Testament context, the phrase ‘kingdom of heaven’ does not refer to a kingdom *located* in heaven as opposed to the earth, but rather to the coming to earth of a kingdom which is heavenly as to its origin and character” (*ibid.*). “Jesus’ Favorite Term for Himself (Son of Man)... Daniel 7 [vs. 13]” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:472) “The terms *Son of Man* and *kingdom of heaven*, used by Jesus regarding the kingdom, are rooted in the Old Testament messianic predictions” (*ibid.*, p. 478).

He is *the Son of David*. “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the **son of David**, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1). “And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, and saying, ‘Have mercy on us, **Son of David**’” (Matt. 9:27)! “And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, ‘This man cannot be the **Son of David**, can he?’” (Matt. 12:23)? “And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from that region, and began to cry out, saying, ‘Have mercy on me, O Lord, **Son of David**; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed’” (Matt. 15:22). “And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, ‘Lord, have mercy on us, **Son of David!**’ And the multitude sternly told them to be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, ‘Lord, have mercy on us, **Son of David**’” (Matt. 20:30-31)! “And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, ‘Hosanna to the **Son of David**; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest’” (Matt. 21:9)! “But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were crying out in the temple and saying, ‘Hosanna to the **Son of David**,’ they became indignant” (Matt. 21:15) “saying, ‘What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The **son of David**’” (Matt. 22:42). “And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, ‘Jesus, **Son of David**, have mercy on me!’ And many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me’” (Mark 10:47-48)! “And Jesus answering began to say, as He taught in the temple, ‘How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the **son of David**’” (Mark 12:35)? “the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the **son of David**” (Luke 3:31) “And he called out, saying, ‘Jesus, **Son of David**, have mercy on me!’ And those who led the way were sternly telling him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, ‘**Son of David**, have mercy on me’” (Luke

18:38-39)! For the significance of this title “Son of David,” see our discussion of the Davidic Covenant in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.

He is *the Lamb of God*. “The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, ‘Behold, **the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**’” (John 1:29)! “and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and said, ‘Behold, **the Lamb of God**’” (John 1:36)! “And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders **a Lamb** standing, as if slain, **having seven horns** and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth” (Rev. 5:6-7). “...the seven horns of the Lamb express the divine plentitude of power” [quoting Werner Foerster, ‘keras,’ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. III, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, p. 669] (Showers, *M*, p. 91).

He is *the Lion of Judah*. “**Judah is a lion’s whelp**; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, **he lies down as a lion**, And **as a lion, who dares rouse him up**” (Gen. 49:9)? “and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah**, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals” (Rev. 5:5). “The Lion of the tribe of Judah; now a Lamb but then a Lion because the executioner of delayed vengeance” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:402).

He is *the Messiah, Christ*. “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until **Messiah the Prince** there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the **Messiah** will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined” (Dan. 9:25-26). “**Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’** And Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.’ **Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ**” (Matt. 16:16–20). “He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We have found the **Messiah**’ (which translated means Christ)” (John 1:41). “The woman said to Him, ‘I know that **Messiah** is coming (**He who is called Christ**); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us” (John 4:25).

By definition, Messiah or Christ means “anointed one,” that is, one anointed to be King. “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until **Messiah the Prince** there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress” (Dan. 9:25). “So Dan. 9:25 gives us ‘Messiah the Prince,’ in which the latter word may be explanatory of the former” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:571) “Let this **Christ, the King of Israel**, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!’ And those who were crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him” (Mark 15:32). “And they began to accuse Him, saying, ‘We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is **Christ, a King**’” (Luke 23:2). “The meaning of ‘Messiah’ or ‘Christ’ is utterly hostile to a purely spiritual reign in heaven, as we have already shown; it being the express title of the Theocratic King reigning over the restored Davidic throne and Kingdom. Thus the Jews and early Christians understood it, and such continues its meaning” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:447). “Abbott (*Freedom and Fellowship in Relig.*, p. 237), pertinently asks: ‘Was it an accident that the new faith took its name, not from the individual Jesus, but from His royal office?’ This leads Abbott, by tracing back the name, to declare that ‘Christianity is developed Judaism’” (*ibid.*, p. 468). “It was the very name of ‘Messiah,’ retaining in force its original meaning, that was attractive and inviting to Jews” (*ibid.*). “...as Knapp (*Ch. Theol.*, p. 325) says: ‘The word Messiah grammatically signifies king’” (*ibid.*, 3:515). “To comprehend the testimony of the New Test. concerning the nature and person of Jesus it is requisite always to retain the biblical conception of the words ‘Christ’ and ‘Messiah.’ This, of course, always brings before us the covenanted relationship of Jesus to the Theocratic Kingdom; He is the Theocratic King, and because He is such He possesses the nature, power, etc., attributed to Him” (*ibid.*). “There is no proper pre-existence of Jesus as ‘the Christ,’ the promised ‘Messiah.’ Fully admitting the pre-existence of the divine, this itself does not constitute ‘the Christ,’ for it is the union of the divine and human in David’s Son that forms ‘the Messiah’—the historical, covenanted Christ. The notion of a pre-existent Christ, notwithstanding the mystical theories finely wrought of Bohme, Poiret, etc., is contradictory to covenant and prophecy, for before David was born to whom the covenant was given (i.e. the assurance was given that out of his line should the Messiah spring), and before Jesus was born as David’s descendant, ‘the Christ’ as such could not exist. Therefore while the divine is represented as pre-existent, the human nature, and the union of the divine and human in one person, is never thus described. Lutheran as our predilections are, it is but

just to say that in this matter the Reformed (comp. Hagenbach's *His. Doc.*, vol. 2, p. 252) were nearer the truth. Our line of argument, relating to the Kingdom, is only concerned in the covenanted Christ, the historical Messiah. Hence while believing e.g. that (John 12:41) Isaiah saw (6:1-10) the divine pertaining to 'the Christ,' we cannot receive the inference of Edwards (*His. Redempt.*, p. 148) that he saw 'the human nature' of the Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 538). "the Meaning of 'Messiah' and 'Christ,'... as able men on all sides admit, they are equivalent to kingship, or highly expressive of Theocratic relationship (for the Theocratic Kings were 'the Lord's Anointed'), and that, in view of the covenanted Theocratic ordering pertaining to Jesus, He pre-eminently bears the title of 'the Anointed,' i.e. the Theocratic King. Keeping in view the plain meaning (as held by the Jews, the disciples, the early Church, etc.), and then noticing what our argument prominently brings forth, viz., the non-realization of the Theocratic order at the First Advent and the postponement of the same to the Sec. Advent, it becomes apparent that the title will only become practically realized when, in 'the day of the Lord Jesus Christ,' this Christ manifests the title in the actual Theocratic position occupied. When the Theocracy is re-established in power and glory, then the Messiah, the Christ, shines forth as the Anointed, the King in Israel, having obtained His appointed inheritance" (*ibid.*, p. 567). "...the Jewish covenanted idea of the Messiahship, viz., that 'the Christ' is the One Person, a descendant of David, who is to reign on the restored Theocratic-Davidic Throne" (*ibid.*, p. 568). "The Kingship of David's Son and of David's Lord are united, constituting the one King, the one Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 573).

"*Christ*" is a title regarding the office; not the Person. "The English version improperly uses 'Christ' as a proper name instead of an appellative... Knapp (*Ch. Theol.*, p. 378) says that the title 'Christ... According to the true use of the Word in the Bible Messiah signifies only King'" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:569). "The Person eminently fitted for the office is not to be confounded with the office itself" (*ibid.*, p. 574).

The title was clearly understood in Jesus' day, but has since then lost much of its original meaning. "Let this **Christ, the King** of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!' And those who were crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him" (Mark 15:32). "And they began to accuse Him, saying, 'We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is **Christ, a King**'" (Luke 23:2). "No controversy was raised between the early Christians and the Jews respecting the meaning, etc., of the Christ (for the controverted point between them was whether Jesus was the Messiah or not), and that many Jews, even priests, with their intense devotion to the

covenanted and predicted Messiah, cordially received Jesus as the same, fully believing that at His Second Coming the postponed Kingdom and glory would be realized. It is painfully sad to find how this simple scripturally-founded belief was soon overwhelmed by a mass of rubbish, which the wisdom of the world conceived to be better adapted to subserve the truth and God's praise" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:350). "Alas! With but comparatively few exceptions the modern Christ is not the Christ of the primitive Church, for the meaning has been changed and another substituted" (*ibid.*, p. 567). "The Jews had a correct Messianic conception and knew what it implied, and hence were guilty of the crime of employing it—when designed specially to bless them, etc.—in order to procure the death of Jesus. The Romans were ignorant of its Theocratic meaning, its covenanted and divine right, etc., and therefore did not sustain the same relationship to Him in condemnation and death. This is the reason why the Scriptures single out the Jewish nation as the guilty party in the awful tragedy" (*ibid.*, p. 571). "The early retention of the Messianic idea of the title gave place finally among the Gentiles—not conversant with its covenanted relationship—to a loss of its special significance; the Christ being 'simply the Lord and the Son of God.' The truth is that as century followed century, and the Davidic covenant was more and more set aside, the departure from the primitive idea became so fixed that no reference to the covenant, upon which the Messianic title is unmistakably founded, was deemed necessary... Many of the declarations of modern Christianity on this point would not be recognized by the early Church... Some of the ablest defenses of Christianity are vitiated by an entire misapprehension of 'the Messiah.'... overlooks one class of predictions to lay stress on another, relating to humiliation and death, i.e. to those pertaining to the First Advent... Such a line of reasoning, which persistently rejects fundamental ideas clearly taught, is irrelevant. The fulfilling of one class of predictions at the First Advent is no proof that we are to ignore just as literal a fulfillment of another class at the Second Advent, but the reverse; while the application of the latter class to the past and present (done only by a method of spiritualizing) is, to say the least, a changing of the Word" (*ibid.*, p. 575). "It is passing strange, and yet in full accord with prediction, that professed believers, who lay special stress on the phrase 'No Creed but the Christ,' do not even appreciate the meaning of 'Christ.' The entire grand result of the work of Jesus has for its central idea 'the Christ,' i.e. when its true scriptural meaning is realized" (*ibid.*, p. 578).

The title is related to the restored Theocracy. "When we consider the title of Jesus, 'the Messiah,' 'the Christ' as alone applicable to a restored Theocracy, we certainly would be lacking faith in God and in His promises

if we refused to receive, cordially and hopefully, the belief that, at the time determined by the Father, the Messiah shall come again, and fulfill the covenants and predictions relating to the restoration of a fallen Theocracy in a state of glory such as inspired men describe” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:588).

Satan’s temptation was addressed to Jesus’ Christship. “Again, **the devil** took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; and he said to Him, ‘All these things will I give You, if You fall down and **worship me**’” (Matt. 4:8-9). “And **the devil** said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone.”’ And he led Him up and **showed Him all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time. And **the devil said to Him, ‘I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours’**” (Luke 4:3-7). “The temptation of Satan was addressed to ‘the Christship’ of Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:571). (See our discussion of Satan’s temptation of Jesus in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom.*)

The title was understood correctly by Peter. “**Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God’**” (Matt. 16:16). “And He continued by questioning them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ **Peter answered and said to Him, ‘You are the Christ’**” (Mark 8:29). “And He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ And **Peter answered and said, ‘The Christ of God’**” (Luke 9:20). “In Matt. 16:16, Mark 8:29, and Luke 9:20, Peter, in answer to the question, ‘Whom say ye that I am?’ answers: ‘Thou art the Christ.’ Jesus replied that he was ‘blessed’ because the Father had revealed this fact to him. Now, how could he be ‘blessed,’ how could the matter be revealed to him, if he did not understand the meaning of ‘Christ?’ That he comprehended it in the Jewish Theocratic sense is self-evident from e.g. Acts 1:6” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:572). “And so when they had come together, **they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel’**” (Acts 1:6)? (See also our discussion of Peter’s reaffirmation of the Kingdom in Acts and in his epistles in our previous chapter *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom.*)

The title had political ramifications for Jesus. “...the dangerous meaning couched under the title, viz., the overthrow of Gentile rule and restoration of the Davidic throne and Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:571).

The title was not used publicly until after Christ’s death. “And **Simon Peter answered and said, ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the liv-**

ing God.' And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' **Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ**" (Matt. 16:16–20). "And He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' And **Peter answered and said, 'The Christ of God.'** **But He warned them, and instructed them not to tell this to anyone,** saying, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day'" (Luke 9:20–22). "The student will also observe how often (as in connection with Peter's confession, etc.) the disciples were charged not to make Him known as 'the Christ.' If 'Christ' is merely 'a doctrinal word,' no satisfactory reason can be given for this prohibition... the prohibition—in view also of the use made of the Christship to the Roman power—is in accord with discretion and wisdom... this prohibition extended only to the death of Jesus, because afterward it became the favorite title, seeing (1) that in view of His death it became essential to show that He was still 'the Christ;' (2) that notwithstanding His death, faith in 'the Christ' evinced hope in the ultimate fulfillment of covenant and prophecy pertaining to it; and (3) the death of Jesus would, owing to unbelief, enable the Christship to be proclaimed without the fear of being regarded in rebellion against the Roman Empire, for what could earthly Kingdoms fear from a dead, crucified Christ" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:573). "If it were merely to denote the moral, religious, spiritual ideal, etc., that so many attach to it, what reason, conclusive, can be possibly given to account for all this concealment of 'the Christ'" (*ibid.*)? (See our discussion of the caution exercised in the preaching of the (political) Kingdom in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom.*)

The title was understood and taught correctly by Paul. "and **immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues,** saying, 'He is the Son of God.' And all those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, 'Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?' But **Saul** kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by **proving that this Jesus is the Christ**" (Acts 9:20–22). "**When Christ,** who is our life, **is revealed,** then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). "Now may the

God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (1 Thes. 5:23). "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, and our gathering together to Him" (2 Thes. 2:1) "Paul, in view of the manner of his conversion, was satisfied that the crucified Jesus was indeed the Christ, and hence at once (Acts 9:20, 22 [KJV—*ed.*]) 'he preached Christ in the synagogues,' 'proving that this (Jesus) is the very Christ.' But how did he give this proof?... by representing that this Crucified One (which was the stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Grecians, 1 Cor. 1:23) should, as his reiterated statements in his epistles show, come again and manifest Himself as the Christ" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:574). (See also our discussion of Paul's reaffirmation of the Kingdom in Acts and in his epistles in our previous chapter *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*.)

The title was understood correctly by the early church. "The fact, too, that the early faith took its name 'Christian,' not from the proper name Jesus, but from His royal title, evidences how highly important and declarative (of coming Kingship) it appeared to those early believers. Its exceeding preciousness was a prominent feature in the Millenarian faith, for believing in 'the Christ' and His future revelation as such, this confession of the Christship of Jesus by its assumption in name was the foundation of their joyful hopes of deliverance and completed salvation" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:576).

The title assisted with the conversion of the Jews. "Can we explain the sudden conversion of so many Jews who, above all things, tenaciously (urged both by covenant and prophecy) held to the Messianic notion as presented by us, unless it be shown that the reception of Jesus also embraced the retention of the most cherished idea of 'the Christ'" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:574). "...why the Jewish mind and heart, still retaining its 'day dream,' could receive the crucified Jesus as 'the Christ,' viz. that His life, death, resurrection and exaltation confirmed Him as 'the Messiah,' who had postponed the fulfillment of the covenanted promises to the Sec. Advent" (*ibid.*, p. 577). (See our discussion of the fact that opposition to chiliasm led to disinterest by, then persecution of the Jews in our chapter *The Kingdom in Church History*.)

When Jesus returns, He will return as the Christ. "**When Christ**, who is our life, **is revealed**, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). "Our whole argument shows that when He comes again, He comes as 'the Christ,' the Anointed King who is to reign as David's Son and Lord just as covenant and prophecy require... the saints at Christ's appearing shall appear with Him in glory (Col. 3:4)... If there is a truth clearly

taught in the Scriptures, it certainly is this one, that ‘the Christ’ shall thus come and exhibit His mighty power and glory as ‘Christ’ in delivering His people, punishing His enemies, and reigning gloriously as ‘the King of kings’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:575).

Jesus will reign in the Millennial Kingdom as the Christ. “Some systems make the death of Christ the central idea; others give us the Incarnation as such, but while each of these are indispensable, neither of them are more than provisional in order that the covenant may ultimately be realized under ‘the Christ.’ It is the Theocratic King as manifested, and the glorious Kingdom that He institutes as ‘the Christ,’ that brings us blessed deliverance. The Kingdom is the end—the centre around which all revolves, while ‘the Christ’ (not in one aspect, but in His perfected manifestation) is the heart of that centre” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:576).

The body of Christ will reign with the Christ. “so **we**, who are many, **are one body in Christ**, and individually members one of another” (Rom. 12:5). “Now **you are Christ’s body**, and individually members of it” (1 Cor. 12:27). “Now He who establishes **us** with you in **Christ** and **anointed** us is God” (2 Cor. 1:21) “which is **His body**, the fulness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1:23). “for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of **the body of Christ**” (Eph. 4:12) “If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:12) “But **you have an anointing** from the Holy One, and you all know” (1 John. 2:20). “And as for you, **the anointing which you received** from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as **His anointing** teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him” (1 John. 2:27). “The student will notice that the saints who are destined to be ‘kings’ are specially declared to be ‘Christ’s body’ (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:23, and 4:12, etc.), and being also ‘anointed’ (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27), they are associated in rule and Kingship (Theocratic ordering) with Him” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:578). (See also our discussion of the fact that believers will reign with Christ in the *Government of the Millennial Kingdom* section of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

Jesus is not yet in possession of the position indicated by the title. “He is not yet manifested as ‘the Christ’ in the actual possession of the Theocratic position indicated by the title” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:568).

The title should produce in believers reverence and respect for “the Christ.” “The very official title of Jesus reminds us also that it should prevent a believer to assume that irreverent and undue familiarity—evidenced by some in the past—with Him in representations of His relations to us and

ours to Him. While duly appreciating His nearness, friendship and love, the immeasurable superiority and majesty of 'the Christ' should urge us to reverence and respect in address" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:579).

And, those who use the title correctly now will be criticized. "Surely, he who professes to receive 'the Christ' ought to be willing to bow to the scriptural meaning of the title. To confess 'the Christ' as the primitive Christians did demands at the present day moral courage, seeing that the vast multitude spiritualize its meaning away. To confess 'the Christ,' as it once was done, will inevitably bring reproach from those even who honestly profess to love Him. This is one of the sad features connected with our present lot" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:568).

Jesus is *the King of the Jews*. "Where is He who has been **born King of the Jews?** For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him" (Matt. 2:2). "Now Jesus stood before the governor, and **the governor questioned Him, saying, 'Are You the King of the Jews?'** And Jesus said to him, **'It is as you say'**" (Matt. 27:11). "And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, **King of the Jews'**" (Matt. 27:29)! "And **Pilate questioned Him, 'Are You the King of the Jews?'** And answering He said to him, **'It is as you say'**" (Mark 15:2). "'Thou hast said' (Matt. 26:64). This was not an evasion, as the ordinary English reader might suppose, but definitely 'a Greek affirmative,' as A. T. Robertson has well said. Mark records it simply, 'I am' (14:62 ['But He kept silent, and made no answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said, "**I am**; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61-62)])" (McClain, *GK*, p. 379). "And Pilate answered them, saying, 'Do you want me to release for you the **King of the Jews'**" (Mark 15:9)? "And answering again, Pilate was saying to them, 'Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the **King of the Jews'**" (Mark 15:12)? "and they began to acclaim Him, 'Hail, **King of the Jews'**" (Mark 15:18)! "And **the inscription of the charge against Him read, 'THE KING OF THE JEWS'**" (Mark 15:26). "And **Pilate asked Him, saying, 'Are You the King of the Jews?'** And He answered him and said, **'It is as you say'**" (Luke 23:3). "and saying, 'If You are the **King of the Jews**, save Yourself!' Now **there was also an inscription above Him, 'THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS'**" (Luke 23:37-38). "Pilate therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, 'Are You the **King of the Jews'**" (John 18:33)? "But you have a custom,

that I should release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the **King of the Jews**” (John 18:39)? “and they began to come up to Him, and say, ‘Hail, **King of the Jews!**’ and to give Him blows in the face” (John 19:3). “And **Pilate wrote an inscription also, and put it on the cross. And it was written, ‘JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS’**” (John 19:19). “And so the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, ‘Do not write, “The **King of the Jews**”; but that **He said, “I am King of the Jews”**’” (John 19:21). “The Lord Jesus Christ is to-day as much ‘the King of the Jews’ as He was when the superscription was placed upon the cross” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:427). “So long as we have such a King of Jewish birth and the legal Heir of the Jewish throne and Kingdom, it is unbecoming to employ the term ‘Jewish’ in any other than a respectful sense” (*ibid.*). “Their sole accusation against Him was that He was the King of the Jews. So He had been declared by the angel Gabriel before birth; so He claimed for Himself throughout His ministry; and upon that ground was found the desired pretext for ridding themselves of the One who claimed to be their King” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 139). “...His examination by the Sanhedrin, where the charge was primarily *religious* in nature... the examination before Pilate, the Roman governor. The charge here was *political*” (McClain, *GK*, p. 379) “Art thou the King of the Jews?” ([John 18] vs. 33)... ‘Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?’ (vs. 34)... If the source of the charge was Pilate, then it would be entirely *political* and nothing more. In that case the Lord’s answer would be, No, I am not a king in that narrow sense of the term... A charge of regal claims on the part of Jesus, if originated by the Jewish leaders, would carry with it all the implications of the Old Testament Mediatorial Kingdom and would have to be answered correspondingly” (*ibid.*, p. 381). “Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me; what hast thou done?” ([John 18] vs. 35). Thus Pilate scornfully disclaims any and all responsibility for the charge, and the way is cleared for our Lord’s reply to the original question... ‘My kingdom is not of this world’ (vs. 36). The preposition is *ek*, indicating source or originating cause. His kingdom does not originate in the present cosmos or world system. As concrete evidence of this negative proposition, our Lord refers Pilate to the actual situation before his eyes: ‘if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight’ (vs. 36). This was something that Pilate could understand: a ‘king’ with no military support, and who actually had to be protected from physical violence on the part of his own subjects, could give no possible concern to the politically realistic Pilate” (*ibid.*). “Art thou a king then?” (John 18:37)... ‘Thou sayest it because I am a king.’ Marcus Dods

[*Expositors Greek New Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 852] thinks we ‘must’ render it, ‘Thou art right, for a king I am.’ That this is the proper meaning is made certain by the words which follow: ‘To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth’ (vs. 37, ASV). To this, Pilate has no answer, except to drop his cynical ‘What is truth?’ (vs. 38) as he left the hall of judgment, tragically unaware that he had been in the presence of the King, who is the God of all truth” (*ibid.*). “‘Thou couldst have no power at all against me, *except it were given thee from above*’ (John 19:11, italics added). Is it necessary for us to argue as to the nature of this ‘power’ which our Lord says had been ‘given’ to Pilate ‘from above’? Surely, although divinely spiritual in origin, in its manifestation it was clearly *political* and nothing else. And the inference is compelling: If this power from above can make itself manifest on earth in the political career of a Pilate, on what ground of either reason or revelation can anyone deny the possibility of its greater exercise through the perfect Mediatorial King and His saints when He comes down to earth again” (*ibid.*, p. 382)?

And, He is the Morning Star. “Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him. And let us know, let us follow on to know **Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning**; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth.” (Hos. 6:1-3) “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you **the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, but **we were eyewitnesses of His majesty**. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’ — and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven **when we were with Him on the holy mountain**. And **so we have the prophetic word made more sure**, to which you do well to pay attention as to **a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts**. But know this first of all, that no **prophecy of Scripture** is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no **prophecy** was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Pet. 1:16-21). “And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and **I will give him the morning star**. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the

churches” (Rev. 2:26-29). “I, **Jesus**, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star.**’ And the Spirit and the bride say, **‘Come.’** And let the one who hears say, **‘Come.’** And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the **prophecy** of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this **prophecy**, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, **‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’** Amen. **Come, Lord Jesus.** The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen” (Rev. 22:16-21). “The Millennial day is introduced by the personal coming of Jesus... the Morning Star or as the Sun ushering in this day... It is therefore with pleasure that we read in ‘the last words of David,’ that (2 Sam. 23:1-4) ‘there shall be a Just One ruling over men, ruling in the fear of God; as the light of the morning shall He arise, the Sun of an unclouded morning, shining after rain upon the tender grass of the earth.’... He is not merely called such owing to the glory of His person or the splendor of His appearing, but because He reveals Himself in the early morning. For, Hos. 6:3, ‘His going forth is prepared as the morning’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:414). “We have in ‘the Morning Star’ an implied reference to the first stage of the Advent, the thief-like coming for the saints, and to obtain it indicates that we are worthy of the better res. or (if living) of the translation. The mention of this in such a connection is also exceedingly significant of the exaltation of the saints to coheirship with the Christ when the morning breaks.... Blessed they, who shall experience this bestowal of love” (*ibid.*, p. 418). “[Rev.] 22:5... our Lord Jesus Christ... identifies Himself here as ‘the bright and morning star’; for while during the life of the churches on earth it is night, not day, the morning is always ‘at hand’ (Rom. 13:12)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 514). “**The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand.** Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12).

See also our discussion of Jesus’ titles at His Second Coming in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.

Glory of the King

Jesus exhibits *glory* at every stage of His theocratic career. He had glory before the world was, He exhibited glory at His incarnation, He has glory now in heaven, and He will exhibit great glory at His Second Coming and in the Millennial Kingdom. While the Kingdom of God is glorious in all its

facets and in all its details, the *source* and *focal point* of the Theocratic Kingdom's glory is its actualizing God, Savior, Prophet, Priest and King. We therefore recognize *Jesus the Christ Himself* as the quintessential Glory of the Kingdom. "The deepest, most profound thinkers of the world have bowed in adoration to Jesus Christ, and men of the highest intelligence and talent, impressed by the Divine Plan pertaining to Christ and the Truth in Him, continue to adore Him" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:513).

Jesus had glory *before His incarnation*. "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, **Father**, with **the glory which I had with Thee before the world was**" (John 17:5).

He displayed glory *at His incarnation*. "And **He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light**. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, **a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him'**" (Matt. 17:2-5)! "And six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And **He was transfigured before them; and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them**" (Mark 9:2-3). "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and **we beheld His glory**, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "This beginning of His signs **Jesus** did in Cana of Galilee, and **manifested His glory**, and His disciples believed in Him" (John 2:11). "For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you **the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when **He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased'**" (2 Pet. 1:16-17)

He has glory *in heaven now*. "These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, 'Father, the hour has come; **glorify Thy Son**, that the Son may glorify Thee'" (John 17:1) "And now, **glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was**" (John 17:5). "**Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world**" (John 17:24). "My

brethren, do not hold your faith in **our glorious Lord Jesus Christ** with an attitude of personal favoritism” (James 2:1). “And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength” (Rev. 1:12–16).

He will display great glory *at His Second Coming*. “and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isaiah 40:5). “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds” (Matt. 16:27). “For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matt. 24:27). “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne” (Matt. 25:31). “For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day” (Luke 17:24). “And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (Luke 21:27). (See also our discussion of the glory of Jesus’ Second Coming in the *Characteristics of the Second Coming* section of our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

And, He and His throne will be glorious *in the Millennial Kingdom*. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious” (Isa. 11:10). “And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28). “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne”

(Matt. 25:31). "...the former Theocracy... Kurtz (*His. Old Cov.*, vol. 3, p. 107)... forcibly says: 'His intention to become Israel's King... Jehovah was about to stoop to be not merely heavenly but earthly King over Israel'.... The Kings of Israel acted as vicegerents of the Theocracy, and hence the earthly vicegerent, who acted as God's representative in the Kingdom, was specially anointed, consecrated, or set apart for the office by God Himself, and was known by the honorable and significant title of 'God's anointed' and 'the Lord's anointed.' But notice in the Person of Jesus, anointed for this purpose, this Theocratic representation assumes its highest and purest form, for what the former Theocratic King (as David, Solomon, etc.), could only do as vicar, by acting as deputy, Jesus Christ performs as a real Representative of God—God being united personally with Him. Hence the glory and blessedness of this Theocracy" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:540). (See also our discussion of the glory of the Millennial Kingdom in the *Life in the Millennial Kingdom* section of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

Not a Deception

The biblical accounts of Jesus' Person and work (His career including His incarnation, life, death, burial and resurrection) are *truthful*. Jesus was neither deceived nor a deceiver. He was not an invention of His disciples, and the gospel accounts of His life were not concocted by later writers.

Jesus was neither deceived nor a deceiver. "Now on the next day, which is the one after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and said, 'Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that **deceiver** said, "After three days I am to rise again." Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, lest the disciples come and steal Him away and say to the people, "He has risen from the dead," and the last **deception** will be worse than the first'" (Matt. 27:62–64). "And when His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, '**He has lost His senses**'" (Mark 3:21). "From this standpoint we are prepared to answer various objections urged by the hydra-headed unbelief. Thus e.g. recent writers (Renan, etc.), who profess an admiration for Jesus (which they do not feel), tell us in a circumlocutory manner that Jesus being enthusiastic, etc., became the victim of self-deception, thinking Himself to be the predicted One until death crushed all His visionary hopes. But how could He be deceived, who before His death, when the representative men of the nation secretly conspired to put Him to death, plainly taught the postponement of the Kingdom, His own death, and all the grand outlines pertaining to this dispensation in relation to Jew and Gentile, to the Church and world? How can we

believe Him to be such when we behold the Church, Jerusalem, the Jewish nation, Gentile dominion, unbelief, etc., just as He predicted? How can He be such when the tender of the Kingdom was conditional, and as long as this conditionality was imposed He rather kept His Messiahship in the background, but when the restraint, self-adopted, was removed by the secret overt act of the chief rulers of the nation (viz., to put Him to death, thus rejecting the tender made), He in connection with His predicted death also proclaimed His Messiahship to be publicly vindicated at some future Advent? How can He be a deceiver, when raising up, according to promise, co-heirs for the Theocratic Kingdom, He exhibits the faithfulness of His Word by bestowing the earnest of that which is to come? The charge of self-deception springs from utterly ignoring the recorded fact that this Jesus, instead of being deceived at not being able to raise up the predicted Messianic Kingdom, Himself merely offered it conditionally, and when this offer was rejected in His contemplated and premeditated death, He Himself withdrew it, and postponed its establishment—as a punishment to the nation and as a mercy to Gentiles—to His Sec. Advent. This is also a sufficient answer to those who urge the same objection with the proviso that, finding Himself unable to set up the Kingdom originally intended, He then changed His plan, and endeavored to establish a kind of purely spiritual or moral Kingdom. Such objectors are very careful not to allow the testimony of the Record to appear which witnesses that the tender was conditional, that it was withdrawn in a certain contingency, and that instead of changing His plan He postponed its execution until the period of His Sec. Coming, in the meanwhile arranging and ordering things to be ultimately promotive of, and effectual in, the prosecution of the postponed Purpose. This also triumphantly meets the dishonoring explanation given by Bauer that the Messiahship arose from a developing process in His own mind; for this is rebutted at once by the first preaching of the Kingdom by John the Baptist, etc., which shows both the relationship that the Messianic idea sustained to all that preceded, and that the Kingdom, which included of course the Messianic idea realized, was in the very beginning tendered in good faith to the Jewish nation on condition of repentance. There is no growth or gradual development here; and, in addition, when the Kingdom is rejected and with it, of course, the Messiah, the Messianic idea remains unchanged, the realization of it being only postponed to the future Advent. It is passing strange that men, who constantly appeal to fairness and reason, will not allow reason to weigh with candor the testimony of Christ's witnesses" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:519).

Jesus was not an invention of His disciples. “And he said, **“The God of our fathers has appointed you [Paul] to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear an utterance from His mouth. For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard”**” (Acts 22:14–15). “For **we did not follow cleverly devised tales** when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we were eyewitnesses** of His majesty” (2 Pet. 1:16). “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, **what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled**, concerning the Word of Life — and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us — **what we have seen and heard** we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John. 1:1–3). “Let the reader exercise patience while we necessarily repeat a few facts which must be noticed in order to form an opinion whether ‘ignorant men’ were able to produce such a portraiture of the Theocratic King. Notice (1) the expressed determination of God to set up a Theocratic Kingdom given by the prophets in the ages preceding the First Advent; (2) this Theocratic Kingdom established in an initiatory form (some of its adjuncts being merely provisional); (3) this Theocracy incorporates the Davidic line, thus more closely in its Headship allying itself with humanity; (4) when this incorporation takes place, it is declared by covenant and promise that this Theocratic Kingdom shall be established in a permanent and most glorious form under a descendant of David; (5) this Theocratic Kingdom under David and his immediate successors never gains a world ascendancy but, on account of the sinfulness of kings and nations, is overthrown; (6) the Jewish nation being the covenanted people and the nucleus, owing to covenant relationship in and through whom the Theocratic Davidic Kingdom can only be manifested, that nation is still preserved; (7) the prophets, notwithstanding the downfall of the Kingdom still continue to predict the fulfillment of covenant and promise in the person of a descendant of David at some time in the future, and these predictions involve the restoration of the identical throne and Kingdom overthrown; (8) this predicted and covenanted Kingdom is preached and tendered to the Jewish nation, when the promised David’s Son comes by the forerunner John, by the Son Himself and by His disciples, but only conditionally, viz., on repentance; (9) this Kingdom, owing to the condition enjoined not being complied with, is then postponed to a future Advent of this Son; (10) during this intercalary period (a) the tabernacle of David continues in ruins, (b) the Jewish nation is to be

subjected to continued and fearful rejection and a scattering among the nations, (c) Gentile domination is to remain until a certain time has elapsed, (d) a Christian Church is to be established and perpetuated to raise up a seed unto Abraham and prepare for the manifestation of the Kingdom with a moral power and grandeur perfectly overwhelming; (11) this Kingdom is always spoken of as still future and identified with the period of the Sec. Advent; (12) and in this Kingdom, as realized at the Sec. Advent, the covenant and prophecies are said to be fulfilled, as is seen e.g. in appropriating the descriptions given by these to the Messianic Kingdom which is to be revealed at the Coming again of this same Jesus. Now here is a connected series, an unbroken chain of facts (some fulfilled, others fulfilling, and others are yet to be fulfilled) without a single defect to mar the union. To contemplate Jesus separated from these facts, is to do violence to His highest claim, His Theocratic Kingship. But to consider Him in His relationship to these, immediately enforces His Messiahship. For the Apostles, with strong Jewish prejudices and dealing with the same in others, could not possibly have persuaded themselves and others that a dead Jesus, Son of David, could be the Messiah unless a strictly logical chain—inset with the jewels of the resurrection, ascension, and exaltation—showed them—as it does to us this day—that the Messiahship of Jesus is immeasurably augmented even by the very postponement of the Kingdom. Thus e.g. leaving the foretelling of the postponement of the Kingdom and of His own death, etc., who told them of the punishment to be inflicted upon the city of Jerusalem and Jewish nation (as seen to this day); who informed them of the establishment of the Church and of its trials, mixed nature, etc. (as seen to this time); who gave them various predictions that were verified in their own experience (and continue in that of believers to the present), and having such testimony (1) in the Theocratic Plan, (2) in personal experience and observation, (3) in what transpired around them, (4) in the aim and intent of this intercalary period, they would indeed have been both hopelessly ‘ignorant’ and debased, had they not accepted of the Christship of Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:516). “The present time, which multitudes claim makes shipwreck of the Jewish Messianic hopes, is only the strongest possible proof of the correctness of the same, seeing that the power that could postpone the Kingdom, punish the Jewish nation for its denial of repentance and slaying of Jesus, and establish the Church to raise up children to Abraham is already truly manifested as a Messianic power. To refute us, let the unbeliever point out a single prediction of Jesus relating to the present dispensation down to this time that has failed to find its mate. Hence, what this Jesus said and performed, His life, death, and resurrection, His per-

sonal withdrawal for a period, and yet His presence with and care over believers, binds Him as the covenanted Theocratic Messiah to all that preceded and to all that is yet to follow. The sacred writers justly reason that the First Advent of Jesus is a great and necessary preparatory measure to insure His exalted Christship. To refute this, let unbelief show us the ignorance of these Apostles in believing that, e.g. the resurrection of Jesus, the gathering out of material for this future Kingdom, etc., would not materially enhance the Theocratic glory that is predicted; yea, let them point out a solitary imperfection which can in any possible way vitiate the exact fulfillment of covenant and promise; yea more, let them say whether any one of the attributes, claims, characteristics, etc., given to Jesus could be omitted without lessening, if not seriously damaging, His Theocratic Kingship. The disciples could not concoct such a Messiah, because the facts that we have arrayed show such a conditional tender of the Kingdom (which was opposed to Jewish prejudice, which looked for it unconditionally in virtue of covenant relationship); such a rebuking, rejection, and dispersion of the nation (which no Jew with the well-known national deep-rooted prepossessions could possibly present, as seen e.g. in the history of false Messiahs); such a postponement of the Kingdom and a turning to the Gentiles (which was highly offensive to Jewish pride and bias), that to credit this to be the work of Jews, unsupported by the aid and light they claimed, is to violate the laws governing nature, making men capable of doing that which is not in his nature to perform, and thus attributing to mere reason what is most unreasonable, viz., that heart, feeling, and affection had nothing to do with this delineation of the Messiah. Can it be that men of intelligence will persist in rejecting a Messiah on the ground that a few Jews foisted upon the world a story of one, when the improbability and impossibility of the same appears in the very outset, in the very nature of humanity, seeing that it is contrary to all experience, all history, to suppose that such Jews, in opposition to their dearest hopes and highest anticipations could portray this Messiah as so hostile to the nation, so opposed to the covenanted people, that He gives them up for a long time to the domination of their enemies. Hence the old view (originated by Celsius, now advocated by many, and one that will ultimately prevail introductory to Antichrist), that Jesus was a deceiver, or that the disciples were intentional deceivers, aside from other considerations, falls before the Divine Plan of the contemplated Kingdom, the purity and perfectness elicited in its development, and the fact that the manner of its ultimate introduction, based upon the temporary rejection of the Jewish nation and the calling of the Gentiles, is opposed to the natural outgrowth of a Jewish training and Jewish sympathies" (*ibid.*, p. 518). "The

student will not fail to notice how these writers delineate the qualifications of Jesus for this Theocratic position, such as being David's Son, as covenant demands; the Son of God, imparting the highest and purest Theocratic element; immortal, insuring continued government, etc.; power, dignity, and honor, indicative of His ability and worthiness; righteousness and unchangeableness, presenting His imperial will in accord with the Father's and the welfare of His subjects; the attributes of the Godhead, giving stability, irresistible power, etc., to the Theocracy; the Personal appearance, the grandeur of His throne, the splendor of His court, the riches of His capitol, the homage and praise tendered, etc., all of which not only serve to impress, but in the Theocratic ordering are elements of importance—and who does not see how impossible it is for 'ignorant' men to present such a portraiture. It is not a slight concession made to the merits of this Christ-picture that men who have done much to injure Christ (as Strauss, Renan, Mills, etc.) still acknowledge a peculiar grandeur in the scriptural portrayal. The highest intelligence, whether the heart respond or not, must acknowledge an incomparable portrayal. Fiske (*Unseen World*, art. 4) in 'the Christ of Dogma' indeed labors to show how the attributing of such characteristics of the divine to Jesus were developed historically, but this is done in the most arbitrary manner by discarding as interpolations, or as subsequent additions, all that refers to the divine. In his one-sidedness he elevates himself to the position of a judge to set aside every statement as non-apostolic which does not suit his theory; and this is called 'criticism'" (*ibid.*, p. 519).

The gospel accounts were not concocted by later writers. "We are told that the Gospel narratives respecting the Christ were concocted in their present form by post-apostolic writers, and that, in view of this, the portraiture of the Messiah must be received with much allowance for interpolation, error, exaggeration, etc. Passing by the important concessions of the later Bauer school, and the numerous testimonies which refute this, it is sufficient to point out the simple fact that, when looking at the connected doctrine of the Kingdom and the exact correspondence of all that pertains to the Messiah with it, the postponement of such a Record to the substituted later age is an impossibility. Because the simple narration of facts leaving the deduction of doctrine from them (grounded upon the notion that the reader has a previous acquaintance with covenant and prophecy), is utterly opposed to the spirit of a succeeding period, which would have interlarded such a production with substitutions, inferences, doctrinal exhibitions, laudatory expressions, etc., which would inevitably have betrayed its later origin. The faithful portraiture of the Messiah, perfectly agreeing with the Old Test. Scriptures and with the views of the Apostolic Church, is an

ample refutation of this theory. Even such incidents as Christ's refusal to perform miracles to prove, on demand, His Messianic character, could not have been inserted at a later age, for under the notion of exalting Him the connection which this refusal sustains to the conditionality of the tender of the Kingdom would have been overlooked (as proven by what really occurred in later writings). Again: the resurrection of Jesus is denied on two grounds: (1) that the Kingdom not appearing, a resurrection was added (so Renan, etc.) in order to substitute a spiritual Kingdom and a spiritual Christ; and (2) that if Jesus rose from the dead as recorded 'why (so Schenkel, *Sketch of Jesus*, etc.) did He not show Himself to His Jewish judges and to the Roman Procurator? Why did He not appear in the streets of Jerusalem before the people who had been so basely deceived as to His Person? Why did He not by His mere appearance inspire courage in His frightened followers everywhere, and utterly defeat His malignant enemies?' Such objections entirely overlook the facts pertaining to the Kingdom. As to the first, the postponement of the Kingdom was proclaimed in connection with the foretold death and resurrection, and no substitution of a spiritual Kingdom, as multitudes dream, was made, as is firmly proven by the universal doctrinal position of the Church for the first three centuries. All believers immediately after the resurrection continued, as the promises positively required, to look for the identical Kingdom which they believed in before His death, only locating its establishment at the Sec. Advent. The spiritual Kingdom that these men talk about is the outgrowth of a later, spiritualistic system of interpretation. Besides this, the resurrection, as we have shown, is an important pre-requisite to secure the reorganization of the Davidic Kingdom upon that unchangeable Messianic basis predicted. The resurrection makes no change in the Kingdom, but pre-eminently qualifies the King to bring it, when re-established, to its promised height of permanency and glory. Indeed, it is an essential factor in its re-establishment in the form covenanted and promised, elevating David's Son into the Immortal Son who can reign as long as the sun and moon endures, and affording unto us the pledge of His Messianic power to fulfill the promises to the Fathers and all believing ones in raising them also from the dead, and causing them to inherit His Theocratic Kingdom when revealed. Any theory which refuses to receive the resurrection just as related in the New Test. (making it a resurrection of mere spirit as Shenkel; or a historical account of no practical importance in the development of Christian faith, as Keim; or an event that is to be explained by apparent death, as Schleiermacher; or a harmless deception, as Renan; or a gross falsehood, as Bardht), fails to see its essential connection with the Kingdom, and its necessary ex-

istence in order, at the appointed time, to fulfill the promises of God. Men like Strauss inform us that they want two proofs in confirmation of the resurrection of Jesus, viz., that the reality of it shall be vindicated by observing all the conditions of historical testimonies; and that, unless this resurrection took place, other events now historically certain could not have transpired. The doctrine of the Kingdom affords those evidences, and thus establishes the Messiahship of Jesus, for it shows us that the direct testimony given by the professed witnesses to the fact are sustained by requisite historical connection both with what preceded and what is to follow. The testimony is in perfect correspondence with the requirements of the Kingdom; and, therefore, in the consideration of this subject, it is only just to weigh the credibility of the witnesses (who profess to testify to the filling out of a Divine Plan) in the light of that history which God has produced and contemplates yet to introduce. In other words: the resurrection being part of the Divine Plan in reference to this Kingdom, the fundamental inquiry ought to be whether it is fully adapted to secure the end intended, and whether in the prosecution of such an end it re-confirms past history. The answer to this vindicates the testimony of the disciples, the absolute necessity of the resurrection, and the cordial reception of it as a glorious earnest of the power of the Coming Kingdom. If it be asked what events that certainly took place are developed by, or connected with, the resurrection, the definite response comes again, such as: the continued belief in the Messiahship of Jesus over against the Jewish prejudice immediately suggested by a crucified One; the establishment of the Church in the manner predicted before His death, by making Peter the one who holds the keys of knowledge to show that there is still forgiveness to the Jew, who cruelly rejected the Messiah, and that the Gentile can be engrafted on the principle of faith; the perpetuity of this Church with its belief in the resurrection of Jesus as a cardinal point; the institution of the Lord's Supper before His death and its perpetuation after the death, but celebrated as a memorial of triumph over death; the treading down of Jerusalem, the continued dispersion of the Jewish nation, the Gentile dominion, the rising up of the apostasy, persecution, etc., considered as depending for their fulfillment upon the previously given word of a crucified and resurrected Jesus. Christlieb has well shown (*Mod. Doubt*) that the conversion and history of St. Paul alone answers Strauss's objection. As to the second explanation asked, why the resurrected Jesus did not appear before the Jewish judges to confound them, etc., the least acquaintance with the doctrine of the Kingdom presents us readily with the reason. The Kingdom having been conditionally offered to the nation and having been rejected because the nation remained unrepentant, it

was postponed until the Sec. Advent, and therefore, in view of the Divine Purpose previously plainly announced before His death, and thus embracing also a punishment upon the unbelief of the nation, it would have been incompatible with Messianic dignity and purpose to exhibit Himself to any others than believers in Him. His enemies were to drink the allotted cup; His friends were to be sustained by the earnestness of faith in His resurrection; all were to receive the sufficiency of evidence consistent with moral freedom, with His own honor, with the predicted withdrawal, and with an incorporated repentance and faith. If the objection has any force, then Jesus ought thus to prove His resurrection to every unbeliever in the world, which leaves no ground for the kind of repentance and faith that the New Test. requires of us" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:523).

Chapter 20: The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)

As we saw in our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*, upon the first-century Jews' rejection of Jesus as Messiah, the covenanted and prophesied Theocratic Kingdom was neither annulled nor transformed, but rather merely *postponed*. Now, if the covenanted and prophesied Davidic Kingdom was postponed; if the Kingdom was not inaugurated at Christ's First Advent and must instead wait for inauguration until His Second Advent (see our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*), then what is to be made of this intervening time period between His two advents, the (so far) nearly two millennia-long age in which we now find ourselves? With the Jews for the most part scattered throughout the world and the Theocratic Kingdom on hold, has God revealed any specific purpose of His for this intervening period? Indeed He has! As we will see in this chapter, the intervening, interim facet of the Kingdom that has taken center stage in this age, the Mystery Kingdom, is in many ways the most gracious and marvelous facet of them all.

Identity of the Mystery Kingdom

In this section we will define the Mystery Kingdom, identify its major player (the church) and explore its mysteries.

Definition of the Mystery Kingdom

As previously defined in our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*, the Mystery Kingdom is *the present "mystery" form of the Kingdom, commonly known as "Christendom."* "And He answered and said to them, **To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted**" (Matt. 13:11). "so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'I will open My mouth in **parables**; I will utter **things hidden since the foundation of the world**'" (Matt. 13:35). "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested**, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:25–26) "but we speak **God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory**" (1 Cor. 2:7) "...unto our glory... the goal of the mystery is our ultimate glory" (Fruchtbaum, *FM*, p. 652). "And by referring to this, when you read you can un-

derstand my insight into **the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel**” (Eph. 3:4–6) “and to bring to light what is the administration of **the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things**” (Eph. 3:9) “that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints**” (Col. 1:26) “Various parties have noticed that the very name given (in Greek) to the Church, is significant of a part being taken from the whole. ‘Ekklesia,’ as critics assure us, denotes a calling forth out of, or from among, others, meaning therefore a body separated from others or the mass; these form the company of believers, the assemblage of the faithful” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:196). “The purpose of the present age is the realization of those features which are styled mysteries, that is, hitherto unrevealed divine purposes. God is now ruling the earth to the extent that He accomplishes all that is embraced in these mysteries. This age thus becomes the kingdom of heaven in its mystery form (cf. Matt 13:11)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:327). “The mystery was the fact that when the One in whom this program was to be realized was publicly presented He would be rejected and an age would fall between His rejection and the fulfillment of God’s purpose of sovereignty at His Second Advent. The mystery form of the kingdom, then, has reference to the age between the two advents of Christ. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven describe the conditions that prevail on the earth in that interim while the king is absent. These mysteries thus relate this present age to the eternal purposes of God in regard to His kingdom” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 143). “This present mystery age intervenes within the program of God for Israel because of Israel’s rejection of the Messiah at His first advent” (*ibid.*, p. 193). “Christ referred to ‘the secrets of the kingdom’ (Matt. 13:11). He was not referring to the covenanted Davidic, or millennial, kingdom. That there would be such a kingdom was no ‘secret’ in the Old Testament! It clearly revealed the essential features or characteristics of the millennial kingdom. But what the Old Testament had not revealed was that *an entire age would intervene between the offer of the kingdom by the Messiah and Israel’s reception of the King and enjoyment of full kingdom blessings*” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 219). “The Mystery Kingdom must be kept distinct from the other facets. First, the Mystery Kingdom is not the same as the Eternal Kingdom because the Mystery Kingdom is limited in time between the first and second coming or, more specifically, from

the Jewish rejection of the Messiah until the Jewish acceptance of the Messiah. Second, it is not the same as the Theocratic Kingdom because it is not limited to one nation, the nation of Israel, but involves both Jews and Gentiles. Third, it is not the same as the Spiritual Kingdom because the Spiritual Kingdom comprises only believers, whereas the Mystery Kingdom includes both believers and and unbelievers. Fourth, it is not the same as the Messianic Kingdom because the Messianic Kingdom was not a mystery; it was the subject of much revelation in the pages of the Old Testament. Furthermore, the Messiah is not ruling this kingdom physically and visibly on earth. Fifth, the Mystery Kingdom is not the same as the Church. The Church is included within the scope of the Mystery Kingdom, but the Mystery Kingdom is much wider than the Church itself. ‘Christendom’ is the best single term to describe what the Mystery Kingdom is. Since the time span of the Mystery Kingdom is from the rejection of the King until the acceptance of the King in the closing days of the Great Tribulation, obviously the Mystery Kingdom includes the Church Age from Acts two until the Rapture. It includes the period of time between Matthew 13 and Acts two. It also includes the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 614). “For something to qualify as a New Testament mystery, it must be something totally unrevealed anywhere in the Old Testament” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 651). “...the biblical mystery was something totally unknown to any man until God revealed it” (*ibid.*, p. 655). “It [the Mystery Kingdom] is not the same as the Church. The Church is *within* the Mystery Kingdom; it is the believing element, the wheat of God’s Mystery Kingdom, which includes both the treasure and the pearl, but it is not the totality. Replacement Theologians have invariably tried to make the Church and the Kingdom of God one and the same, but they are not. The Church is an aspect of God’s Kingdom Program; it is an aspect of both the Spiritual Kingdom and the Mystery Kingdom, but it is not the totality of the Mystery Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 670).

The Identity of the Church

The primary player within the Mystery Kingdom is *the church*. Therefore, for a correct understanding of God’s overall Kingdom program, proper identification of the church is essential. “Many precious truths are lost in the broad generalizations which characterize the amillennial treatment of ecclesiology” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 104).

What the Church is Not

Contrary to much popular opinion, the church is not Israel, nor is the church the Kingdom.

The Church is Not Israel

The church is not Israel. This should be obvious from a plain, “literal” reading of Scripture. However, because the church is so often confused with Israel, both by many within the church and by many if not most heretical groups (such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, who believe their “anointed remnant” is the new Israel), and because this misidentification is such a determining factor in many peoples’ conception of the Kingdom, we will spend a fair amount time and effort on it here. “It is a lamentable fact that prophecies, en masse, which have no relation to the church as organized at present, are appropriated and applied to the church as now existing, that cannot and do not thus apply, and that this has necessarily caused unbelief in many who detect, easily, the utter discrepancy. We only now say, that there must be a sad defect somewhere in human systems, which causes prophecies to promise, plainly too, one thing and yet mean quite another; this, we affirm, is an imperfection existing, not in the language of the prophets, but only in the interpretation of them, and in the limiting of their fulfillment to the past and present, as if God was unable to carry out His purposes in the future. A renewed study, a thorough examination of them, and a return to the grammatical sense, will alone enable us to close the wide gap left open for opposers to enter” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:168). “Papists and Protestants have appropriated what exclusively belongs to the Jewish nation” (*ibid.*, p. 169) “A mixture of the teachings concerning Israel, as a nation, with the revelations concerning the Church, the body of Christ, is groundless in Scripture. It is hopelessly confusing and grotesque, for under this plan only Israel’s blessings are borrowed; her curses and penalties are, naturally, not wanted. No progress can be made in the kingdom studies unless plain words are taken in their obviously plain meaning. In the Bible ‘Israel’ is not the ‘Church’; ‘Zion’ is not the body of saints of this dispensation; the ‘throne of David’ is not Heaven, nor will it ever be; the ‘land of your fathers’ is not ‘Paradise’ and the ‘house of Jacob’ is not a host of Gentiles ignorantly attempting to force an entrance into Judaism. All such borrowed habits of interpretation must be faithfully judged and abandoned if ever the kingdom portions of God’s Word are to assume any order or meaning” (Chafer, *KHP*, 7%). “Let no one rob Israel, hoping thereby to enrich the church, but at the same time impoverishing both Israel and the church” [quoting Feinberg, *Premill or Amill?*, p. 246] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 476). “As an original work of God, the church is not a continuation of Israel in some spiritual sense; even in the New Testament ‘Israel’ and its future are clearly distinguished from the church (Rom. 9-11). Jesus never denied there would be a future kingdom for Israel but said the times were in God’s hands (Acts 1:6-7; cf. Matt.

19:28). At no time have the unconditional land-promises, given to Abraham and his descendants ‘forever,’ been fulfilled. Consistent application of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic demands that they will be” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:56).

Prefacing our detailed discussion with a summary, Chafer lists *twenty-four distinctions between Israel and the church*. “There are at least twenty-four far-reaching distinctions yet to be observed between Israel and the Church, while there are about twelve major features common to both; but the obvious similarities do not set aside the differences” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:30). “Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 4:47-53] has set forth twenty-four contrasts between Israel and the church which show us conclusively that these two groups can not be united into one, but that they must be distinguished as two separate entities with whom God is dealing in a special program. These contrasts may be outlined as follows: (1) The extent of Biblical revelation: Israel—nearly four-fifths of the Bible; Church—about one-fifth. (2) The Divine purpose: Israel—the earthly promises in the covenants; Church—the heavenly promises in the gospel. (3) The seed of Abraham: Israel—the physical seed, of whom some become a spiritual seed; Church—a spiritual seed. (4) Birth: Israel—physical birth that produces a relationship; Church—spiritual birth that brings relationship. (5) Headship: Israel—Abraham; Church—Christ. (6) Covenants: Israel—Abrahamic and all the following covenants; Church—indirectly related to the Abrahamic and new covenants. (7) Nationality: Israel—one nation; Church—from all nations. (8) Divine dealing: Israel—national and individual; Church—individual only. [‘There are two elections—Israel the nation and the Church as individuals.’ (Chafer, *ST*, 4:320)] (9) Dispensations: Israel—seen in all ages from Abraham; Church—seen only in this present age. (10) Ministry: Israel—no missionary activity and no gospel to preach; Church—a commission to fulfill. (11) The death of Christ: Israel—guilty nationally, to be saved by it; Church—perfectly saved by it now. (12) The Father: Israel—by a peculiar relationship God was Father to the nation; Church—we are related individually to God as Father. (13) Christ: Israel—Messiah, Immanuel, King; Church—Saviour, Lord, Bridegroom, Head. (14) The Holy Spirit: Israel—came upon some temporarily; Church—indwells all. (15) Governing principle: Israel—Mosaic law system; Church—grace system. (16) Divine enablement: Israel—none; Church—the indwelling Holy Spirit. (17) Two farewell discourses: Israel—Olivet discourse; Church—upper room discourse. (18) The promise of Christ’s return: Israel—in power and glory for judgment; Church—to receive us to Himself. (19) Position: Israel—a servant; Church—members of the family. (20) Christ’s earthly reign: Israel—subjects; Church—co-reign-

ers. (21) Priesthood: Israel—had a priesthood; Church—is a priesthood. (22) Marriage: Israel—unfaithful wife; Church—bride. (23) Judgments: Israel—must face judgment; Church—delivered from all judgments. (24) Positions in eternity: Israel—spirits of just men made perfect in the new earth; Church—church of the firstborn in the new heavens [But note: As Dr. Fruchtenbaum points out, after the New Jerusalem descends to the new earth, in the Eternal Order, both groups will access the city, so at that time there may be little if any functional difference between the two.—*ed.*]” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 201).

Now, individually:

The church is not “Israel.” That the church is not Israel is evident from a number of factors:

First, *in the Bible*, “*Israel*” always refers to literal Israel. “The premillennial position on the term *Israel* is that it *always* has reference to those who are physical descendants of Jacob” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 164). “‘Israel’ is consistently defined in the NT as the nation rooted in Abraham and never as the Gentiles” (Horner, *FI*, p. 194) “[Linguistically] ‘Israel’ denotes both people and land... Israel’s destiny is that of the land” [quoting B. Maoz, “People, Land and Torah: a Jewish Christian Perspective,” *The Land of Promise*, pp. 191-192] (*ibid.*, p. 223) “For many centuries there was prevailed in the Churches of Christ a strange, and to my mind, an unwarrantable mode of dealing with this word ‘Israel.’ It has been interpreted in many passages of the Psalms and Prophets, as if it meant nothing more than Christian believers. Have promises been held out to Israel? Men have been told continually that they are addressed to Gentile saints. Have glorious things been described as laid up in store for Israel? Men have been incessantly told that they describe the victories and triumphs of the gospel in Christian churches. The proofs of these things are too many to require quotation. No man can read the immense majority of commentaries and popular hymns without seeing this system of interpretation to which I now refer. Against that system I have long protested, and I hope I shall always protest as long as I live. I do not deny that Israel was a peculiar typical people, and that God’s relations to Israel were meant to be a type of His relations to His believing people all over the world. I would have it most distinctly understood that God’s dealings with individual Jews and Gentiles are precisely one and the same. Without repentance, faith in Christ and holiness of heart, no individual Jew or Gentile shall ever be saved. What I protest against is, the habit of allegorizing plain sayings of the Word of God concerning the future history of the *nation* of Israel, and explaining away the fullness of their contents in order to accommodate them to the Gentile Church. I believe the

habit to be unwarranted by anything in Scripture, and to draw after it a long train of evil consequences. Where, I would venture to ask, in the whole New Testament, shall we find any plain authority for applying the word “Israel” to anyone but the nation of Israel? On the contrary, I observe that when the Apostle Paul quotes Old Testament prophecies about the privileges of the Gentiles in gospel times, he is careful to quote texts which specifically mention the “Gentiles” by name. The fifteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is a striking illustration of what I mean. We are often told in the New Testament that, under the gospel, believing Gentiles are “fellow heirs and partakers of the same hope” with believing Jews (Eph. 3:6). But that believing Gentiles may be called “Israelites,” I cannot see anywhere at all” [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, pp. 107-108] (*ibid.*, p. 344).

Second, a careful examination of *the seventy-three occurrences of the word “Israel” in the New Testament* makes it plain that *the term always means natural, ethnic Israel*. These seventy-three occurrences are: “And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler, Who will shepherd My people **Israel**” (Matt. 2:6). “Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of **Israel**; for those who sought the Child’s life are dead” (Matt. 2:20). “And he arose and took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of **Israel**” (Matt. 2:20:2). “Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled, and said to those who were following, ‘Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in **Israel**’” (Matt. 8:10). “And after the demon was cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marveled, saying, ‘Nothing like this was ever seen in **Israel**’” (Matt. 9:33). “‘but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of **Israel**’” (Matt. 10:6). “‘But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of **Israel**, until the Son of Man comes’” (Matt. 10:23). “But He answered and said, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of **Israel**’” (Matt. 15:24). “so that the multitude marveled as they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of **Israel**” (Matt. 15:31). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of **Israel**’” (Matt. 19:28). “Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, ‘And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of **Israel**’” (Matt. 27:9) “‘He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of

Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him” (Matt. 27:42). “Jesus answered, ‘The foremost is, “Hear, O **Israel**! The Lord our God is one Lord”’” (Mark 12:29). “‘Let this Christ, the King of **Israel**, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!’ And those who were crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him” (Mark 15:32). “‘And he will turn back many of the sons of **Israel** to the Lord their God” (Luke 1:16). “‘He has given help to **Israel** His servant, In remembrance of His mercy” (Luke 1:54) “‘Blessed be the Lord God of **Israel**, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people” (Luke 1:68) “‘And the child continued to grow, and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to **Israel**” (Luke 1:80). “‘And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of **Israel**; and the Holy Spirit was upon him” (Luke 2:25). “‘A light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Thy people **Israel**” (Luke 2:32). “‘And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in **Israel**, and for a sign to be opposed —’” (Luke 2:34) “‘But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in **Israel** in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land” (Luke 4:25) “‘And there were many lepers in **Israel** in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian” (Luke 4:27). “‘Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the multitude that was following Him, ‘I say to you, not even in **Israel** have I found such great faith” (Luke 7:9). “‘that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of **Israel**” (Luke 22:30). “‘But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem **Israel**. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened” (Luke 24:21). “‘And I did not recognize Him, but in order that He might be manifested to **Israel**, I came baptizing in water” (John 1:31). “‘Nathanael answered Him, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of **Israel**” (John 1:49). “‘Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Are you the teacher of **Israel**, and do not understand these things” (John 3:10)? “‘took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of **Israel**” (John 12:13). “‘And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to **Israel**” (Acts 1:6)? “‘Men of **Israel**, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through

Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know —” (Acts 2:22) “Therefore let all the house of **Israel** know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). “But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, ‘Men of **Israel**, why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk’” (Acts 3:12)? “let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of **Israel**, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead — by this name this man stands here before you in good health” (Acts 4:10). “For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of **Israel**” (Acts 4:27) “And upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak, and began to teach. Now when the high priest and his associates had come, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of **Israel**, and sent orders to the prison house for them to be brought” (Acts 5:21). “He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to **Israel**, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). “And he said to them, ‘Men of **Israel**, take care what you propose to do with these men’” (Acts 5:35). “But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of **Israel**” (Acts 7:23). “This is the Moses who said to the sons of **Israel**, ‘God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren’” (Acts 7:37). “But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, ‘It was not to Me that you offered victims and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, O house of **Israel**’” (Acts 7:42)? “But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of **Israel**’” (Acts 9:15) “The word which He sent to the sons of **Israel**, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) —” (Acts 10:36) “And Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand, he said, ‘Men of **Israel**, and you who fear God, listen’” (Acts 13:16) “The God of this people **Israel** chose our fathers, and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it” (Acts 13:17). “From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God has brought to **Israel** a Savior, Jesus, after John had proclaimed before His coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of **Israel**” (Acts 13:23). “crying out, ‘Men of **Israel**, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people, and the Law, and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place’” (Acts 21:28). “For this reason therefore, I requested to see you

and to speak with you, for I am wearing this chain for the sake of the hope of **Israel**” (Acts 28:20). “But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all **Israel** who are descended from **Israel**” (Rom. 9:6) “And Isaiah cries out concerning **Israel**, ‘Though the number of the sons of **Israel** be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved’” (Rom. 9:27) “but **Israel**, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law” (Rom. 9:31). “But I say, surely **Israel** did not know, did they? At the first Moses says, ‘I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, By a nation without understanding will I anger you’” (Rom. 10:19). “But as for **Israel** He says, ‘All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people’” (Rom. 10:21). “God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against **Israel**” (Rom. 11:2)? “What then? That which **Israel** is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened” (Rom. 11:7) “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to **Israel** until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in” (Rom. 11:25) “and thus all **Israel** will be saved; just as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob’” (Rom. 11:26). “Look at the nation **Israel**; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar” (1 Cor. 10:18)? “But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of **Israel** could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was” (2 Cor. 3:7) “and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of **Israel** might not look intently at the end of what was fading away” (2 Cor. 3:13). “And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the **Israel** of God” (Gal. 6:16). “remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of **Israel**, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). “circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of **Israel**, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee” (Phil. 3:5) “For finding fault with them, He says, ‘Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of **Israel** and with the house of Judah’” (Heb. 8:8) “‘For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of **Israel** After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, And I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, And they shall be My people’” (Heb. 8:10). “By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of **Israel**, and gave orders concerning his bones” (Heb. 11:22).

“But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of **Israel**, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality” (Rev. 2:14). “And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of **Israel**” (Rev. 7:4) “It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of **Israel**” (Rev. 21:12). “Covenant Theologians boldly state that the Church is the new Israel and sometimes make it sound as if that claim is an obvious foregone conclusion of the New Testament. Cox even claimed that the two terms are used interchangeably. The truth is that the term Israel is used a total of 73 times in the New Testament. As the following list shows, such a bold claim is unwarranted from the evidence” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 684) “The above list is the total number of times that Israel is mentioned in the New Testament and it is obvious even to Covenant Theologians that the vast majority of the times it refers to national ethnic Israel. In fact, only three passages are used by Covenant Theologians to try to prove their Church-equals-Israel equation. On two of these, Romans 9:6 and 11:26, they are not unanimous, for even some Covenant Theologians see these verses as speaking of national ethnic Israel. The only one verse on which all Covenant Theologians are unanimous is Galatians 6:16. This is the one and only verse that even comes close to saying what Covenant Theologians want it to say. Therefore, it will be given its own separate treatment. [See our paragraph *The church is not ‘the Israel of God’* below.—*ed.*]” (*ibid.*, p. 690). “In the NT, ‘Israel’ is used seventy-three times... Paul... ‘there is, in fact, no instance of his using [Israel], except of the Jewish nation or a part thereof” [quoting E. D. Burton, *Galatians*, p. 358] (Horner, *FI*, p. 228).

Third, *the Bible never identifies the church as “Israel.”* “The Scriptures never use the term Israel to refer to any but the natural descendants of Jacob” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 230). “It is very important to recognize that *in no place in the New Testament is a Gentile ever referred to as Israel*, for to be included in the nation of Israel one must be a physical descendant of Abraham” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 80). “The term *Israel* is not used in the Scriptures to describe anyone but the physical descendants of Abraham” (*ibid.*, p. 173). “Whenever Israel is used in the Scriptures, whether in reference to an individual (Rom. 11:1) or a nation (9:4) without exception it refers to those who are physical descendants of Abraham” (*ibid.*, p. 290). “Cox fails to produce a single clear and obvious example where the Church is called ‘Israel’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 181). “When the term ‘Israel’ is used figuratively, it is a

reference to the believing remnant. There is *no* example of ‘Israel’ being used of the Church, or indicating Gentiles are included in the figurative use of the term” (*ibid.*, p. 183). “Yes, there are two Israels: one comprises all Jews and the other only those Jews who believe; but nowhere does Paul use the term *Israel* of the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 253). “Ladd has been trying to show that the Remnant of Israel constitutes the Church, which in turn becomes ‘the true Israel’ and ‘the true people of God.’ He even claims that ‘it is difficult to avoid’ this conclusion, but that is not the case. Until Ladd shows a clear statement in Scripture where the Church is called Israel, that conclusion is not difficult to avoid at all” (*ibid.*, p. 277). “The New Testament never actually uses the term ‘Israel’ of the Church, even by application” (*ibid.*, p. 295). “Ryrie [in *Premillennial Faith*, pp. 67-69] points out ‘...the fact that Gentile Christians are never included in the designation *Israel*’” (*ibid.*, p. 447). “In the New Testament... every time *Israel* is used, it speaks of either Israel as a nation still in unbelief or the ‘believing remnant which is incorporated into the church without destroying the national promises to Israel in the least’” [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 168-170] (*ibid.*, p. 463). “Feinberg [in *Premill or Amill?*, pp. 230-231] is correct when he states that the Scriptures ‘never use the term Israel to refer to any but the natural descendants of Jacob’” (*ibid.*, p. 475). “...the language of the NT that in reality nowhere declares that the church is Israel renewed. This fictional extrapolation is in reality warmed over Augustinianism” (Horner, *FI*, p. 90) “There is no use of the term ‘Israel’ in the NT that is an explicit equivalent to the Christian church. Regarding Paul’s usage, Burton declared, ‘There is, in fact, no instance of his using [Israel], except of the Jewish nation or a part thereof’ [quoting E. D. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 358] (*ibid.*, p. 265).

Fourth, in the Bible, “*tribes*” always refers to literal tribes of people. There are nine occurrences of “tribes” in the New Testament: “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve **tribes** of Israel’” (Matt. 19:28). “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the **tribes** of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). “that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve **tribes** of Israel” (Luke 22:30). “the promise to which our twelve **tribes** hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews” (Acts 26:7). “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the

twelve **tribes** who are dispersed abroad, greetings” (James 1:1). “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the **tribes** of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen” (Rev. 1:7). “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all **tribes** and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands” (Rev. 7:9) “And those from the peoples and **tribes** and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb” (Rev. 11:9). “It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve **tribes** of the sons of Israel” (Rev. 21:12). “Never is the word tribes as applied to Israel used to mean anything but literal tribes of people” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:480). Compare also: “And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every **tribe** of the sons of Israel: from the **tribe** of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the **tribe** of Reuben twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Gad twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Asher twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Simeon twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Levi twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Issachar twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Joseph twelve thousand, from the **tribe** of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed” (Rev. 7:4-8).

Fifth, *the primitive church did not identify the church with Israel*. “There is no historical evidence that the term Israel was identified with the church before A.D. 160. Further, at that date there was no characterization of the church as ‘the Israel of God.’ In other words, for more than a century after Paul there was no evidence of the identification.” [quoting Toussaint and Dyer, *Pentecost Essays*, p. 191] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 695). “‘Israel’ was first applied to the Christian Church by Justin Martyr c. 160” (Horner, *FI*, p. 264) “...Israel being equated with the church, which happened about AD 160 when Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho* was published” (*ibid.*, p. 281).

Sixth, *the church has no genuine nexus with Israel*. “...another ‘Israel’ having no genuine nexus with the historical nation” (McClain, *GK*, p. 149) “...the New Testament church, which is *functionally* distinct from Israel” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:24).

Seventh, *the church does not replace Israel*. “It is a fundamental tenet of the Koran that both Israel and the Church failed. Moses was a prophet.

Jesus was a prophet. But Muhammad was the seal of the prophets, the messenger of the final revelation. The Jews are not the people of God—they failed! The Christians are not the people of God—they failed! It is the Muslims who are the people of God. Of course this is preposterous. But, in the event that you are still uncertain about the calling of Israel, consider this simple truth: If God could forsake Israel, in spite of His unconditional, everlasting promises, then He could *forsake* the Church! If God could replace Israel, in spite of His unconditional, everlasting promises, then He could *replace* the Church! So, if you hold to a theology that says, “God has forsaken physical Israel,” or “The Church has replaced Israel,” you had better be extremely careful. Maybe the Koran is right” [quoting Michael L. Brown, *Our Hands Are Stained with Blood: The Tragic Story of the ‘Church’ and the Jewish People*, pp. 125-126] (Horner, *FI*, p. 362)! “Once replacement theology became a presupposition of theological reflection, it required that much of the Old Testament be interpreted allegorically” [quoting Ronald E. Diprose, *Israel and the Church*, pp. 171-72] (*ibid.*, p. 364). “Does Gentile inclusion in God’s promises necessitate Jewish exclusion?... For Paul, non-Christian Jews continue to be included within God’s promises simply because of God’s covenant faithfulness to Abraham and other patriarchs... Paul would not affirm the theological doctrine that became entrenched among later generations of Christians, namely, that Gentile inclusion necessitates Jewish exclusion” [quoting Jeffrey S. Siker, *Disinheriting the Jews*, pp. 195-197] (*ibid.*, p. 375).

The church is not “new Israel.” “It is well known that the [Roman Catholic] Church calls herself the “New Israel”” [quoting Michel Remaud, *Israel, Servant of God*, p. 5] (Horner, *FI*, p. 374)

The church is not “spiritual Israel.” “For **he is not a Jew who is one outwardly**; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. **But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart**, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God” (Rom. 2:28-29). “It is true that ‘real Jews are those who have been circumcised inwardly’; but the passage on which this is based, Romans 2:28-29, contextually (Rom. 2:17-3:20) is being addressed to the Jews (Rom. 2:17) and not to Gentiles or the Church. It too deals with the Remnant of Israel which has both a physical and spiritual circumcision in contrast to Israel the whole which only has physical circumcision” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 295). “But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For **they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel**” (Rom. 9:6) “Shedd refers to this spiritual Israel as ‘spiritual descendants of Jacob,’ something the Bible itself never does. Both Jewish and Gentile be-

lievers are referred to as a spiritual seed of Abraham, but not Jacob—an important distinction within Israelology” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 75). “Since Covenant Theology teaches that all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, are spiritual Jews, or spiritual Israel, perhaps for that reason Shedd inserts ‘spiritual seed of Jacob.’ By doing so, he has gone beyond the biblical text” (*ibid.*). “The second Israel is an Israel ‘within ethnic Israel’; that is, they are Jews who believe” (*ibid.*). “Murray points out that the purpose of making a distinction between Israel the whole and the true Israel is to show that ‘God’s covenant purpose and promise’ has not failed. While Israel the whole did reject and disbelieve, the true Israel did not” (*ibid.*). “The disagreement between Dispensationalists and Covenant Theologians is whether the spiritual Israel and the spiritual seed of Abraham are always one and the same. Generally, Dispensationalists would keep the two distinct and Covenant Theologians would not. Hodge’s interpretation is consistent with his Covenant Theology” (*ibid.*, p. 76). “The correct premise is that not all members of Israel the whole are the believing Israel. Not all Jews live up to the name (the praise of God)” (*ibid.*, p. 183). “For **there is no distinction between Jew and Greek**; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him” (Rom. 10:12) “In this context, the specific area where there is no difference is in the area of salvation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 82). “Not even once in this chapter did Paul say that God has forever ‘cast off’ or ‘rejected’ Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 83). “There are distinctions between Jews and Gentiles even within the Body of Christ in other areas outside of salvation; but as far as salvation is concerned, there are no distinctions” (*ibid.*, p. 709). (See also our discussion of Galatians 3:28 below.) “I say then, **they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be!** But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous” (Rom. 11:11). “So was the stumbling of Israel for the purpose that Israel would irrevocably fall and never rise again? Paul then gave the answer: *God forbid*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 742)! “And if the first piece of dough be holy, the lump is also; and if the root be holy, the branches are too. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of **the olive tree**, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.’ Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God’s

kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree” (Rom. 11:16-24)? “Nowhere does Paul state that this Olive Tree symbolizes the new or true Israel. Paul’s picture of the Olive Tree is to represent it as the place of spiritual blessings which are rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant, now being enjoyed by Jewish and Gentile believers” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 199). “Obviously, if either Jewish or Gentile branches are cut off, it means they were previously in this tree. If the tree is the Church, the true Israel, the elect, then because of unbelief, they have been cut off from all this. Have they then lost their salvation” (*ibid.*)? “The natural branches are the Jews (Israel) and the wild olive branches are the Gentiles (v. 17). The Olive Tree in this passage does not represent Israel or the Church, but it represents the place of spiritual blessing. The root of this place of blessing is the Abrahamic Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 744). “**There is neither Jew nor Greek**, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). “Paul does not say there is neither Jew nor Greek *within the church*. He speaks of those who are “in Christ”... But Paul also says there is neither male nor female, nor slave, nor free man in Christ. Would he then deny sexual differences within the church? Or the social differences in Paul’s day? Is it not plain that Paul is not speaking of national or ethnic difference in Christ, but of spiritual status? In that sense there is no difference in Christ” [quoting Toussaint and Dyer, *Pentecost Essays*, p. 190] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 695). “Therefore remember, that formerly you, the **Gentiles** in the flesh, who are called ‘Uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘Circumcision,’ which is performed in the flesh by human hands — remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of **Israel**, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and **broke down the barrier of the dividing wall**, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make **the two into one new man**, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity” (Eph. 2:11-16) “We cannot receive the idea advanced by Oosterzee, that Jesus at His First Advent ‘put an end to the wall of separation

between Israel and the nations” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:392). “...the wall of partition... is not removed but only between believers of all nations and the Jewish nation” (*ibid.*). “...the wall of partition only broken down between believers and not between the Jewish nation and other nations” (*ibid.*, 2:81) “Believing in a future for Israel or even in a distinctive Jewish remnant today is not to ‘rebuild the dividing wall,’ for they in no way limit Gentile access to the spiritual blessings, which was the reason the wall was broken down in the first place. The Gentile believer is still a ‘partaker.’ ‘Israel’ is still Israel whether it is applied to the nation as a whole or to the believing remnant within Israel the whole. Israel can still have a national future without Gentile believers losing any of the things God promised them” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 183). “The Ephesians passage does not say that this ‘one new man’ is ‘neither Jew nor Gentile,’ but it states ‘that he might create of the two one new man.’ In other words, the one new man is to consist of both Jews and Gentiles. This is not merely a semantical difference. Paul’s wording in Ephesians allows for a continuous Jewish and Gentile distinctive” (*ibid.*, p. 250). “It is proper to speak of believing Jews and believing Gentiles as Abraham’s spiritual seed (so Paul designates them in Galatians 3:8, 9), but spiritual Israelites are believing Jews only” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 230). “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘ALL THE NATIONS SHALL BE BLESSED IN YOU.’ So then **those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham**, the believer” (Gal. 3:8–9). “And **if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring [seed], heirs according to promise**” (Gal. 3:29). “The Bible never speaks of a ‘spiritual Israel’” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 244). “There is a godly or spiritual Israel in the Old Testament who are true believers in God, and there is a godly Israel in the church consisting of Israelites who are believers in Jesus Christ” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 164). “...the remnant today being both part of Israel and part of the Church...” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, 275) “The Remnant of Israel is always within the nation and not apart from it” (*ibid.*, p. 275). “The Church is never called, and is not, a ‘spiritual Israel’ or a ‘new Israel.’ The term *Israel* is either used of the nation or the people as a whole, or of the believing remnant within. It is never used of the Church in general or of Gentile believers in particular” (*ibid.*, p. 699). “The first false view is that Gentiles become ‘spiritual Jews’ upon believing in Christ” (*ibid.*). “Mere physical birth cannot save. Mere physical circumcision does not save either. Circumcision is only outward whereas God demands a circumcision which is of the heart... A true Jew is a ‘completed’ Jew, a ‘full’ Jew, one who has had both types of circumcision, outward and inward” (*ibid.*, p. 707). “A completed Jew is one

who has had both circumcisions, the circumcision which is outward in obedience to the Abrahamic Covenant, and an inward circumcision of the heart as an act of obedience to the New Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 708). “Outward circumcision deals with the issues of the flesh, the letter, and the mind. Inward circumcision deals with the issues of the heart, the spirit, and God” (*ibid.*). “...the body of Christ is *not* a spiritual Israel” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:56). “There is no hint of any alleged spiritual Israel that has replaced national Israel in God’s plan” (*ibid.*, p. 485).

The church is not “the Israel of God.” “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, **and upon the Israel of God**” (Gal. 6:15–16). “In Galatians 6:16 Paul distinguishes between the Gentiles, ‘who follow this rule’ and the saved Jews, whom he calls ‘the Israel of God’” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 290). “God’s blessing is declared on those who walk according to this rule (among the Galatians who were Gentiles), and also ‘upon the Israel of God.’ The use of *and* (Greek *kai*) is difficult to explain apart from the intention of the writer to set off the ‘Israel of God’ from those considered in the first half of the verse” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 170). “Peace and mercy from God are available to those who walk according to this rule, that is, according to the message of salvation by grace through faith alone. This blessing is pronounced on believing Galatians and on believing Jews. (The NIV errs in trans. ‘even to the Israel of God’ rather than ‘and upon the Israel of God’ as in the NASB.) While some believe that ‘Israel of God’ is the church, the evidence does not support such a conclusion. First, the repetition of the preposition (‘upon’ or ‘to’) indicates two groups are in view. Second, all the 65 [72?—*ed.*] other occurrences of the term ‘Israel’ in the New Testament refer to Jews. It would thus be strange for Paul to use ‘Israel’ here to mean Gentile Christians. Third, Paul elsewhere referred to two kinds of Israelites—believing Jews and unbelieving Jews (cf. Rom. 9:6). Lest it be thought that Paul is anti-Semitic, he demonstrated by means of this benediction his deep love and concern for true Israel, that is, Jews who had come to Christ” (Walvoord, *BKC*, Gal. 6:16). “Galatians 6:16 does not refer to all New Testament believers as *the Israel of God*, but only to the Jewish believers who are the believing remnant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 52). “Identifying the Church with Israel or the Israel of God is an assumption all Covenant Theologians make, and they build their Israelology on that assumption. They seldom try to prove that assumption by exegesis” (*ibid.*, p. 178). “Galatians 6:16 obviously mentions two groups: the *them* and *the Israel of God*. The two are joined by a Greek connection *kai*. The primary meaning of *kai* is ‘and.’ Normally, one resorts to a secondary

meaning, such as ‘even,’ only when the primary meaning makes no sense; here, however, the primary meaning of ‘and’ makes perfect sense” (*ibid.*, p. 182). “When Hoekema declares that ‘there is at least one New Testament passage where the term Israel is used as inclusive of Gentiles,’ the implication is that there are others; but Galatians 6:16 is the *only* example he and others of his persuasion ever provide, and so their claim stands or falls on this one verse alone” (*ibid.*, p. 185). “It should not be missed that this is the only verse that this camp has in trying to prove that the New Testament applies the term ‘Israel’ to the Church. Their entire view stands or falls on the proper interpretation of this one verse” (*ibid.*, p. 186). “Ryrie [in *Basic Theology*, p. 399] cites Galatians 6:16 which, as has been shown many times, is the one and only passage that all Covenant Theologians cite as proof that the Church is Israel or the New Israel. Ryrie, however, states that this passage ‘provides no clear proof that the church is equated with Israel.’ Covenant Theologians are forced to resort to a secondary meaning of *kai* to arrive at their conclusion” (*ibid.*, p. 443). “Again, Galatians 6:15-16 is the only passage Covenant Theologians have to try to prove that the Church is Israel and even then they must resort to a secondary meaning when neither the context nor the grammar demands it” (*ibid.*, p. 454). “The *them* are ‘the Galatians who were Gentiles’ or the uncircumcision of verse 15 and *the Israel of God* are the Jewish believers who are the circumcision.” [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 168-170] (*ibid.*, p. 463). “Galatians 6:16, the only passage produced by all Covenant Theologians as evidence that the Church is the spiritual Israel, or that Gentile believers become spiritual Jews. The verse does not prove their case” (*ibid.*, p. 690). “‘the Israel of God’... the words refer simply to believing ethnic Israelites in the Christian church. Does not Paul speak of himself as an Israelite (cf. Rom. 11:1)? And does not the apostle also speak of ‘a remnant according to God’s gracious choice’ (cf. 11:5), words that plainly in the context refer to believing Israelites? What more fitting thing could Paul write, it is said, in a work so strongly attacking Jewish professing believers, the Judaizers, than to make it most plain that he was not attacking the true believing Jews? Judaizers are anathematized, but the remnant according to the election of grace are ‘the Israel of God’” [quoting Toussaint and Dyer, *Pentecost Essays*, p. 191] (*ibid.*, p. 696). “...the ‘Israel of God’... it should be taken of Israelites (Jews) who are true believers, which fits also with Paul’s usage in other places” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:443). “Paul says nothing of a spiritual Israel; his reference to ‘Israel of God’ delineates literal Israelites who have accepted the message of God’s grace” (*ibid.*). “Galatians 6:16... the ‘Israel of God’... it should be taken as referring to Israelites (Jews) who are true believers... Paul says noth-

ing of a spiritual Israel... ‘Israel of God’ and those of the ‘circumcision, who worship God’ (Phil. 3:3 NKJV) are the same group, viz., Jews saved by grace” (*ibid.*, p. 581). “The continuative ‘and’ (*kai*) is not only contextually but also statistically preferable when compared with the ascensive ‘even.’ Most commonly, the translation is ‘and upon the Israel of God’ (KJV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, NRSV, etc.), which shows Hebrew Christians retaining a distinct identity within the one people of God. The translation, ‘even upon the Israel of God’ (NIV), portrays the church, comprised of all the people of God, with a refined title, the ‘spiritual’ Israel of God. In the NT of the KJV the approximate usage is 97 percent for *kai* as ‘and’ compared with 3 percent for *kai* as ‘even.’ The continuative use of *kai* has a far greater frequency than the ascensive use. Concerning the NIV’s uncommon use of ‘even’ in this regard, a degree of ambiguity remains. The ascensive use of *kai* could be correct, but the emphatic use is also possible: ‘Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even [by way of an adjunctive, emphatic thought] to the Israel of God.’ A. T. Robertson suggested that this may have been the original meaning of *kai*, so that ‘also’ here would seem to be a preferable translation, as with the HCSB (see above). In this instance the distinctive character of the Jewish Christian is retained. It is difficult not to suspect that the NIV translation was doctrinally driven so that the intention was to identify the church as the new Israel of God” (Horner, *FI*, p. 265).

The church is not a race. “But you are **a chosen race**, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9) “So it is not the Church which is a chosen race, but the Jewish believers. Rather, the Church, which is not a ‘race’ anyway, is comprised of believers from all races” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 187). “The use of the term race shows that Peter is also dealing with their national election. The Church, however, is not a race but composed of believers from all races” (*ibid.*, p. 722). “His [Peter’s] purpose is to show that, while the non Remnant has failed in its calling, the Remnant has not failed. Thus what Peter states here may not necessarily be true of the Church as a whole, but specifically of Jewish believers who now make up the Remnant of Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 770). “...*an elect race*, based on Isaiah 43:20” (*ibid.*, p. 772) “The beasts of the field shall honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to **my people, my chosen**, the people which I formed for myself, that they might set forth my praise. Yet thou hast not called upon me, O **Jacob**; but thou hast been weary of me, O **Israel**” (Isa. 43:20–23)

The church is not a nation. “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to **a nation** producing the fruit of it” (Matt. 21:43). “Matthew 21:43... The ‘nation’ of this verse would be identified by Boettner as the Church; but if the Church is the ‘nation,’ then it contradicts Paul’s statement in Romans 10:19 that God would provoke the Jews with a ‘no nation,’ and the Church is just that: a no-nation, an entity comprised of individuals of all nationalities. Matthew 21:43 would be better understood to mean a different generation of Israel. The Jewish generation of Jesus’ day had rejected the kingdom; so it will be offered to a later Jewish generation that will accept it” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 60). “But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? At the first Moses says, ‘I will make you jealous by that which is **not a nation**, By a nation without understanding will I anger you” (Rom. 10:19). “Romans 10:19 where the Church is referred to as *no nation*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 161). “But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is **no nation**, With a nation void of understanding will I anger you” (Rom. 10:1, ASV). “who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself **a people for His own possession**, zealous for good deeds” (Titus 2:14). “Titus 2:14 refers to believers as a people for his own possession, but not as a nation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 161). “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia**, who are chosen” (1 Pet. 1:1) “Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: ‘Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, And he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.’ This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, ‘The stone which the builders rejected, This became the very corner stone,’ and, ‘A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense’; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. But **you are** a chosen race, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation**, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for **you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God**; you had not received mercy, but now you

have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as **aliens and strangers** to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent **among the Gentiles**, so that in the thing in which they slander **you** as evildoers, **they** may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Pet. 2:1-12). “First Peter 2:9 does speak of a *holy nation*, but the first two verses of this epistle make it clear that Peter was addressing Jewish believers specifically and not the Church as a whole. This makes sense since Peter was the apostle to the circumcision. The Jewish believers constituted the present Remnant of Israel or the *Israel of God*. They are the *holy nation*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 161). “Peter is speaking specifically to and of Jewish believers. Cox, like Allis, ignores Peter’s opening words when he spells out to whom he is writing” (*ibid.*, p. 179). “To whom was Peter writing? Peter (1:1) states that he is writing to the *sojourners of the Dispersion*. In other words, Peter is writing to Jews living outside the land” (*ibid.*, p. 186). “He specifically states that he is writing to the *sojourners of the Dispersion*. This was and is a very Jewish way of speaking of Jews living outside the land of Israel. Peter is writing as a Jew to Jews. This is not a way a Jew writes if he is addressing an audience of primarily Gentiles” (*ibid.*, p. 187). “It is not true that the word dispersion is ‘often applied to Jews’; rather, it is *always* applied to Jews when used technically by Jewish writers, which Peter was” (*ibid.*). “The Church is also not a *holy nation*, but is comprised of believers from all nations. In fact, when Paul speaks of the Church, he calls it a no nation (Rom 10:19)” (*ibid.*). “It should be noted that Peter does not even use the word ‘church’ a single time, giving Hoekema’s claim that Peter is addressing the Church even less credence” (*ibid.*, p. 188). “By taking Peter’s words in 1:1-2 literally, it is clear that the epistle was not written to the Church at large, nor to a body of Gentile believers, but to Jewish believers living outside the land within a majority Gentile population. The term *Dispersion* is a technical Jewish term for Jews who live outside the land. It is used twice elsewhere: John 7:35 and James 1:1, which all commentators agree refers to the Jews of the Diaspora” (*ibid.*, p. 720). “The Jews therefore said to one another, ‘Where does this man intend to go that we shall not find Him? He is not intending to go to **the Dispersion among the Greeks**, and teach the Greeks, is He?’” (John 7:35)? “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to **the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad**, greetings” (James 1:1). “The believing Jewish remnant is a *holy nation*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 722). “Formerly, in times past, they were part of the non-remnant being *not my people* and without mercy. Now they are members of the remnant and so are *my people* and have obtained mercy” (*ibid.*). “To summarize, Peter is

not drawing a distinction between Israel and the Church or between unbelieving Jews and believing Gentiles. The distinction is between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. His point is that while Israel as a whole failed, the believing Remnant of Israel has not failed and so the Remnant of Israel is fulfilling the calling of the nation as a whole. Paul will make the same point in his theology of Israel in Romans 9-11” (*ibid.*). “Theologians who refuse to see the Jewish nature of the epistle and insist on applying what Peter says in 2:1-10 to the Church as a whole either ignore Peter’s usage of the term Gentile [vs. 12] or insist that he means ‘unbeliever.’ There is simply no exegetical grounds to interpret Gentile to mean ‘unbeliever’ and, in fact, the term is often used in the New Testament of those who are believers” (*ibid.*, p. 996). “In verse 10, this section concludes with a reference to Hosea 1:10-2:1, 23... Formerly, they were part of the non-Remnant; spiritually, *in time past*, they *were no people* and *had not obtained mercy*. Now they are members of the Remnant, *the people of God*, and *now have obtained mercy*” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 773). “Yet the number of **the children of Israel** shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, **in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God**” (Hos. 1:10). “And it shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, saith Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall answer **Jezreel**. And I will sow her unto me **in the earth**; and **I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy**; and **I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God**” (Hos. 2:21-23). “The Church of Christ is not composed of nations, but of individuals out of the nations” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:214) “Berkhof totally fails to prove his contention that the Church in the New Testament is ‘represented as a nation’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 162).

The church is not Mount Zion or Jerusalem. “But **the Jerusalem above** is free; she is our mother” (Gal. 4:26). “Galatians 4:26 only distinguishes the heavenly Jerusalem from the earthly one but does not identify the heavenly Jerusalem as the Church. (Is not the Church also on earth? Yet Paul only speaks of a Jerusalem that is above.) The symbolic use of Jerusalem in this verse is heaven and not the Church” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 205). “But you have come to **Mount Zion** and to the city of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem**, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and **church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven**, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, and

to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel” (Heb. 12:22-24). “Yes, the writer is using ‘mount Zion’ symbolically here [but Walvoord apparently disagrees: ‘Zion... Its use in the Old Testament as in the New is literal in every instance’ (*MK*, p. 191)—*ed.*]; however, he does not equate it with the Church but rather with the ‘heavenly Jerusalem.’ Neither is the heavenly Jerusalem equated with the Church. In listing the residents of this heavenly Jerusalem, the Church is mentioned as one of several and not as the total package” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 34). “He claims that the Church is called Israel; but here Hodge is presupposing his theology, for he has failed to prove this contention. According to Hodge, the ‘church is called Jerusalem, and Zion.’ This, too, is an unproven assumption. The few times that these terms are used symbolically, they refer to the New Jerusalem in heaven and not to the Church. In fact, the Church is listed as only one resident of several in the New Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22-24)” (*ibid.*, p. 99). “Hoekema’s fourth line of evidence is the fact that the terms ‘Zion’ and ‘Jerusalem’ are used in a figurative way. Once again, there is a correct premise followed by a wrong conclusion. The correct premise is that the terms ‘Zion’ and ‘Jerusalem’ are used in a figurative way, but the wrong conclusion is that these terms, therefore, refer to the Church. The ‘Zion’ and ‘Jerusalem’ that the passages speak of have several residents: (1) innumerable angels (who can hardly be part of the redeemed Church since these angels never fell and never needed redemption); (2) the Church of the firstborn; (3) God the judge of all men; (4) spirits of just men made perfect; and, (5) Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant. The point is that these passages in Hebrews and Revelation do not equate this ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ with the Church, but make the Church only one of several residents of this Jerusalem. In fact, while ‘Zion’ and ‘Jerusalem’ are used figuratively many times, they are never used of the Church. It would, therefore, be far wiser to make the ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ of this Hebrews passage just that: heavenly. While Hoekema criticizes the ‘dispensationalist contention that when the Bible talks about Israel it never means the church...,’ he has not proved otherwise” (*ibid.*, p. 189). “Berkhof is correct when he denies that ‘Zion’ always refers to a mountain and ‘Jerusalem’ always refers to the literal city. These terms are used symbolically; but when they are, it is never the Church. When used symbolically it speaks of Israel as a nation or the Jewish people” (*ibid.*, p. 205). “Hebrews 12:22... It identifies the symbolic ‘Mount Zion’ with ‘the heavenly Jerusalem.’ In verse 23, the Church is among the residents of the heavenly Jerusalem along with God the Father, Jesus, and the angels, but it is not the same as ‘Mount Zion’ or the ‘heavenly Jerusalem’” (*ibid.*). “‘He who over-

comes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and **I will write upon him** the name of My God, and **the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem**, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name” (Rev. 3:12). “Revelation 3:12 promises that those of the Church who overcome will have the name of the new Jerusalem written upon them, but that is far from saying that the Church is the ‘New Jerusalem.’ The absurdity of this interpretation becomes evident if one reads what else is in the same verse. The same verse promises that the overcomer will also have the name of my God written upon him. Does this mean that the Church is God? Berkhof would shrink from such an identification. The verse also states that the overcomers will have mine own new name written upon him. Does this mean that the Church is Jesus? Again, Berkhof would deny any such identification. By the same token, because the overcomer has the new name of Jerusalem written upon him, it cannot mean that the Church is the New Jerusalem” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 205). “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you **the bride**, the wife of the Lamb” (Rev. 21:9). “As for Revelation 21:9, it mentions that John sees the Bride of Christ, but it does not make her the New Jerusalem. What John describes beginning in verse ten is the eternal abode of the Bride or the Church which will be the New Jerusalem. This passage (21:10-22:5) is an expansion of Hebrews 12:22-23 in which the Church is one of several residents of the New Jerusalem” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 205). “Some churches lay special claim to these titles, delighting to designate themselves as ‘Jerusalem’ or ‘Zion,’ esteeming themselves thus particularly favored. This sad, sad perversion of covenant and prediction extensively prevails, and the wildest extravagances of scriptural interpretation springs from it” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:38). “Abraham, etc., who ‘looked for a city,’ evidently, as a comparison shows, not supported by the conception that mysticism or symbolism suggests” (*ibid.*, p. 47)

The church does not receive the fulfillments of Israel’s promises. “The names Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem are regarded by a host of writers as synonymous with the Church, without any regard to the connection of the prophecy that the same Israel, Judah and Jerusalem acted and overthrown for its sinfulness, is to be restored to favor, and is thus meant. The curses pronounced are all carefully heaped upon them severally and shown in their case to be sadly realized, while the blessings promised to the identically same nation and city are taken from them and carefully bestowed upon the Gentile churches. Is this honest to the Record” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:615)? “...the curses which logically and grammatically (if language has any mean-

ing) belong to the same people that are restored... the Church—now arrogant—by claiming these Jewish blessings” (*ibid.*, 2:55) “That the Christian now inherits the distinctive Jewish promises is not taught in Scripture. The Christian is of the heavenly seed of Abraham (Gen 15:5, 6; Gal. 3:29), and partakes of the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 15:18); but Israel as a nation always has its own place, and is yet to have its greatest exaltation as the earthly people of God” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:316). “The church is never promised inheritance in a land, material blessings on the earth, or rest from oppression, all of which are parts of the promise to Israel” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 173). “If God says something positive about Israel or the Jews, this is often applied to the Church; but if it is a negative statement, it is too often applied to physical Israel and literal Jews” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 55). “Hendricksen sees nothing unethical or immoral on God’s part if He makes a promise to one people but then keeps it by transferring it to another people” (*ibid.*, p. 184). “If a father makes a promise to one child and then keeps that promise to a different child, the father will never convince the first child, or any other observer, that the action was moral or ethical. The father will not be able to absolve or justify himself until the promise is kept with the first child to whom it was made, regardless of whether he will or will not do the same for the second child. Regardless of how much of the promise is being kept with the Church, God must still fulfill His promise to Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 185). “It is sufficient for now to point out that the Church is merely partaking of the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. This much was already promised to the Gentiles in the Old Testament. This does not mean that the Church ‘is fulfilling Israel’s promises.’ Some promises were to be shared by the Gentiles and the Church is doing so. Other promises, however, promised exclusively to Israel, will be fulfilled to Israel alone” (*ibid.*, p. 359). “In the case of the Church, there was no promise of a land, nor of ‘earthly things beyond his personal need.’ The believer’s hope is ‘the imminent coming of Christ to take away His church from the earth’” [quoting Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, pp. 57-67] (*ibid.*, p. 439). “It does not mean that Gentile believers become Jews in a mystical way, but rather that they become partakers in the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants and receive this privilege by faith. This act does not make them spiritual Jews but spiritual Gentiles. Even by being partakers, they do not share in all the facets of the covenants, but only in the spiritual blessings contained in them. Things such as inheritance of the land and circumcision, among others, are not appropriated by believing Gentiles. These elements are exclusively for the Jew” (*ibid.*, p. 701).

The church is not the wife of Jehovah. In the Bible, Israel is called “the wife of Jehovah.” “For **thy Maker is thy husband**; Jehovah of hosts is his name: and the Holy One of **Israel** is thy Redeemer; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For **Jehovah hath called thee as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even a wife of youth**, when she is cast off, saith thy God. **For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee**” (Isa. 54:5-7). “For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and **as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee**. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O **Jerusalem**; they shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are Jehovah’s remembrancers, take ye no rest” (Isa. 62:5-6) “Therefore, behold, **I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her**. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and **she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt**. And **it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me Ishi [my husband], and shalt call me no more Baali [my owner]**. For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And **I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah**” (Hos. 2:14-20). “...Hosea. To the nation of Israel, cast off because of unfaithfulness, Jehovah speaks in tender love: ‘I will betroth thee unto me for ever; ...and thou shalt know the LORD’ (2:19-20)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 284). “Israel is pictured as the Wife of Jehovah which may refer to the Triune God as a whole or, more specifically, to God the Father. The Church is pictured as the Bride and Wife of Christ and is only related this way to one person of the Trinity, God the Son. Since Cox is a trinitarian and believes in three distinct persons in the Godhead, then there can be two wives, each married to a different member of the Godhead without there being bigamy” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 215). “The distinction that Dispensationalists make is not between the terms ‘wife’ and ‘Bride,’ but between the concepts of ‘the Wife of Jehovah’ and ‘the Bride of Christ,’ with Israel being the former and the Church the latter” (*ibid.*, p. 296). “The marriage of the church to Christ is still future.

Israel's marriage to Jehovah is history" (*ibid.*). "This contrast is one virtually all Dispensationalists have recognized: that Israel is the Wife of Jehovah while the Church is the Bride of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 428) "In the Bible, Israel is represented as the *Wife of Jehovah*, whereas the Church is represented as the *Bride of Christ*" (*ibid.*, p. 829). "What Moses did in Deuteronomy was to take all the various facets of the three earlier books and present them in the form of an ancient marriage contract" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 570). "Because of His love for Israel, He entered into a covenant relationship with her. This covenant relationship is the marriage contract of Deuteronomy. But now Israel has an obligation ([Deut. 7] vv. 9-11). God implored Israel to faithfulness, to be a faithful wife to God by being obedient and subject to Him" (*ibid.*, p. 571). "For **thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth... Thou shalt therefore keep the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command thee this day, to do them**" (Deut. 7:6-11).

Tracing Israel's marital status throughout history: "...men may argue that God will utterly forget His marriage vows most solemnly given when He took to wife this nation, but, however unfaithful she has been, God, as the prophets testify, is faithful to His own... 'call me Ishi,' i.e. My Husband... God cannot, will not forsake this woman, but intends, such is His purpose, to restore her to favor. A thousand predictions proclaim it" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:133). "These, then, are the six stages of Israel's relationship as the Wife of Jehovah, a wife whom God married but who committed adultery. Eventually, a separation took place, followed by a divorcement, and today Israel is in her period of punishment. However, there will yet come the time when Israel will be remarried, at her national regeneration, and be reunited to her God with all of her blessings restored" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 585). 1. *She was married.* "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, **thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord Jehovah, and thou becamest mine**" (Ezek. 16:8). "God did not choose Israel as His wife due to her size, because Israel was small. He had only one basic reason and that was His love for Israel. Because of His love for Israel, He entered into a covenant relationship with her. This covenant relationship is the marriage contract of Deuteronomy" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 829). "The words used by Ezekiel are words of the wedding night" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 572) 2. *She became an adulteress; her marriage covenant was broken.*

“They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man’s, will he return unto her again? Will not that land be greatly polluted? But **thou hast played the harlot with many lovers**; yet return again to me, saith Jehovah. Lift up thine eyes unto the bare heights, and see; where hast thou not been lain with? By the ways hast thou sat for them, as an Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness. Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; yet thou hast a harlot’s forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth? Will he retain his anger for ever? Will he keep it to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and hast done evil things, and hast had thy way” (Jer. 3:1-5). “not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which **my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah**” (Jer. 31:32). “But thou didst trust in thy beauty, and playedst the **harlot** because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy whoredoms on every one that passed by; his it was. And thou didst take of thy garments, and madest for thee high places decked with divers colors, and playedst the harlot upon them: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. Thou didst also take thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest for thee images of men, and didst play the harlot with them; and thou tookest thy brodered garments, and coveredst them, and didst set mine oil and mine incense before them. My bread also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou didst even set it before them for a sweet savor; and thus it was, saith the Lord Jehovah. Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Were **thy whoredoms** a small matter, that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them up, in causing them to pass through the fire unto them? And **in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and wast weltering in thy blood**. And it is come to pass after all thy wickedness, woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord Jehovah, that thou hast built unto thee a vaulted place, and hast made thee a lofty place in every street. Thou hast built thy lofty place at the head of every way, and hast made thy beauty an abomination, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy **whoredom**. Thou hast also committed **fornication** with the Egyptians, thy neighbors, great of flesh; and hast multiplied thy whoredom, to provoke me to anger. Behold therefore, I have stretched out my

hand over thee, and have diminished thine ordinary food, and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines, that are ashamed of thy lewd way. Thou hast played the **harlot** also with the Assyrians, because thou wast insatiable; yea, thou hast played the **harlot** with them, and yet thou wast not satisfied. Thou hast moreover multiplied thy **whoredom** unto the land of traffic, unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith. How weak is thy heart, saith the Lord Jehovah, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an impudent **harlot**; in that thou buildest thy vaulted place at the head of every way, and makest thy lofty place in every street, and hast not been as a **harlot**, in that thou scornest hire. **A wife that committeth adultery! that taketh strangers instead of her husband!** They give gifts to all harlots; but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and bribest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for **thy whoredoms**. And thou art different from other women in thy whoredoms, in that none followeth thee to play the harlot; and whereas thou givest hire, and no hire is given unto thee, therefore thou art different” (Ezek. 16:15–34). “Adultery meant that the marriage contract was null and void” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 830). “Israel indeed forgot the love of her youth when God first entered into the covenant relationship with her ([Ezek. 16] v. 22)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 574). 3. *She was separated*. “Thus saith Jehovah, **Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, wherewith I have put her away?** Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities were ye sold, and for your transgressions was your mother put away” (Isa. 50:1). “God spoke to Isaiah the prophet stating that He had not yet divorced His wife... In the days of Isaiah, God and Israel were not divorced, but they were separated” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 832). “According to Deuteronomy 24:1, if a husband wished to divorce his wife, he had to write out a decree, or what is better known as a bill of divorcement. After having written it out in long-hand, he would give it to his wife and then the divorce was final” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 576). “In the days of Isaiah, God and Israel were not divorced, but they were separated. This separation was due to Israel’s adultery and lasted approximately one hundred years” (*ibid.*). 4. *She was divorced*. “Moreover Jehovah said unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these things, She will return unto me; but she returned not: and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. And I saw, when, for this very cause that backsliding Israel had committed adultery, **I had put her away and given her a bill of divorce-**

ment, yet treacherous Judah her sister feared not; but she also went and played the harlot. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that the land was polluted, and she committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 3:6-10). “To a great extent, almost all of Jeremiah can be called God’s bill of divorcement of Israel, but especially the passage now under consideration [3:6-10]” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 832). “The Book of Hosea was God’s bill of divorcement of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and the Book of Jeremiah is the bill of divorcement of the Southern Kingdom of Judah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 577). 5. *She was punished*. “Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness uncovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers; and because of all the idols of thy abominations, and for the blood of thy children, that thou didst give unto them; therefore behold, **I will gather all thy lovers**, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all them that thou hast loved, with all them that thou hast hated; **I will even gather them against thee on every side**, and will uncover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness. And **I will judge thee**, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and **I will bring upon thee the blood of wrath and jealousy. I will also give thee into their hand**, and they shall throw down thy vaulted place, and break down thy lofty places; and they shall strip thee of thy clothes, and take thy fair jewels; and **they shall leave thee naked and bare**. They shall also bring up a company against thee, and **they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords**. And **they shall burn thy houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee** in the sight of many women; and **I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou shalt also give no hire any more**. So will I cause my wrath toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry. Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast raged against me in all these things; therefore, behold, I also will bring thy way upon thy head, saith the Lord Jehovah: and **thou shalt not commit this lewdness** with all thine abominations” (Ezek. 16:35-43). “Thou hast borne **thy lewdness and thine abominations**, saith Jehovah. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **I will also deal with thee as thou hast done**, who hast **despised the oath in breaking the covenant**” (Ezek. 16:58-59). “Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she

shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now. For she did not know that I gave her the grain, and the new wine, and the oil, and multiplied unto her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. Therefore will I take back my grain in the time thereof, and my new wine in the season thereof, and will pluck away my wool and my flax which should have covered her nakedness. And now will **I uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers**, and none shall deliver her out of my hand. **I will also cause all her mirth to cease**, her feasts, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn assemblies. And **I will lay waste her vines and her fig-trees**, whereof she hath said, These are my hire that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. And I will visit upon her the days of the Baalim, unto which she burned incense, when she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith Jehovah” (Hos. 2:6–13). “All this punishment has a specific aim. The aim of this punishment is not so God can be vengeful and get His revenge upon Israel, but rather to cause her to stop sinning and to stop her adulteries ([Ezek. 16] v. 43)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 578). “God’s providential dealings with Israel ([Hos. 2] v. 6)” (*ibid.*, p. 579) “To this day, Israel is still in the fifth stage of her historical and prophetic relationship with Jehovah, her God. Israel is still in the period of punishment. This is evidenced by the persecutions of the Jews around the world and by the present worldwide dispersion. But there is one stage yet to come” (*ibid.*, p. 580). *and 6. She will be remarried.* “And Jehovah said unto me, Backsliding Israel hath showed herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith Jehovah; I will not look in anger upon you; for I am merciful, saith Jehovah, **I will not keep anger for ever**. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against Jehovah thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith Jehovah. **Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you:** and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and

all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: **neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart.** In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers” (Jer. 3:11–18). “Behold, the days come, **saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:** not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which **my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them,** saith Jehovah. But this is **the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). “The Jewish prophets did not leave things hopeless. They spoke of a coming day when Israel will again become the restored Wife of Jehovah. Of course, this will require a new marriage contract, and this marriage contract is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34. What is often known as the New Covenant is in many respects a new marriage contract that God will make with the two Houses of Israel and Judah (v. 31)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 834). “This new covenant of marriage ([Jer. 31] v. 31) will be necessary because the old marriage covenant was broken (v. 32)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 581). “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith Jehovah. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not: lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt spread abroad on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall possess the nations, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth; and the reproach of thy widowhood shalt thou remember no more. For **thy Maker is thy husband; Jehovah of hosts is his name:** and the Holy One of Israel is thy Redeemer; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For **Jehovah hath called thee as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even a wife of youth, when she is cast off, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gath-**

er thee. In overflowing wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting lovingkindness will I have mercy on thee, saith Jehovah thy Redeemer" (Isa. 54:1-8). "Like a new husband rejoices over his virgin bride, in this same way God will rejoice over His restored wife (v. 5)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 835). "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah; for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and **thy land shall be married**. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and **as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee**" (Isa. 62:4-5). "Nevertheless **I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant**. Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder sisters and thy younger; and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And **I will establish my covenant with thee**; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah; that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I have forgiven thee all that thou hast done, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 16:60-63). "This everlasting covenant is the same as the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 582). "Therefore, behold, **I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her**. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and **as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt**. And it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And **I will betroth thee unto me for ever**; yea, **I will betroth thee unto me** in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. **I will even betroth thee unto me** in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, saith Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall answer Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and

they shall say, Thou art my God” (Hos. 2:14–23). “Israel will again be allured into the wilderness (in the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah) where God will speak to her heart in courtship” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 584) “The Jewish prophets did not leave things in a state of hopelessness” (*ibid.*, p. 581).

The church, on the other hand, is the bride of Christ. “For **the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.** So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though **she is joined to another man.** Therefore, my brethren, **you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead,** in order that we might bear fruit for God” (Rom. 7:2-4). “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I **betrothed** you to one husband, that **to Christ** I might present you as **a pure virgin**” (2 Cor. 11:2). “Husbands, love your wives, just as **Christ** also loved the church and **gave Himself** up for her; that He might sanctify her, having **cleansed her by the washing of water** with the word, **that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle** or any such thing; but that she should be **holy and blameless**” (Eph. 5:25–27). “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:6–8). “There is a totally different picture in the Scriptures regarding the Church... a betrothed bride that is not yet joined to her husband” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 585). “2 Corinthians 11:2... they were espoused to one husband for the purpose of eventually being presented as a pure virgin to the Messiah. The means by which this will be accomplished is the process of sanctification” (*ibid.*, p. 586). “Unlike Israel, who was guilty of adultery, when the union comes between the Messiah and the Church, the Church will be presented as a pure virgin” (*ibid.*). “Ephesians 5:25–27... When this process is finally complete, the Church will be presented without spot (no visible defilement), without wrinkle (no evidence of age or corruption), and holy, without blemish (no evidence of sin)” (*ibid.*).

The church and Israel have differing relationships to Christ. “To Israel, Christ is Messiah, Immanuel, and King with all that those appellations imply. To the Church, Christ is Savior, Lord, Bridegroom and Head” [quoting Chafer, *ST*, 4:50] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 426). “Only when one sees two separate entities, Israel as the Wife of Jehovah and the Church as the Bride of Messiah, do all such contradictions vanish” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 590).

The church and Israel will have differing roles in the Millennial Kingdom. “Not only is there a distinction between Israel and the Church today, that distinction will also be true in the future kingdom. Israel as a nation will be in her Promised Land and ‘in her kingdom glory,’ while the Church will have a world-wide position as she will ‘be coreigning with Christ’” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:33] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 420).

Dr. Fruchtenbaum sums up his Israelology (in contradistinction to his theology of the church): “Dispensationalist writers simply integrate their Israelology into their Ecclesiology and their Eschatology. However, the subject of Israel and the key role it plays in Scripture is worthy of its own distinct place in Systematic Theology” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 559). “...Paul’s Israelology in Romans 9-11” (*ibid.*, p. 711) “Of the twenty-one epistles, five were specifically written to Jewish believers and are, therefore, most relevant to Israelology: Hebrews, James, 1 and II Peter, and Jude” (*ibid.*, p. 765).

Regarding Israel *past*, “Israel as a nation was the object of a national election which put them in a place of privilege and blessing. This did not guarantee the salvation of every Jew, since salvation is a result of individual election. Those individually elected become believers and make up the Remnant of Israel. While the national election did not guarantee salvation, it did guarantee Israel’s survival as a people” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 560). “Because of this national election, God entered into five covenants with Israel, four of which were unconditional and eternal, while one was conditional and temporary. The first covenant was the Abrahamic Covenant, which contained three key elements: a seed or a nation, a land, and blessings. The nation is the Jewish nation; the land is Canaan, or Palestine, or the Land of Israel; and the blessings were spiritual blessings which were also destined to extend to the Gentiles. The second covenant was the Mosaic Covenant, the only one which was conditional and temporary. It contained the Law of Moses, which was a rule of life for Israel, for the Old Testament saint, but it never was a way or means of salvation. It promised blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. The third covenant is the Palestinian Covenant which amplified the land aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant, promising a world-wide scattering and dispersion, followed by a

world-wide regathering into the land. The fourth covenant is the Davidic Covenant, which amplified the seed aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant. When used as a collective singular, the *seed* refers to the Jewish nation. When it is used as an absolute singular, it refers to the Messiah. This covenant assures the continuance of the House of David, for the Messiah will come from him. Furthermore, it promised three eternal things: a house, a kingdom, and a throne. The eternity of the house, kingdom, and throne is guaranteed because the seed of David culminates in a descendant Who is Himself eternal. The fifth covenant is the New Covenant, which amplifies the blessing aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant, especially spiritual blessings. This covenant promised a national salvation of Israel. The covenant contained both physical and spiritual promises” (*ibid.*). “As for the Kingdom of God, Dispensationalists see two major facets of God’s kingdom program. The first facet is the Universal Kingdom or the Eternal Kingdom, which is God’s rule over His creation by means of His sovereignty and providence. As the names imply, it is both universal (over all creation) and eternal (God’s rule has no beginning or end). The second facet is known as the Theocratic Kingdom or Mediatorial Kingdom, which is God’s rule through human mediators. While a form of theocracy existed since Adam, it had a unique display with God’s rule over Israel. The Theocratic Kingdom over Israel began with Moses and continued in its purely mediatorial form from Moses to Joshua, through the Judges, until Samuel. It then took a monarchical form from Saul to Zedekiah. The Theocratic Kingdom ended with the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. At that time, the Theocratic Kingdom in history ended and the Times of the Gentiles began. As the quality of the Theocratic Kingdom declined, the prophets spoke of a future facet of the kingdom program, the Messianic Kingdom, when God will exercise His rule through the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 561).

Regarding Israel *present*, “When Jesus came, He offered to Israel the very kingdom which the prophets spoke of, the Messianic Kingdom, the earthly kingdom. In fulfillment of prophecy and the plan of God, Israel rejected the Messiah. As a result, the offer of the millennial form of the kingdom was rescinded, destined to be reoffered to a future Jewish generation, while the present generation was placed under a divine judgment that came in A.D. 70. In place of setting up the Messianic Kingdom following His death and resurrection, He instead returned to the Father. In place of the Messianic Kingdom, a different facet of God’s kingdom program was inaugurated, which is the Mystery Kingdom. This is the way God’s rule is manifested between the Jewish rejection of the Messiah and the Jewish acceptance of the Messiah. The Mystery Kingdom is not the Church, though the

Church is included in that kingdom. The Mystery Kingdom is basically defined as ‘Christendom’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 561). “Christ also announced the formation of a new entity, distinct from Israel, through which the message of salvation is to go forth: the Church. The Church began in Acts two when the Holy Spirit began the work of Spirit baptism, and it is composed of all believers, Jews and Gentiles, from Acts two until the Rapture of the Church. The Church is not the new Israel or the spiritual Israel, but the *one new man*. She has not taken over Israel’s covenants, blessings or promises, nor are God’s promises to Israel being fulfilled in or through the Church. However, the Church is a partaker of Jewish spiritual blessings. The Jewish covenants contained both physical and spiritual promises. The physical promises were limited to the Jews, but the spiritual promises were to extend to the Gentiles. When the Church became a *partaker*, this was fulfilled and is still being fulfilled, but this does not make the Church Israel or the Kingdom of God” (*ibid.*). “As for Romans 9-11, the two Israels are not physical Israel and the Church, but physical Israel and spiritual Israel. Both Israels are composed of Jews only. Physical Israel includes all Jews, but spiritual Israel is only those Jews who believe. This is the same as the *Israel of God* of Galatians 6:16 and the Remnant of Israel. While the majority of the Jews have not believed, this does not mean that God has cast away His people. The truth is, the majority have always disbelieved while a minority, the remnant, believed. Today, also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. Some believe that this remnant ceases to be part of the Commonwealth of Israel and becomes a member of the Church only, while others see Jewish believers to be in both groups. As for the Olive Tree, this is not the Church or Israel, but it is the place of blessing, rooted in the patriarchs and the Jewish covenants. The natural branches are Jews, and the wild olive branches are the Gentiles. Both groups have believers in the place of blessing. Today, Israel suffers under a judicial blindness, but this blindness is partial so that there is still a remnant. It is temporary until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. Today, God is taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name” (*ibid.*, p. 562).

Regarding Israel *future*, “The fullness of the Gentiles comes when the set number of Gentiles God has ordained for the Church is complete, and then she is raptured. Because of the distinction that is maintained between Israel and the Church, Dispensationalists are pretribulationists” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 562). “Israel will undergo the seven years of Tribulation and is to be identified with the Woman of Revelation 12. Israel will suffer persecution during this period, and many will die; but one-third of the nation will survive. The 144,000 are a special class within Israel who will be used to

proclaim the gospel world-wide, resulting in the salvation of myriads of Gentiles” (*ibid.*). “At some point in relationship to the second coming, Israel will experience a national salvation; for the blindness will be removed, and all Israel will be saved. Israel will also experience a national regathering and restoration back into the land and will have a prominent place above the Gentile nations in the Messianic Kingdom. Some, but not all, believe that Israel will undergo a special judgment in conjunction with the second coming to determine who will or who will not enter this kingdom. Others feel the tribulation itself is the judgment upon Israel and so a separate judgment is not necessary” (*ibid.*). “In the Messianic Kingdom, which is to last a literal one thousand years, Israel will enjoy, receive, and fulfill all the promises and blessings of the four unconditional covenants. The saved nation will have her own distinct identity and will not be amalgamated into the Church. As for the Church, she will have a separate role in the kingdom as co-reigners with Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 563).

Regarding *heavenly vs. earthly hopes*, “Chafer’s [*Systematic Theology*, 1:xiv-xv] distinctions are several, many of which are still accepted by most Dispensationalists today, but not all. For example, Chafer makes a sharp distinction between ‘earthly’ and ‘heavenly,’ with Israel’s program being ‘earthly’ and the Church’s being ‘heavenly.’ This need not be true, nor is it germane to Dispensationalism. Certainly in the Eternal State Israel will have a ‘heavenly’ future, while in the Millennium the Church will have an ‘earthly’ future. It would be better to view the roles of Israel and the Church as being different while sharing both an earthly and heavenly future. What is germane to Dispensationalism is that in this age, humanity is divided into three divisions: Jews, Gentiles and the Church” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 420). “Not all Dispensationalists will agree with Chafer here. While it may be true that the primary divine purpose for Israel is earthly, it is not exclusively so, for Israel is also destined to be in the heavenly Jerusalem in the Eternal State. It may also be true that the primary divine purpose for the Church is heavenly, but it is not exclusively so since the Church is to have a major role on earth during the Millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 422). “Both Israel and the Church will live eternally in the New Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 429). (See our discussion of the ongoing Jew/Gentile distinction in the Eternal Order in our chapter *The Eternal Order*.)

The Church is Not the Kingdom

The Church is not the Kingdom. See our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom is not the church in our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*.

What the Church Is

So then, if the church is not Israel and the church is not the Kingdom, then *what is she?* “Next to the field of eschatology itself, ecclesiology offers the greatest contrast between the amillennial and premillennial views” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 80).

The church is *an entirely new entity*. “The church simply didn’t exist in the Old Testament” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:22). “...the parables of Matthew 13... Christ... He announced the introduction of a new form of the kingdom, one that would span the period from Israel’s rejection of Christ until Israel’s future reception of Christ at the Second Advent. This present age...” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 225) “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I **will build** My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18). “[Matt. 16:18]... the church... He did not say that He had been building it, but that He was yet to do so” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 139). “This revelation of the new form through which the theocracy would be administered in this present age was followed by a specific prophecy: ‘I will build My church’ ([Matt.] 16:18). The nature and function of the church is not explained here, but will be revealed in its historical development in the Book of Acts, with its doctrines explained in the Epistles” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 226). “The Church is first mentioned in Matthew 16:18” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 40). “for **John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now**” (Acts 1:5). “And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly **there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind**, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And **there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them**” (Acts 2:1–3). “...the church did not begin before the baptism of the Spirit occurred (Pentecost—Acts 1:5; 2:1-3)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:23). “This is a new entity in two ways. First, it did not exist before Pentecost and, second, it was not something prophetically revealed in the Old Testament” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 432). “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood**” (Acts 20:28). “‘the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood’ (Acts 20:28)... Paul therefore was declaring that Jesus acquired or obtained the church through his death, implying that Jesus did not have the church before He shed His blood” (Showers, *M*, p. 236). “Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called ‘Uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘Circumcision,’ which is performed in the flesh by human hands — remember that you were

at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. **But now** in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near **by the blood of Christ**. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might **make** the two into **one new man**, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. **AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;** for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone**, in whom the whole **building**, being fitted together is growing into a **holy temple** in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a **dwelling of God in the Spirit**" (Eph. 2:11-22). "The church could not exist until after the death of Christ... Ephesians 2:13-16... Gentiles, who used to be far off, now had been brought near 'by the blood of Christ' (v. 13)" (Showers, *M*, p. 235). "Since a building cannot be built without a foundation, and since the church's foundation consists of the apostles and New Testament prophets, the church could not have been built before the time of the apostles and New Testament prophets" (Showers, *M*, p. 237). "The Church is called the *one new man* in Ephesians 2:15... Paul mentioned three groups in this context (2:11-3:6): Israel, the Gentiles, and the *one new man*" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 683). "The same three groups are distinguished from each other in I Corinthians 10:32... This is a contrast made well after the Church has been established" (*ibid.*). "Give no offense either to **Jews** or to **Greeks** or to **the church of God**" (1 Cor. 10:32) "Therefore it says, '**When He ascended** on high, He led captive a host of captives, And **He gave gifts to men.**' (Now this expression, 'He ascended,' what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And **He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ**" (Eph. 4:8-12) "The church could not exist until after Christ's ascension" (Showers, *M*, p. 238). "In Ephesians 4:8, 11-12, Paul indicated that in conjunction with His ascen-

sion to heaven, Christ gave spiritual gifts to people so that the body of Christ, the church, could be built" (*ibid.*, p. 239).

The church can be *defined as an assembly of persons, the "body of Christ," the members of which have each been joined to Christ through Spirit baptism.* "For **by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). "He is also head of **the body, the church**; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything" (Col. 1:18). "The Christian Church is an association of believers in Christ, who, led by the same consciousness of God, truth and spirit, accept of the terms of salvation, repentance and faith, and continue in the use of the means of grace appointed by the Redeemer. It is an association exclusively for religious purposes, separate and distinct from civil or secular interests. It is different from the Kingdom once established in that State and religion are separated, hence involving no civil or State relationship, for members of all nations and States, without absolving their allegiance due as citizens to their respective civil powers, can become members of this exclusive religious organization. It is different from the Jewish [remnant], before and after the Theocratic rule, in that it embraces new ordinances, discarding the Mosaic, and is open to both Jew and Gentile by an expression and experience of faith in Jesus Christ. It was formed solely on account of the rejection of the Kingdom by the Jews, in order that through it a body of believers might be raised, through whom finally, when all gathered, the Kingdom might be reorganized in the most effective and triumphant manner. Originated for this special purpose it was designed, as its commencement proves, to be separate and distinct not only from the Jewish State but all other States. Union with secular powers was not contemplated, because it was not in accordance with the design of its establishment, viz.: to call and gather out of the nations and kingdoms a believing people. If the object had been to organize a Kingdom, we then undoubtedly would have had a specific form of government given to us, and direct declarations concerning the union of State and Church, and the exercise of civil and political power. The absence of such directions abundantly confirms our argument. It is necessarily outward so far as the persons, ordinances, assemblies, expansion, form of worship, etc., is concerned; and inward, so far as individual experience, adoption, union with Christ, etc., relates. It is a community of saints, who, while occupying various positions in life, are not deprived by it of civil, social, or family relations, but rather by the formation of such a community find their conduct in all these relations regulated and controlled. Having no ecclesias-

tical constitution for government (such as were afterward produced by human invention), given by divine authority, it rests in a few indispensable commands respecting its organization and perpetuity, acknowledging in these the Sovereignty of God and the Headship of Christ, and constantly realizing by obedience to the religious and moral precepts, of which it is the guardian, that it is under Divine guidance, and in reality the product of Divine power and grace” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:609). “This interpretation of the Church... is substantially that adopted by many of our opponents, who, however, are forced by their theories to add to it the notion of an existing predicted Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 610). “The unsaved members of Israel were as much the Mosaic Covenant people of God as were the saved members... By contrast, the church (not organized Christendom, but the true body of Christ formed by Spirit baptism) consists only of saved or regenerated members” (Showers, *M*, p. 231). “The Church is composed of all true believers from Pentecost in Acts two until the Rapture of the Church. The Rapture excludes the Old Testament saints. It also excludes the Tribulation saints. The only saints who will be raptured are the Church saints. The Rapture passages clearly state that only those who are *in Christ* will partake of the Rapture. Throughout his writings, Paul uses terms such as *in Christ*, *in Jesus*, *in Jesus Christ*, *in Christ Jesus*, *in Him*, *in Whom*, *in the Lord*, in a very technical way, referring to those who were baptized by the Spirit into the Body of the Messiah, which only began in Acts two” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 142). “The Church... The primary use of the word is ‘of the born-again ones of all generations since Pentecost’” [quoting Chafer, *The Kingdom in History and Prophecy*, pp. 15-16] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 442). “The New Testament Greek word for ‘church,’ *ekklesia*, from which we get the word *ecclesiastical*, means ‘an assembly of persons’” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:43). “Not only are all saved persons in the universal church, but only saved people are in it. Unlike the local church which, unfortunately, contains both wheat and tares (Matt. 13:24-30), the universal church has a totally and completely regenerate membership, made up only of sheep. The local church has ‘wolves’ (Acts 20:28-29), ‘false brethren’ (Gal. 2:4 NKJV), ‘unbelievers’ (1 Cor. 14:23), and ‘certain men [who] crept in from the outside’ (Jude 4 NKJV)” (*ibid.*, p. 55). “Other than the early post-Pentecost church in Jerusalem, there never has been and never will be a truly catholic (universal) church on earth. Neither the Roman nor the Greek branch of Christendom is truly catholic; the only truly catholic church today is the spiritual body of Christ, which is all true believers in whatever local church or denomination. Never does the bible use the word *church* to denote one visible ecclesiastical union that is the sole organization representing Christ

on earth; the repeated use of the word *churches* reveals that only in a general, collective sense can we speak of the many self-governing, independent churches that are based on New Testament teaching as the ‘church’ on earth. Only the invisible church is truly universal” (*ibid.*). “The Reformers placed even more emphasis on the universal church’s invisible nature, in opposition to the Catholic stress on one visible organization” (*ibid.*, p. 61). “...the invisible church is Christ’s spiritual body, which is *His exclusive work*, while the local visible church(es) are *a work of Christ’s disciples on earth*” (*ibid.*, p. 65). “There is no one visible church: There are many visible churches—with one invisible Head, Christ—that are to be based on the teachings of His infallible Word (the Bible). These doctrines are best expressed in the helpful but not infallible ecumenical confessions, creeds, and councils of the churches in the first five hundred years after the earthly life of Jesus. Accordingly, the root basis for historic orthodoxy is found in *one Bible, two testaments* (Old and New), *three creeds* (Apostles” [c. 150], Nicene [325], Athanasian [428]), *four councils* (Nicea [325], First Constantinople [381], Ephesus [431], Chalcedon [451]), and *five centuries*. After this there was increasingly no catholicity, little unity, and progressive unorthodoxy, which culminated in the Roman Catholic Council of Trent’s (1545-1563) ‘infallible’ decisions, including the rejection of crucial Protestant teachings, such as salvation being (1) by faith alone; (2) based on the Bible alone; (3) accomplished by the work of Christ alone; and (4) for the glory of God alone (1 Cor. 10:31)” (*ibid.*, p. 101). “Whether, then, you eat or drink or **whatever you do, do all to the glory of God**” (1 Cor. 10:31).

The church is *a spiritual seed of Abraham*. “and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you, that **God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham**” (Matt. 3:9). “For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to **all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham**, who is the father of us all” (Rom. 4:16) “Even so **Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS**. Therefore, be sure that **it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham**. And the **Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘ALL THE NATIONS SHALL BE BLESSED IN YOU.’** So then **those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer**” (Gal. 3:6–9). “in order that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles**, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it. Now **the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one, 'And to your seed,' that is, Christ.** What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise" (Gal. 3:14-18). **"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring [seed], heirs according to promise"** (Gal. 3:28-29). "in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the **adoption as sons**" (Gal. 4:5). "Abraham's seed, however produced, natural or engrafted, receive the Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:230). "...adopted as the seed of Abraham. Precisely here was the mystery, which baffled even the apostles until specially enlightened" (*ibid.*, p. 233). "The Kingdom of God is expressly covenanted to the seed of Abraham (but to the faithful, obedient seed); now how can the covenanted promises respecting the Kingdom in this line be carried out into realization when the nation embracing that seed is rejected? Is this rejection final and perpetual, or is it removable and temporary? Can the nation or people who are to specially receive what the Jewish nation then lost by its non-repentance, obtain it without any reference to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, i.e. without, in some way, becoming, by adoption, or engrafting, or incorporation, the seed of Abraham? Remember that God confirmed his promises by oath, and that He is faithful—not given to variableness or change—and, therefore, unless these questions can be satisfactorily and consistently answered, so that the promise still runs in the covenanted Abrahamic line, there would be a sad and unwarranted deficiency somewhere" (*ibid.*, p. 387). "They cannot be gathered out or selected, as multitudes now vainly imagine and foolishly boast, without any regard whatever to the old covenanted line. They must be, if God is sincere and mindful of His oath, adopted as Abraham's seed" (*ibid.*). "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.'... God would perform so miraculous a creative act rather than leave His covenant promises unfulfilled" (*ibid.*). "Hence the apostle in Gal. 3 tells us (v. 7) 'Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.' But why become the children of Abraham? Because, as he shows, verses 14-18, the promises and inheritance are given through him,

and we must be related to Abraham in order to receive and inherit the same. Therefore he goes on and insists that this very essential relationship is established in and through Jesus Christ, and adds: ‘for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to promise.’ Thus then (ch. 4:5) receiving ‘the adoption of sons,’ because united and identified with Christ, who is the chief inheritor under the Abrahamic covenant, we become co-heirs with Him. This marvelously simple arrangement, introducing mercy and grace to us Gentiles, preserves the covenanted promises intact and confirms them” (*ibid.*, p. 396). “...necessity for our becoming the seed of Abraham in order to inherit” (*ibid.*, p. 397). “We cannot too strongly insist upon this necessary engrafting of Gentile believers, so that by virtue of a real relationship, they, being regarded by God Himself as of the seed of Abraham, may inherit” (*ibid.*). “In treatises on Justification by Faith (by which we become engrafted) we find, from beginning to end, no allusion whatever to the Patriarchs and the covenants, just as if the present dispensation was separate, unconnected, and independent of all others. This is a serious, fundamental blunder, violating unity, and making the election and covenants of little value” (*ibid.*). “These chosen ones, becoming such through adoption, ‘shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob (to whom the covenant was given) in the Kingdom of heaven,’ etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 402). “The establishment of the Ch. Church is explained in the New Test, to be a positive necessity in order, while the elect Jewish nation is for a determined time held in abeyance, that a seed may be gathered out to Abraham, and an unbroken line of election be continued” (*ibid.*, 3:526). “Two distinct lines of seed were promised to Abraham. One, an earthly seed, to be like the dust of the earth, without number (Gen. 13:16), centered wholly in the earth by a relationship of physical generation: the other seed were likened to the stars of heaven, without number (Gen. 15:5), centered wholly in the heavenlies by a relationship of Spirit regeneration, which is the present answer of God to all true Abrahamic faith (Rom. 4:1-5)” (Chafer, *S*, C2:16/37). “**And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered**” (Gen. 13:16). “**And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be**” (Gen. 15:5). “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about; but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? **AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM**

AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to **the one who** does not work, but **believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness**” (Rom. 4:1–5) “There are, then, three different senses in which one can be a child of Abraham. First, there is the natural lineage, or natural seed. This is limited largely to the descendants of Jacob in the twelve tribes. To them God promises to be their God. To them was given the law. To them was given the land of Israel in the Old Testament. With them God dealt in a special way. Second, there are the Israelites who believed in God, who kept the law, and who met the conditions of present enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant. Those who ultimately possess the land in the future millennium will also be of spiritual Israel. Third, there is the spiritual seed of Abraham who are not natural Israelites. Here is where the promise to “all the families of the earth” comes in. This is the express application of this phrase in Galatians 3:6-9... in other words, the children of Abraham (spiritually) who come from the heathen or Gentiles fulfill that aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant which dealt with Gentiles in the first place, not the promises pertaining to Israel. The only sense in which Gentiles can be Abraham’s seed in the Galatians context is to be “in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). It follows: “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29). They are Abraham’s seed in the spiritual sense only and heirs of the promise given “to all the families of the earth”” [quoting John F. Walvoord, *Millennial Series*, Bibliotheca Sacra, 108:420] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 87) “Gentiles, by faith in Christ and by virtue of their relationship to Christ, who is a descendant of Abraham, are called the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 290). “The saved in every age, in a sense, are Abraham’s seed (Gal. 3:29)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 508). “All believers are the spiritual seed of Abraham, but that does not make them all ‘spiritual Jews’ or ‘spiritual Israel,’ any more than all physical members of the physical seed of Abraham are physical Jews or physical Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 100). “When the New Testament speaks of the relationship of the Gentiles to the spiritual blessing of the Jewish covenants, it speaks in terms of the Gentiles being ‘grafted’ into a Jewish olive tree, and of becoming ‘partakers’ with the Jews of these Jewish spiritual blessings, but not taker-overs of these blessings” (*ibid.*, p. 177). “In fact, the New Testament never equates the spiritual seed of Abraham with either Israel or ‘spiritual Israel’” (*ibid.*, p. 188). “What he [Hoekema] has proved is that all believers are of the spiritual seed of Abraham. Dispensationalists believe the same thing. What he has not proved is that the seed of Abraham equals Israel or spiritual Israel” (*ibid.*). “While all believers are said to be of

the seed of Abraham, they are *never* said to be of the seed of Jacob” (*ibid.*, p. 295). “What the Church is now enjoying are the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic and New Covenants” (*ibid.*, p. 355). “Ryrie [in *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 148-150] responds by showing that ‘the Church is a seed of Abraham, but this does not mean that the Church is Israel.’ The reason is ‘that the Scriptures speak of more than one kind of seed born to Abraham,’ and he lists three such seeds: ‘the natural seed, the physical descendants of Abraham,’ by which Ryrie means the Jews, but he could also have included the Arabs; the Messiah, who is the unique individual Seed of Abraham; and, ‘Christians are Abraham’s seed,’ meaning, the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 456). “Ryrie [in *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 148-150] further points out that ‘it is correct to call *some* of the spiritual seed of Abraham spiritual Israel, but not all,’ by which he means that only Jewish believers could legitimately be called spiritual Israel” (*ibid.*). “Scripturally, ‘the spiritual seed of Abraham does not mean Israel for Abraham is related to Israel as a national father, and he is related to believing individuals of all nations (including the Jewish) who believe, as a spiritual father.’ The obvious fact is that ‘believers as a *group* are not called spiritual Israel” [quoting Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 148-150] (*ibid.*). “What is true of the physical is also true of the spiritual realm: being children of Abraham by faith is not enough to make one a Jew” (*ibid.*, p. 701). “Being a child of Abraham alone is not enough to make one a Jew... one must be a child of Jacob to be a Jew” (*ibid.*). “It should be noted that the term *seed of Abraham* is used in four different senses in the Scriptures. First, it refers to the physical seed of Abraham. This is the natural seed who are physical descendants of Abraham. While primarily it would be a reference to Jews, it would also include the Arabs. The point is that not all physical descendants of Abraham are Jews. In fact, most of them are Arabs. In the Old Testament, however, the term always refers to the physical descendants of Abraham who are Jews. However, the *seed of Abraham* is not equal to Israel; the *seed of Abraham* by itself does not mean that the seed is Israel. Second, it refers to the Messiah who is the unique individual Seed of Abraham (Heb. 2:16-17). Third, the believers today, the Church is the spiritual seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29). This seed includes the Jews who are physical descendants of Abraham and Gentiles who are not physical descendants of Abraham who have Abraham’s faith. The question is: is the spiritual seed of Abraham ever called *Israel*? The answer is: No! The spiritual seed are partakers of Jewish spiritual blessings, but are never said to become partakers of the physical, material, or national promises. Fourth, the term *seed of Abraham* is sometimes synonymous with the Remnant of Israel and is a reference to Jewish believers (Isa. 41:8;

Rom. 9:6; Heb. 2:16). Only some of the spiritual seed then are truly *Israel*: the Jewish believers who are also part of ethnic Israel and the Israel of God. But the spiritual seed of Abraham as a unit is never referred to as Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 702). “But thou, **[ethnic] Israel**, my servant, **Jacob** whom I have chosen, **the seed of Abraham** my friend” (Isa. 41:8) “But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For **they are not all [spiritual] Israel who are descended from [ethnic] Israel**” (Rom. 9:6) “**And if you belong to Christ, then you [the church] are Abraham’s offspring**, heirs according to promise” (Gal. 3:29). “For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to **the descendant of Abraham [Jesus]**. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:16–17). “What Covenant Theologians need to prove their case once and for all is a statement that all believers are of ‘the seed of Jacob’; this would go a long way to prove that the Church is spiritual Israel or that Gentile Christians are spiritual Jews. This is exactly what they do not have” (*ibid.*). “...we, the church, are Abraham’s spiritual seed” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:19). “That Abraham has two ‘seeds,’ one physical and one spiritual, does not mean the latter replaces the former; *the spiritual seed is parallel, not a replacement*. There is a future for Abraham’s physical descendants; indeed, as will be shown, all outstanding land- and kingdom-promises to Israel will be fulfilled at the Second Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 443). “Paul makes it clear that Abraham has both physical and spiritual descendants (Rom. 4:16)” (*ibid.*, p. 447) “Abraham has two ‘seeds,’ physical and spiritual; the spiritual seed is a parallel (not a replacement) seed” (*ibid.*, p. 540). “Abraham having two sets of offspring does not mean one replaces the other; once again, the spiritual seed is a parallel seed, not a replacement seed” (*ibid.*, p. 581).

She is *the bride of Christ*. “For **the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband**. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though **she is joined to another man**. Therefore, my brethren, **you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead**, in order that we might bear fruit for God” (Rom. 7:2-4). “**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her**, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. **So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.** He who loves his own wife loves himself; for **no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. For this reason A man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church**” (Eph. 5:25-32). “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin**” (2 Cor. 11:2). “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of **the Lamb** has come and **His bride** has made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7). “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb**’” (Rev. 21:9). (See our discussion of the fact that one of the *current* purposes of this Church Age is to espouse a bride to Christ in our section *The Current Purpose of the Church Age* below, our discussion of the fact that one of the *ultimate* purposes of the church is to be Christ’s wife in our section *The Ultimate (Future) Purpose of the Church* below, and our discussion of the bridegroom’s fetching of the bride in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

She is *an organism, not an organization*. Some groups, including the Roman Catholic Church and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, claim to be the one and only visible, catholic/universal church (or organization), but these groups are in error. *The church is not a visible organization, but rather an invisible organism*. “Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE of you, WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another**” (Eph. 4:25). “For just as **we have many members in one body** and all the members do not have the same function, so **we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another**” (Rom. 12:4–5). “For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For **by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:12–13). “But now **there are many members, but one body**” (1 Cor. 12:20). “**There is one body** and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:4-5). “And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to

which indeed **you were called in one body**; and be thankful” (Col. 3:15). “The fact that the Church is a ‘Body’ made up of ‘living members’ shows that it is not an ‘Organization,’ but an ‘ORGANISM.’ An ‘Organization’ is made up of distinct units like the doors, windows, roof, floors, etc., of a building, that may be removed and replaced by new parts without destroying the integrity of the building; but a human body is an organism. You cannot remove an eye, or ear, or arm, or foot, or even a finger nail or tooth, without destroying the integrity of the body and causing a mutilation. So we see from this for Christ to lose One Member of His Body (the Church) is to MUTILATE it” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 75). “The ‘Kingdom’ is an outward, visible and earthly ‘POLITICAL ORGANIZATION,’ and is to be ‘set up’ on the earth (Dan. 2:44); while the ‘Church’ is an invisible and heavenly ‘SPIRITUAL ORGANISM’ that is to be ‘caught out’” (*ibid.*, p. 87). “In contrast to Israel, which nation was an organization or commonwealth (Eph 2:12), and in contrast to the visible church, which is merely a human systemization, the true Church is an organism. The term organism indicates that the thing specified is permeated throughout all its parts with one common life” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:68). “The Church, like the human body, is self-developing” (*ibid.*, p. 70). “There is, however, no record of an enrollment of church members, nor is there any example in the New Testament of a person joining a church” (*ibid.*, p. 145). “Organization is wisdom’s first step for a people associated together in a common cause; but organization is for a purpose and therefore is not the purpose itself” (*ibid.*, p. 150). “In no passage is there an intimation that these churches were federated or under the authority of a super-government. On the other hand, nothing is said against the federation of churches provided it does not hinder the direct and immediate leadership of the Holy Spirit in the local church. That divine leadership is a priceless reality, if the church is willing to avail itself of it; yet unspiritual authorities too often dominate the church to the exclusion of all experience in the matter of the Spirit’s guidance. As details in the believer’s life under grace are left for the leading of the Spirit (Gal 5:18 [‘But **if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.**’]), in like manner details in church life are accorded the same gracious latitude” (*ibid.*, p. 152). “Israel is always regarded as a nation, a theocracy, and a people among whom God dwells, while the church is regarded as a living organism in whom Christ dwells, united by vital life and growing by inner spiritual supply” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 33). “Premillennial treatments of ecclesiology tend to enlarge the concept of the church as the body of Christ—an organism rather than an organization—and give extended treatment to the spiritual life of the believer” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 81). “While it has a visible manifesta-

tion in the local church, the universal church as such is not a *visible organization* (like the Roman Catholic Church); rather, it is an *invisible organism*, a living body that grows daily” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:51). “*The Holy Spirit, who indwells the church, is an all-sufficient guide.* Because of the omnipotent Spirit, the church has no need for a visible head or a super-organization imposing its will on the local congregations. Seven times in Revelation 2-3 we read: ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches’ (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 NIV). *The Spirit of God speaking through the Word of God is sufficient to guide the church of God*” (*ibid.*, p. 125). “The universal church is an organism; a local church is an organization” (*ibid.*, p. 126). “There are no denominations in heaven” (*ibid.*) “God foreknew what human history has revealed to us about the correlation of power to corruption, and He apparently deemed that His visible church would be best off with authority distributed throughout many churches rather than localized in one top-heavy organization. For example, poisoning one well doesn’t affect other disconnected wells, but poisoning a city’s central water supply will affect everything and everyone tapped into it. Similarly, one individual congregation diseased by false teaching doesn’t directly pollute others the way that false teaching in a hierarchical organization, coming from the top down, will pervade all the churches under its domain. Human depravity calls for the existence of independent, self-governing churches. God’s wisdom as to our depravity is also manifest inside the local church; congregational government contains a check-and-balance structure not found in elder-rule or bishop-rule models. In the multitude of counsel there is wisdom: The majority of the congregation is less likely to deviate from the truth than one or a few leaders” (*ibid.*, p. 127). “Christ has no vicar over earth; He Himself heads His church universal” (*ibid.*, p. 133). “In the New Testament the visible church had no hierarchy; each church was independent and congregational in form” (*ibid.*, p. 138). “As time has passed, the church presided over by the bishop of Rome (as Peter’s successor) has assumed authority to coerce people to accept its truth” (*ibid.*, p. 139). “Where, then, is the true visible church? Organizationally, there is none, and in fact, there never was one except for a short time in Jerusalem after Pentecost. Rather, as shown earlier, from the earliest times there was not one church but many independent, autonomous New Testament churches (Acts 14:23), each built on the authority of apostolic teaching (Eph. 2:20; Acts 2:42) as inscripturated in the New Testament. Other than the one invisible universal church known as the ‘body of Christ,’ the only real sense in which there ever was one universal *visible* church on earth was the first one in Jerusalem before anyone died. The apostles themselves started many

churches that were not unified under one organizational structure. The only other way it is proper to speak of a universal visible church is as a generic generalization of the many individual self-governing churches that follow apostolic doctrine and practice. The true visible church of Christ on earth is not in any single denomination or organization of churches, but in the collective body of believers who confess the basic saving truths of the Christian faith. This spiritual brotherhood is composed of all true believers, whether Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox, whether Protestant or Anabaptist; in Christ there is neither ethnic nor denominational difference, and rather than any organizational banner or denominational structure, Christ alone is the invisible Head of all visible churches. While they have *unity* in doctrine and practice, they have no uniformity in ritual or governmental form. The visible unity of believers is the result of their manifestation in the doctrine and deeds of their invisible Head (Christ), regardless of what label is on the local assembly to which they belong” (*ibid.*, p. 718).

She is *an exclusively blessed entity*. **“I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours”** (John 17:9) **“The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one”** (John 17:22) **“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world”** (John 17:24). “There is clearly an exclusive aspect to the intercessory prayer of Christ: ‘I pray not for the world,’ He says, ‘but for them which thou hast given me’ ([John 17] vs. 9). The prayer is striking for its omissions. Beyond the ‘world’ in general which He specifically shuts out, there is no mention of the nation of Israel, nor of the Gentile nations, nor of the poor and afflicted, nor of the thousand and one heartbreaking problems of humanity with which the Messianic Kingdom of our Lord will be concerned. The prayer is wholly concerned with the preparation of a body which is to reign with Him in that future blessed Kingdom. For its members He prays: that they may behold the glory of the Son (vs. 24); that they may share in this glory (vs. 22); and that they may be with Him where He is (vs. 24)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 379). “...four closely allied concepts: Unanimity, uniformity, union, and unity... nor does uniformity of ritual presuppose organic union; nor does organic union involve unity of spirit... Unity prevails wherever there is a deep and genuine experience of Christ; for the fellowship of the new birth transcends all historical denominational boundaries...” [quoting Merrill Tenney, *The Gospel of John*, pp. 248-249] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:52) “There are no racial, national, or political distinctions;

Christ's body transcends all of these as a spiritual union of all believers since Pentecost" (*ibid.*, p. 54).

She is *the pillar and support of the truth*. "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, **that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures**" (1 Cor. 15:1–4) "but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is **the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth**" (1 Tim. 3:15). "fundamental truths, essential to the vitality of the Christian religion, as e.g. those relating to the person and work of Jesus, the Supernatural, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the conditions of salvation, the sacraments, etc." (Peters, *TTK*, 3:140)

She is *not limited to only those who espouse a particular eschatological view*. "We... disclaim all fellowship with that exclusive narrow spirit characteristic of some professing small bodies of believers, which condemn as unchristian and lost all who do not in all things conform to their doctrinal belief. Aside from Christ only being the Judge to decide in reference to the final status of professions, all, who cordially receive, believe and trust in Christ, exhibiting their faith by producing the enumerated graces of the Spirit, are to be recognized by us as Christians, no matter whether, on various points, they differ from us" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:226).

She is *identifiable*. She is identifiable by *her correct doctrine*, "but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is **the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth**" (1 Tim. 3:15). The evangelical church's doctrinal unity is remarkable, especially considering that its churches are independent, with no overarching hierarchical and/or coercive ecclesiastical structure. She is also identifiable by her *exhibition of the fruit of the Spirit*, "But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22–23). "The Spirit of God in the heart and the fruits of that Spirit in life, alone can attest the fact of a Christian, and the reality of his Christianity" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:139). And, she is identifiable by *her non-exhibition of cultic exclusivity*. "God's work is progressing, and when we see men and women converted, and exemplifying the fruits of the Spirit and the mind of Christ in their lives, no matter in what denomina-

tion, or sect, or organization, we see the sign of the approaching end, since the gathering out is advancing toward completion. Hence we have no sympathy for that class of men, who, under misguided zeal and bigotry, take the phrase 'Babylon and her daughters,' and, while giving in the main a correct exposition of its meaning, press it to an injurious extreme, as if it embraced without exception everything relating to Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, State and confederated churches, Confessional churches, in brief, all outside of their own limited little sect. This spirit is exemplified e.g. in Christadelphianism, Seventh-Day Adventism, Believers, Shakerism, Mormons, etc., etc. These men overlook several things: that while there has been evil in all these churches, there have also been godly men in them who were keenly alive to them, deplored, and resisted them; that to sit in wholesale and indiscriminate judgment upon all is to do gross injustice to that 'small flock' which was gathered out before such sects saw the light; that the call 'to come out of her' (which means to come into their own sect) addressed to men and women who are devoted to Jesus and willing to give up all for Him, if obeyed would only result in infusing the same narrow contracted view of 'charity' exhibited by those callers; that if this wholesale denunciation is to be received, no Christian Church can possibly be traced; that those who employ this language, call upon us to come into their distinctive faith, without being in agreement as to that faith (i.e. various sects use it, and each one claims to be the pure Church alone); that while the ultimate overthrow of the churches under Antichristian persecution is clearly taught, we are also taught that faithful men and women are in them, seeing that the true Church for many centuries has only been perpetuated through them, amid apostasy, contention for the truth, and persecution; that we must discriminate between piety, reverence for God's Word, love to Jesus, etc., and error, ignorance, etc., that may be allied with the same; that in the sight of heaven a condemnatory, uncharitable, and self-exalting spirit is even worse than the entertainment of error with a heart full of love to God and man. Hence such writings as Dr. Thomas's, Lincoln's, Barbour's, White's, etc. (however valuable in interesting matter), are vitiated by a species of denunciation, which claim, for their respective sects or organizations, per se to be the only true Church, and denounce all others as false and Babylonish. These are simply one-sided, and judge everything by their own humanly-devised standard, speaking evil of men, whose nobleness, usefulness, imitation of Christ, etc., is immensely above their belittling vision" (*ibid.*, p. 142).

And at this point in time, she is *not yet perfect*. "**Allow both to grow together until the harvest;** and in the time of the harvest I will say to

the reapers, First gather up the **tares** and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the **wheat** into my barn” (Matt. 13:30). “Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe’s people, that **there are quarrels among you**” (1 Cor. 1:10–11). “for you are still fleshly. For since **there is jealousy and strife among you**, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men” (1 Cor. 3:3)? “For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that **divisions exist among you**; and in part, I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you” (1 Cor. 11:18–19). “What is the source of **quarrels and conflicts among you**? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members” (James 4:1)? “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you**, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves” (2 Pet. 2:1). “We do not concede that the ‘Variations of Protestantism,’ or the disagreements of churches or the ‘denudation’ or retrogressive periods, can be urged against the claims of Christianity (for such a state is foretold and is a consequent of human freedom)” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:184).

The Mystery of the Church

In Scripture, the church is said to be a *mystery*. “**the mystery**, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into **the mystery** of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; **to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel**, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power” (Eph. 3:3-7).

This mystery was *revealed to Paul*. “But arise, and stand on your feet; **for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you**; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those

who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:16–18). “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to **my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested**, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:25–26) “For this reason *I, Paul*, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; that **by revelation there was made known to me the mystery**, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand **my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God**, who created all things; in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him” (Eph. 3:1–12). “In Rom. 16:25, 26 Paul speaks of what he calls ‘My Gospel’... It was the ‘revelation’ that was promised to Paul at his conversion (Acts 26:16-18), and which comprises the ‘Mysteries of God” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 151).

The church is called a mystery because *it was not foretold in the Old Testament*. “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested**, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen” (Rom. 16:25-27). “Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God’s wisdom

in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor. 2:6-8) “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him” (Eph. 1:4). **“the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;** to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of **the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God**, who created all things; in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him” (Eph. 3:3-12). “that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints**, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of **this mystery** among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:26-27). “...‘the reconciling of the world’—a radical change in God’s attitude toward men, such as the Old Testament Scriptures gave no indication of, and even the Gospels foreshadowed but vaguely” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 86). “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ **reconciling the world** to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18-19). “The prophecy of Isaiah is the fullest of all the prophecies, covering a time period from his own day to the creation of the new heavens and new earth, the present age excepted” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 113). “The kingdom now takes a form in which its administration is in the hands of men while the King is rejected and absent from the kingdom, a period not described in the Old Testament” (*ibid.*, p. 136). “There is no mention or prophecy of the church in the Old Testament Scriptures” (*ibid.*, p. 153). “The Holy Spirit had not revealed to the Old Testament prophets the

events which should transpire between the two advents” (*ibid.*, p. 258). “There is no hint of a possible position in Christ in any teaching of the law or of the kingdom. The believer’s present position in Christ was not seen even in type or prophecy. In the ages past it was a secret hid in the mind and heart of God” (Chafer, *G*, 85%). “It pleased God to keep this period of time and its purpose as a sacred secret, or mystery, until the time of its realization” (Chafer, *KHP*, 59%). “There was no secret regarding the ‘times of the Gentiles,’ with the attending present position of Israel in the world; but hidden within that era is a briefer period, ‘the fullness of the Gentiles’ (Rom. 11:25) about which nothing had been revealed. It is the church that is the ‘fullness of him that filleth all in all,’ and that body completed is the ‘perfect stature of the fullness of Christ’ (Eph. 1:23; 4:13; Acts 15:13, 14; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13). It is clear, therefore, that a mystery age has been thrust, as a parenthesis, into that which had been previously revealed for the fulfillment of the purpose of God” (*ibid.*, 67%). “The believer’s present position in Christ was not seen even in type or prophecy” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:98). “The Old Testament story runs directly into the kingdom age without the slightest recognition of the present age or its purpose, and the present age is, therefore, wholly dissociated from, and contributes nothing to, the Old Testament program” (*ibid.*, p. 168). “But for the Church intercalation—which was wholly unforeseen and is wholly unrelated to any divine purpose which precedes it or which follows it—Israel would be expected to pass directly from the crucifixion to her kingdom; for it was not the death of Christ and His resurrection which demanded the postponement, but rather an unforeseen age. It should require no great effort to note that the recognition of this age—wholly unforeseen, wholly unrelated, and itself a strict intercalation—is the key to the understanding of the entire program of God in the ages, and without that key only confusion can result” (*ibid.*, 5:349). “Mankind knew nothing about the church until the time of the apostles and New Testament prophets” (Showers, *M*, p. 235). “The Old Testament contained no revelation concerning the church” (*ibid.*). “Ladd affirms that ‘there are no clear prophecies of the Christian church as such in the Old Testament’” [quoting George Eldon Ladd, *The Last Things: An Eschatology for Laymen*, pp. 7-9] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 235). “The term *mystery*, as used in the New Testament, always refers to something totally unknown in the Old Testament but revealed for the first time in the New (Matt. 13:11, 35; Rom. 16:25-26; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 3:4-5, 9; Col. 1:26)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 18). “...the church, a mystery unknown in the Old Testament but now revealed to the apostles” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:482). “...the church age that intervened was not a divine afterthought; it was a ‘mystery’ (Rom. 11:25),

known and planned by God from all eternity (Eph. 1:4), unknown to humans until the coming of the apostles and New Testament prophets (2:20; cf. 3:3-6)" (*ibid.*, p. 487). "The Old Testament foretold a time of Gentile blessing but did not foresee the mystery of the church" (*ibid.*, p. 529). "Old Testament believers did not understand the mystery of how Jews and Gentiles share the same footing in Christ's body (see Eph. 3:3-6; Col. 1:25-27)" (*ibid.*, p. 545).

As is so also with the other Old Testament prophets, the church was *not foreseen by Daniel*. "The Theocracy, the Kingdom of God, being withdrawn is the reason why Daniel's prophecies, which give an epitome of the world's history down to the re-establishment of this Theocracy under the Messiah, make no mention (as they consistently could not) of a Kingdom of God on earth running contemporaneously (as many would have us to believe against fact) with the Gentile empires delineated by the Prophet" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:238). "However, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that Daniel did not see the intercalation period of the Church which would intervene between the two advents of Christ—a period which, as has been indicated, is an intrusion into Gentile times, but which is not emphasized as an extension of Gentile times; rather it is seen to be an added delay in the realization of the major divine purpose for Israel" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:331). "This age of the Church, it must be restated, is so perfectly isolated from the rest of human history that it draws nothing into itself of that gone before, nor does it contribute anything to that which follows. If this detached, disassociated, segregated character of this age is not granted, there can be no tracing of God's time-periods as they are revealed... the divine reckoning makes no place for this unforeseen and unpredicted age of grace, as it is manifested in the Church" (*ibid.*, p. 339). "Only the blindest form of Covenant Theology would ignore the overwhelming evidence in the Scriptures that the Church is not in Daniel's 483 years, or in any period of the Old Testament history" (*ibid.*, p. 364).

The are *four elements that comprise the mystery of the church*. "The fact that the Church is a mystery—with regard to the age of her outcalling, the truth that she is the Body of Christ, the truth that she will be the Bride of Christ, and the manner of her departure from this world—indicates her distinctive character as separate from all that has gone before or that will follow" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:251). "While the church is never expressly called a mystery in the New Testament, the term is used of the distinctive elements of truth that concern the church" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 28). "The various mystery aspects of the church combine to form a united testimony. The features therein revealed are foreign to divine revelation given in the Old Tes-

tament. They are related to the church as a distinct entity in the present age. They mark out the church as a separate purpose of God to be consummated before the resumption of the divine program for Israel” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 247). “While the Church itself is not called a mystery, a number of features relevant to the Church are. There are four such features” (Frucht-enbaum, *I*, p. 683).

The *first* element of the mystery of the church is *that Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body of Christ*. “the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into **the mystery** of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; **to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel**, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power” (Eph. 3:3-7). “...the mystery that in the present dispensation believers are united to Christ in a special relationship as members of a body of which He Himself is the head” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 110). “...the body of Christ. It did not exist before Pentecost, as there was no work of the baptism of the Spirit to form it. The concept of the body is foreign to the Old Testament and to Israel’s promises” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 24). “Living Israelites saved under the old economy were apparently placed into the body of Christ at Pentecost (cf. Ga. 3:28; Eph. 2:14-15)” (*ibid.*). “**There is neither Jew nor Greek**, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). “For He Himself is our peace, who **made both groups into one**, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might **make the two into one new man**, thus establishing peace” (Eph. 2:14-15) “The Old Testament strictly maintains the distinction between Jew and Gentile, distinguishes their hope, their promises, and God’s dealing with them. That is the main point of the Old Testament. The idea that Jews and Gentiles might be united in one entity without any distinction whatever, with equal privileges, rights, and fellowship is foreign to the Old Testament” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 237). “...the Ephesians 3 ‘mystery’... there would be a period of time when believing Jews and Gentiles would be united together as equals in one body” (Showers, *M*, p. 233). “What was not revealed is that Jewish and Gentile believers would be united into one body, the Church, and so the Gentiles would become ‘fellow heirs with the Jews in one body’ and become

‘partakers’ of Jewish spiritual blessings.” [quoting Chafer, *The Kingdom in History and Prophecy*, pp. 15-16] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 442). “The first such mystery that Walvoord [in *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 232-237] discusses is the ‘Mystery of the One Body.’ The content of this mystery is ‘that Gentiles have an absolute equality with the Jews in the body of Christ’” (*ibid.*, p. 467). “The body concept of Jewish and Gentile believers united into one body is designated as a *mystery* in Ephesians 3:1-12” (*ibid.*, p. 683). “But what exactly is this mystery? ...the *one new man* of [Eph.] 2:15... The mystery which was previously unrevealed was the fact that Jewish and Gentile believers will make up the one new entity, the Body of Messiah, the Church... *fellow-heirs*, set to share with Israel in the inheritance of the Kingdom... *fellow partakers of the promise*. The promise is the covenantal promise of spiritual blessings” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 672) “The mystery here is a union of Jews and Gentiles in one Body, unrevealed in the Old Testament” (*ibid.*, p. 673). “The mystery of how Jew and Gentile would be united as coheirs in the one spiritual body of Christ was kept secret in times past but was revealed to His New Testament ‘apostles and prophets’ (Eph. 3:3-5; cf. Col. 1:26-27)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:40). “This mystery of how God could provide for Gentile blessings promised through Abraham (Gen. 12:3)—*without* breaking His land and throne promises to Israel—was made possible by Christ and revealed in the New Testament age” (*ibid.*, p. 41).

The *second* element of the mystery is “*Christ in you.*” “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested** to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is **the riches of the glory of this mystery** among the Gentiles, **which is Christ in you**, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:24-27). “For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When **Christ, who is our life**, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory” (Col. 3:3-4). “that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of **God’s mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**” (Col. 2:2-3). “— a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but **Christ is all, and in all**” (Col. 3:11). “The truth is that the Old

Testament, while speaking of the coming Messiah both in suffering and in glory, never once anticipates such a situation as 'Christ in you.' While some passages picture the Holy Spirit as indwelling the believer in the coming kingdom, the Second Person is never so presented" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 238). "The second mystery is that of the 'Church as an Organism.' This mystery emphasizes the Church as an organism and the content of this mystery is 'Christ in you;' it is the mystery 'of the indwelling Christ'" [quoting Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 232-237] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 467). "The doctrine of Christ indwelling every believer, the Christ in you concept, is called a mystery in Colossians 1:24-27; 2:10-19; 3:4, 11" (*ibid.*, p. 683).

The *third* element of the mystery of the church is *the Rapture*. "Behold, I tell you **a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:51-53). "1 Cor. 15:51-55... 'a "Mystery"; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed'... This is the greatest of all mysteries, because it reveals something that reason never dreamed of" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 152). "This call of the Bridegroom for His bride is an event that should never have been considered even as an aspect of the second coming of Christ. It is a mystery, or sacred secret, and, as such, is but a part of the whole mystery of the body and bride of Christ. It is only one item in the program of the out-calling and final gathering of the church. No revelation had been given to the Old Testament prophets of that great age purpose, and certainly no hint had been made as to the manner in which she would be taken out of the earth into her heavenly bliss. On the other hand, the return of Christ to the earth in power and glory was seen by all the prophets from Moses to Christ" (Chafer, *KHP*, 77%). "a mystery... We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed... 1 Cor. 15:51-52... This passage reveals that there are two possible ways by which a corruptible body can be transformed into an incorruptible: one way is by resurrection; the other is by translation. This latter truth is introduced as a 'mystery.' It should be clear to all careful students of the Word of God that it is not a mystery that saints who die will be raised again. The doctrine of resurrection is taught in both the Old and New Testaments and is not a hidden truth. Nor is it a mystery that there will be living saints on the earth at the time of the coming of the Lord. All passages dealing with the second advent as well as passages which speak of Christ coming for His church assume or state that saints will be on earth awaiting His coming. The precise mystery

is the added revelation of the fact of translation without dying in connection with the coming of the Lord” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 241). “...the significant fact that none of the Old Testament passages dealing with the second advent teach anything on the subject of the translation of the saints. In fact, the idea of a general translation is foreign to the Old Testament. The viewpoint of Old Testament prophecies is that saints on earth at the time of the second advent will enter the millennial kingdom in the flesh, an obvious contradiction of the idea of translation” (*ibid.*, p. 242). “It is surprising that the tremendous significance of the 1 Corinthians passage has been overlooked by so many scholars... Never in Scripture are the Old Testament saints or the saints of the future tribulation promised translation. The thought of translation is in fact a pure mystery, a truth not revealed at all in the Old Testament. It is peculiarly the hope of saints in the present age and is not extended anywhere in the Scripture to the saints who will live in the tribulation period” (*ibid.*). “the Old Testament never mentions the rapture of the church” (*ibid.*, p. 265) “The third mystery is that of the Rapture. It is not the resurrection of the dead that is the mystery, but the translation of the living” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 468). “The Rapture with its corollary events of the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living is called a *mystery* in I Corinthians 15:50-58” (*ibid.*, p. 683). “In [1 Cor. 15] verse 51, Paul declares: *Behold, I tell you a mystery*. The Second Coming of the Messiah is not a mystery, for it was something well revealed in the Old Testament. In fact, there are more details about the Second Coming in the Old than the New Testament... *we all shall not sleep... but we shall all be changed*” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 677) “The Second Coming is not a mystery; the Rapture with its translation is a mystery unrevealed in the Old Testament, and is one of the many reasons for Pretribulationism” (*ibid.*). “‘I tell you a mystery:’... (1 Cor. 15:51-53)... Like the church, a mystery once concealed but now revealed (Eph. 3:3-5; Col. 1:17), so the church’s rapture was unknown. The fact of a future resurrection was known to Old Testament Jews, but nowhere was it revealed that a large body of believers who were neither Jew nor Gentile (Gal. 3:28) but a ‘new creation’ (2 Cor. 5:17) and ‘one new man’ (Eph. 2:15) would be raptured to heaven without either dying or being resurrected from graves” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:622). (See our full discussion of the Rapture in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

And the *fourth* element of the mystery is *the bride of Christ*. “For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his **wife**; and the two shall become one flesh. **This mystery** is great; but I am speaking with reference to **Christ and the church**” (Eph. 5:31-33) “man and wife becoming ‘one flesh’ (Eph. 5:31)... ‘...mystery... in regard of Christ and

of the church' (Eph. 5:32)" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 245) "The fourth mystery is the Church as the Bride of Christ" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 468). "The Church as the Bride of Christ is called a mystery in Ephesians 5:22-32" (*ibid.*, p. 683).

Purposes of the Church

The *purposes* of the church can be divided into two broad categories: those having to do with the *current* (church) age in which we now live and those having to do with the *future* ages.

The Current Purposes of the Church Age

The *current* purposes of the church and of this Church Age, which when understood correctly correspond perfectly with today's observable realities, are *important to understand*. "A simple statement of the design of the Church and this dispensation has far more weight with infidelity than all the high-flown and exaggerated eulogies so lavishly employed; for the former is seen to be actually in progress and realized, while the latter exists only in the imagination of the eulogizers, being opposed both by Scriptures and history" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:688). "Froude, in the *International Review*, 1878... the general tenor of his articles concluding that Christianity is a failure shows that he has no idea whatever of the design of the present dispensation" (*ibid.*, 3:137)

The current purposes of the church in this Church Age are:

To give man an opportunity to avail himself of God's grace. "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, **God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent**, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). "For **by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast**" (Eph. 2:8-9). "And **the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.'** And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And **let the one who is thirsty come**; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost" (Rev. 22:17) "The present issue between God and man is one of whether man will accept God's estimate of him, abandon his hopeless self-struggle, and cast himself only on God who alone is sufficient to accomplish his needed transformation. All Divine love, wisdom, and power have wrought to make these conditions open to man; and when this last and supreme effort of God has been rejected, the final plead-

ing with man must be forever past, and the long delayed judgment upon sin be executed in righteousness” (Chafer, *S*, C4:2/31).

To save men by grace; to gather the elect. “But **as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God**, even to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12) “And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and **as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed**” (Acts 13:48). “For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached **to save those who believe**” (1 Cor. 1:21). “The design of this dispensation is distinctively referred to, it is to save them that believe, to proclaim the terms of salvation by which, if observed, men may become inheritors of Christ’s Kingdom, to gather out such a body of elect ones” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:587). “Amidst all this diversity, error, hostility, etc., the one great, grand design has never been lost sight of, i.e. to save them that believe” (*ibid.*, p. 636). “‘The Gospel is inadequate’... we never say so; it accomplishes all that was intended by it... if a man preached it with the hope of converting the world, which the preaching of eighteen centuries has not accomplished, it would be a vain hope, but if he preaches it with the expectation of ‘saving some,’ ‘them that believe,’ etc., he will be reasonable and scriptural” (*ibid.*, 3:140). “...the faithfulness, activity, and piety of those who were Millenarian in doctrine, and labored earnestly to call the elect, and hasten the day of the Lord Jesus Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 200).

To call out from the Gentiles a people for God’s name. “Simeon has related how **God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name**” (Acts 15:14). “The design of the establishment of the Christian Church, viz.: to raise up a seed unto Abraham by gathering out of the nations a people for His name, until the throne and Kingdom, now desolate, shall be restored to its covenanted position” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:598) “...the design to be accomplished by the church, which is, as James asserted in the Apostle’s Council, to gather out a people for His name” (*ibid.*, p. 636). “The constant gathering going on through the Gospel reminds us of the continued existence of the Divine Purpose and its ultimate certain result” (*ibid.*, 2:225). “God instead of contemplating the conversion of nations, or of the world, is taking out, here and there, from among the nations, a people for His name” (*ibid.*, 3:188). “...the foretold (even already by Moses) anger of God abiding upon the Jewish nation influencing Him to call out from among the nations a people for His name” (*ibid.*, p. 526) “...(Acts 15:13-18), where he declares that God has visited the Gentiles to ‘Take Out of Them a “PEOPLE” for His Name.’ The purpose of

this Dispensation then is not the Conversion of the World, but the ‘Gathering Out’ of the Church” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 75).

To espouse a bride to Christ. “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband**, that to **Christ** I might present you as a pure virgin” (2 Cor. 11:2) “In Christ’s day an espousal was as sacred as a marriage” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 76). “The First Adam had his Bride, and the Second or Last Adam must have His Bride” (*ibid.*). “Now Jesus during His life on the earth as a man, abode alone, but a deep sleep—the sleep of death—fell on Him, and out of His wounded side, as the result of the Atonement He made on the Cross, there came that from which the Church was formed, and to which the Holy Spirit gave life on the Day of Pentecost; so that, as Adam said of Eve—‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,’ so we can say of the Church—‘We are members of His Body, of his Flesh, and of his bones.’ Eph. 5:29-33” (*ibid.*). “for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does **the church**, because **we are members of His body. FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.** This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to **Christ and the church.** Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband” (Eph. 5:29–33). “Rebekah consented to become the wife of a man she had never seen solely on the representations of Eliezer, and she departed with him, leaving her kinsfolk behind... So God has sent the Holy Spirit into this world in this Dispensation to get a wife for His Son Jesus, and when the full number of the Church is complete, the Holy Spirit will take her back with him to the Father’s home, and Jesus, whose Bride she is to be, will come out into the midair at the ‘Eventide’ of this Dispensation to meet her. 1 Thess. 4:15-17... Rebekah was not an Israelite, but a Gentile, so the type holds good... Israel, the Bride of Jehovah; the Church, the Bride of Christ... The ‘Wife’ (Israel) is to reside in the earthly Jerusalem during the Millennium, while the ‘Bride’ (the Church) will reside in the New Jerusalem” (Larkin, *DT*). “As to the Church being both the ‘Body’ and ‘Bride’ of Christ, we have the type of Eve who was of the ‘body’ of Adam before she was his ‘bride’” (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of the identity of the church as the bride of Christ in our section *The Identity of the Church* above, our discussion of the fact that one of the *ultimate* purposes of the church is to be Christ’s wife in our section *The Ultimate (Future) Purpose of the Church* below, and our discussion of the bridegroom’s fetching of the bride in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church.*)

To incite the Jews to jealousy. “But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? At the first Moses says, **‘I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU’**” (Rom. 10:19). “I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But **by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous**” (Rom. 11:11). “But I am speaking to you who are **Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them**” (Rom. 11:13–14).

To select and prepare kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom. “And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that **you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Matt. 19:28). “He said therefore, **‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.** And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.” But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.” And it came about that **when he returned, after receiving the kingdom,** he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done. And the first appeared, saying, “Master, your mina has made ten minas more.” And he said to him, “Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, **be in authority over ten cities.**” And the second came, saying, “Your mina, master, has made five minas.” And he said to him also, “And **you are to be over five cities.**” And another came, saying, “Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.” He said to him, “By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?” And he said to the bystanders, “Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.” And they said to him, “Master, he has ten minas already.” I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence” (Luke 19:12–27).

“that you may eat and drink at My table **in My kingdom**, and **you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Luke 22:30). “and **if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him**” (Rom. 8:17). “You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have **become kings** without us; and I would indeed that you had **become kings so that we also might reign with you**” (1 Cor. 4:8). “For **momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**” (2 Cor. 4:17) “If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:12) “and **He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father**; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:6). “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and **didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth**’” (Rev. 5:9-10). “Blessed and holy is **the one who has a part in the first resurrection**; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:6). “The proclamation of nighness was involved in the fact that, as a certain number of elect are contemplated as requisite to the establishment of the Theocratic Kingdom (former experience teaching that otherwise it could not be sustained), that number, in case of national repentance, would have been speedily obtained. But owing to the rejection of Christ, the number of inheritors must now be obtained in a different and more gradual way” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:362). “Before God took the Israelites to Canaan He first provided a sufficient number of people, even under great trial and sorrow, who should be able to occupy the land, drive out their adversaries, and enjoy their imparted possession. So now God has promised a rich inheritance, even the whole earth, to the saints under a Theocratic ordering, which they are to realize in a peculiar, exalted way; but before this inheritance is given God is engaged in gathering out this people, even under trial, temptation, and tribulation; and when the chosen, elected number is complete (known only to Him), then the possession will be received, the adversaries will be judged and overthrown by them as associated in Rulership with the Lord Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 401). “The introduction of the faith principle, by which Abraham was justified before circumcision took place, to raise up children to Abraham, merely produces ‘the heirs,’ who inherit the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 412). “...the design for which

the election is made, viz.: to qualify men for the future divine administration of the restored Theocratic Kingdom” (*ibid.*) “The object or design of this dispensation is to gather out these elect, to whom, as heirs with Abraham and his seed, Christ, this Kingdom is to be given” (*ibid.*, p. 587). “This dispensation, as its progressive work indicates, can do no more than prepare the heirs for the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 588). “The Head is preparing the members, by the bestowal of blessed privileges, sacred ordinances, rich experience, and His own ever-abiding Presence, for the coming exaltation of the Kingdom. Communion with Christ and with each other necessitates a churchly arrangement, so that the requisite elect may be taken out from among the nations to place the future Theocratic Kingdom on an immovable basis” (*ibid.*, p. 597). “Oosterzee (*Ch. Dogmatics*, vol. 1, p. 67, and vol. 2, p. 696) introduces a division, ‘Of the Church, or the Training School of the Kingdom.’ The idea of a training school is excellent, suggested both by Scripture and experience, but to make the notion still more distinctive and Scriptural, we suggest ‘the Training School *for* the Kingdom,’ which is one of the objects intended by the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 600). “...the design of this dispensation in gathering out a people for a future divinely constituted Church and State” (*ibid.*, p. 639) “Just as there was a preparatory growth and development of Abraham’s seed before the Theocratic government was instituted, so now there is designed and carried out by the Divine Will a preparatory gathering of Abraham’s seed until a sufficient, predetermined number is obtained” (*ibid.*, 2:224). “God’s purpose is delayed for a time—which to finite man appears long, but to God is ‘as a day’—until the Saviour is provided, and the proper material has been gathered even out of the fallen race, for the leverage requisite to lift the race out of its sunken condition” (*ibid.*, p. 536). “The Kingdom itself is purposely delayed for thousands of years (long to man, but brief to God), in order to raise up this body of rulers to sustain it when manifested with a purity, dignity, power, stability, and glory worthy of a Theocracy. If the question be asked, why did not God establish the Theocracy in such a form in the time of Moses, or of David, or at the First Advent, the answer, as testified to by history, is apparent, viz., that man was not prepared for it. The essential element to sustain and give it its immortal, enduring characteristics had not yet been prepared and gathered” (*ibid.*, p. 589). “...until this number (known only to God) is completed, the Kingdom itself will not be revealed” (*ibid.*). “But when the last elected one is gathered, when the preparatory measures are all completed, then comes the sudden revelation of the Majestic King and His associated kings upon an awe-struck world” (*ibid.*, p. 590). “For such extraordinary glory these saints must be trained in obedience and suffering, in temptation and

trial, just as the King Himself has been. The subjects of this restored Theocracy, owing to the binding of Satan and the unspeakable blessings of the Messianic reign, will not be subjected to the same privations, temptations, and crosses that those now are who are schooled for their future appointments... This future Kingship is really the secret cause of that chastening that oftentimes is now so grievous. God designs that by our trials we may become fitted and prepared for the position in the Coming Kingdom... The physical and moral evil encountered, the valuable experience obtained, the relative change realized, the characteristics developed and confirmed, these, with the abundant additions of the Spirit, qualify them for the honor of kingship and priesthood, making them intelligent and wise kings, sympathetic and loving priests” (*ibid.*). “This comforting and delightful subject can readily be extended... Salvation is indeed of grace, but the proportionment of stations is dependent upon the faith and obedience of the individual... devoted themselves to God with ever-increasing fidelity... be careful ‘that no man take thy crown’ (for they are limited in number). Graff (‘Greybeard’) in his ‘*Lay Sermons*,’ No. 6, truly observes that ‘the present or ecclesiastical dispensation may therefore be said to be allotted to the development of Christ’s aristocracy, the nobility of His Kingdom, the ruling class in the world to come.’ After urging that humility precedes exaltation, he says: ‘If Christians were not forgetful of the distinguished honors which await them in the future, they would be less concerned about the honors and emoluments of the present.’ Pregnant words; but, alas, how few heed the lesson imparted. In No. 13 he has some thoughtful words on ‘the Reward of Good Works that is superadded to Salvation,’ in which occurs the following sentence: ‘And although the literature of the Church abounds in “crowns for the departed,” it is not improbable that there will be many crownless heads on the day when the Lord shall appear to receive them, inasmuch as the three crowns [five?—*ed.*] (whatever they may typify) designated in the Scriptures, are mentioned in each case as the reward of some special service or merit. (The “crown of righteousness” to those that “love His appearing;” the “crown of glory” to those who feed the flock of Christ willingly, etc.; the “crown of life” to those who endure temptation and persecution.)’... The unspeakable honor thus conferred explains why the demands of God in reference to supreme love to Him, unreserved surrender to His Will, etc., are, as required in this dispensation, not fanatical requirements (as unbelief suggests), but essential in view of qualifying the saints for this rulership. Hence the Scriptures inform us that we should receive our trials and even tribulation joyfully, because if we endure the testing, these things shall give us a fitness for the special honor of kingship and

priesthood” (*ibid.*, p. 591). “He may be despised and overlooked by the rich, or by his neighbors, and yet he is destined to a position far higher and more honorable than that occupied by the proudest, richest, greatest monarch that ever lived... From the testimony of the Word we learn that God will gather these princes and kings more from the ranks of the poor and the ignorant than from those of the rich, mighty, and worldly wise, simply because the former are more disposed to receive and obey the truth than the latter” (*ibid.*, p. 594). “Auberlen (Lange’s *Com. 1 Thess*, p. 25) remarks: ‘...the sufferings and afflictions, which are the divinely appointed way to the future glory, 2 Cor. 4:17 sq., Rom. 8:17’” (*ibid.*, 3:327) “The relationship that saints now sustain to Jesus as intended co-rulers in the Coming Kingdom insures from Him a deep and abiding interest in their welfare (even trial and suffering being intended to bring in additional rank and honor), because His own glory and that of His kingdom is connected with it” (*ibid.*, p. 342). “A distinguishing peculiarity of this restored Theocracy is that the rulers are all chosen by God Himself; no one can ever be a king or priest in it without God’s direct appointment” (*ibid.*, p. 593). “God is today saving and preparing in the *ekklesia* the members of the royal family who are destined to rule with Christ in the future established Kingdom... born into the royal family” [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 439-40] (Feinberg, *M*, p. 146) “...the Church, begun on Pentecost, as the spiritual and royal nucleus of the coming Kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 423). “There is an interesting parallel in the career of King David, great ancestor of our Lord Jesus Christ. When David was chosen of God and anointed as king of Israel (1 Sam. 16:1, 13), he did not immediately occupy the throne... During this period several hundred men, in distress and debt, ‘gathered themselves’ unto David and became his loyal followers (1 Sam. 22:2)... Similarly, at His first coming our Lord was exalted to be both Lord and Messianic King (Acts 2:36); but not until His second coming will He establish His Kingdom on earth as the rightful successor to the throne of His father David. In the interim He is gathering to Himself a body of people, distressed and debtors because of sin, who are destined to be associated with Him in the coming Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 440). (See our discussion of the fact that faithful believers will be rewarded with authority in the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church* and our discussions of the facts that believers will reign with Christ and will be priests with Him in the Millennial Kingdom in the *Government* section of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.) By the way, nowhere in Scripture is the number of those who are to reign with Christ limited to 144,000, as is erroneously taught by Jehovah’s Witnesses. The 144,000 of Revelation chapters seven and four-

teen are never identified in Scripture as kings, priests, or the body or bride of Christ. They are instead 144,000 literal Jews who are sealed for God's purposes during the Tribulation period. (For detailed identification of the 144,000, see our discussion of the sealing of the 144,000 in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

To develop Christians' character. “For **momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**” (2 Cor. 4:17) “**Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing**” (James 1:2–4). “...the ordinary operations of the Spirit given to form and develop Christian character” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:68)

To demonstrate that God's purposes do not fail. “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it**” (Matt. 16:18). “**Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; **and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age**” (Matt. 28:19–20). “Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for **there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:23–24). “...this dispensation... as one which, in the establishment and perpetuation of the Christian Church, stands forth as a constant sign or witness that God's purposes do not fail; and hence, as a standing proof that, however long delayed, the oath-bound Davidic covenant will be most amply realized” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:588).

Not to entertain the church and others. “...the Church... is not a ‘Social Club,’ organized and supported solely for the benefit of its members. It is not a ‘Place of Amusement’ to pander to the carnal nature of man” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 77).

Not to Christianize the nations. “And it will come about **in that day** that I will make **Jerusalem** a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And **all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it**” (Zech. 12:3). “But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be **condemned** along with **the**

world” (1 Cor. 11:32). “For after all it is only just for **God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus**” (2 Thes. 1:6–8). “Know this first of all, that **in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.’** For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But **the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men**” (2 Pet. 3:3–7). “God does not recognize, either in Daniel or Rev., the alleged and professed conversion of the Roman Empire, for down to the Sec. Advent it retains its bestial character. God looks at nations from a standpoint very different from that assumed by their eulogizers” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:395). “...open rebellion against the existing powers, etc., a principle utterly at variance with ancient and modern Chiliasm” (*ibid.*, p. 533). “Noticing the design of this dispensation and not overloading it with things that belong to a coming one, Christianity itself, as it exists, is susceptible of a more easy defence against the attacks of infidelity. Thus e.g. we can more readily account for its want of success in some ages, its retrogressions where once predominant, its declines and revivals, its union with much that must be discarded, etc., for these and other events do not affect its object, or prevent the carrying out of the design originally intended. Humanly speaking, these may cause a delay, but the delay itself is an experience of continued mercy and forbearance so that the design may be completed. On the other hand, bind upon this dispensation ideas and notions which really belong to the future coming age, and at once—in view of the Church’s mixed character, the comparative meagre extension of real piety after eighteen centuries of preaching, the losses Christianity has sustained in countries where once it existed in all its vigor, the corruption of doctrine and practice, the virulent controversies and spirit often exhibited, etc.—a resort must be had to apologetic shifts, mystical subterfuges, and philosophical glosses utterly unworthy of a candid and noble defence. Is there a student who has not been saddened by the apologies of eminent believers in behalf of the gospel, who, hampered by a Church-Kingdom theory, feel themselves com-

pelled to excuse and justify a want of success, etc., when no such special pleading is demanded by the design God has in view, or by the real facts in the case? God's plan, and the time employed by Him, in gathering the elect, requires on our part no abject vindication" (*ibid.*, p. 589). "Pressense (*The Early Years of Christianity*, p. 25) makes the 'vocation' of the Church to be that of 'illuminating and vivifying the world'— 'to purify itself within, and to extend itself without, such is the twofold task of the Church, and the ages are given for its fulfillment.' Here the preconceived idea of the conversion of the world through the Church suggests the vocation. Now in contrast, we give Dr. Fausset's (*Com. Dan.* 7:11) brief comment: 'The New Test. views the present aeon or age of the world as essentially heathenish, which we cannot love without forsaking Christ (Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:20, and 2:6, 8, and 3:18, and 7:31; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 2:2; 2 Tim. 4:10; cf. 1 John 2:15, 17). The object of Christianity is not so much to Christianize the present world as to save souls out of it, so as not to be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:32), but to rule with Him in His Millennium (Matt. 5:5; Luke 12:32, and 22:28-30; Rom. 5:17; 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 1:6, and 2:26-28, and 3:21 and 20:4). This is our hope; not to reign in the present world course (1 Cor. 4:8; 2 Cor. 4:18; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:14).' Pressense's view is inferential; Fausset's is directly Scriptural" (*ibid.*). "It is a significant fact, fully attested by history, past and present, that no Christian nation has ever existed among the Gentiles. No matter how largely the laws of Moses and the precepts of Christ have been incorporated, and no matter how men of a Christian spirit have endeavored at times to legislate and execute laws in a proper spirit, it still remains true that the design of this dispensation has never been to convert nations" (*ibid.*, 2:778) "We deprecate the fulsome and unscriptural eulogies heaped upon earthly governments by various writers" (*ibid.*). "...the positive declarations that no nations are on the Lord's side when He comes for vengeance and redemption" (*ibid.*) "What the Church itself cannot perform no outside influence can possibly accomplish. Hence good, pious, honest, sincere, and able men are doomed to meet disappointment. So it is also with those conventions, etc., that draw together great talent, novelties, sensational things, etc.—whatever good is accomplished is clouded by the insidious notion of prosperity, the conversion of the world, etc. The proof is found in this: that a scriptural representation of the nearness of the Advent, of coming persecution, etc., would be regarded as entirely out of place in them... all those great conventions, assemblies and organizations which—whatever truth may be presented or good done—eagerly anticipate, and with loud praises predict, the conversion of the world, the unlimited advancement of the Church, and the ushering in of

Millennial glory through their instrumentality, are predicting falsely and misleading the multitude. A Pre-Millenarian would be condemned, if he ventured to call attention to the biblical statements; and, indeed, there is little danger of any one ever doing so, since particular care is taken to exclude such, lest a strain of discord mar the smooth prophesyings so fashionable and palatable at such gatherings. Men on the brink of fearful times encourage each other by scriptural but pleasing pictures of reform and progress” (*ibid.*, 3:143). “...the Davidic throne and Kingdom... The conversion even of all nations could not restore the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 181). “Those to whom the commission was given never stated that its intention was to convert the world by preaching the Gospel” (*ibid.*, p. 192). “Dr. Marsh, after many years of prophetic study, declared (Mem. by his daughter): ‘The complete victory of truth I do not expect until the Second Advent of our blessed Lord. I have no hope of a general or universal spread of Christian knowledge till He comes.’ ‘When He has taken out of the Gentiles a people for His name and called a remnant of the Jews according to the election of grace, then He will return and convert the Jewish nation, put down all rule and all authority and power opposed to His Gospel, and cause the knowledge of Himself to cover the earth. So I read in every passage of Holy Writ, and long for the day; for then Satan will be bound and Creation will cease to groan” (*ibid.*, p. 194). “We are not surprised that some advocating the Whitbyan opinion, express themselves (misconceiving the design of the dispensation), as Dr. Lyman Beecher (Taylor’s *Voice of the Church*, p. 9.), ‘It would take to all eternity to bring the Millennium at the rate that modern revivals progress” (*ibid.*, p. 196). “... the false assumption that Christianity, if divine, must rescue and reunite the race, when the design of this dispensation is the reverse. Those who indorse this presumption, instead of adopting God’s declared Divine Purpose in reference to this dispensation, virtually undertake to decide for themselves what is, and what is not, worthy of divine procedure, thus giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the truth. This, too, is done under an honest and sincere misapplication of the facts of history and the predictions of God’s Word. Thus e.g. Rev. Dr. Helwig, in a temperance lecture reported in the Springfield Republic, Dec. 24th, 1877, indorses the statement of multitudes, that the triumph of truth is always certain, saying that ‘although the wrong may at times seem triumphant, it is but for a day. Right has might and power for its allies, and will triumph, for it is the truth.’ All history, as well as the Bible, contradicts this as illustrated in the antediluvian world, the overthrow of the Theocracy, the closing of the Mosaic economy, the continued unbelief and punishment of the Jewish nation, the dark ages, the gigantic proportions of error

even in organized forms, the future coming conflict with the culminated Antichrist, the predicted ending of this age, etc. No! The Word assures us, that while God will see to it that truth, the light, shall always, more or less, exist as a testimony and to accomplish the Divine Purpose intended by this dispensation, its triumph will only be secured by the personal Coming of Him, who is the Truth" (*ibid.*, p. 209). "Van Oosterzee (*Ch. Dog.*, vol. 2, p. 795), speaking of 'the consummation of all things' as presented by Scripture, remarks: 'The prospect here opened up is well adapted to put to shame every optimistic-humanistic dream, as though in this best of worlds things should grow better, the nearer the stream of time rolls to the ocean of eternity'" (*ibid.*, p. 211). "One of the indirect, but most powerful, evidences of the divine inspiration of the Scripture is found in the fact that nowhere do we find those eulogistic descriptions of 'the triumph of the Gospel in subduing the world' which now so largely adorn the eloquence of Whitbyan missionary discourses. Nothing of the kind is exhibited even when reference is made to the rapid extension of the preached Word over the then known world, for the Spirit evidently foresaw, what history testifies to, the ultimate overthrow and fallen condition of the churches, then so widely extended" (*ibid.*, p. 215). "The world was just as full, if not fuller, of the evils that afflict society today, in the days of Christ, but He never, nor did the Apostles, organize any reform agencies. He knew that the source of all the evils in the world is SIN, and the only way to eradicate sin is to Regenerate the Human Heart, and so He gave to the world The Gospel, and the Mission of the Church is to carry that Gospel to the Whole World" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 77). "The great mistake the Church has made is in appropriating to herself, in this Dispensation, the promises of earthly conquest and glory which belong exclusively to Israel in the Millennial, or 'Kingdom Age.' As soon as the Church enters into an 'Alliance With the World,' and seeks the help of Parliaments, Congresses, Legislatures, Federations and Reform Societies, largely made up of ungodly men and women, she loses her spiritual power and becomes helpless as a redeeming force" (*ibid.*, p. 78). "The setting up of the earthly kingdom is never described as the result of a process" (Chafer, *S*, C2:24/37). "Well may believers study their own motives in service in view of these vastly differing programs; and question whether there is in them a humble willingness to co-operate in the present purpose of God in preparing the Bride for the returning King: or whether they have carelessly fallen in with the Satanic ideal, which rejects the coming Kingdom of Christ by an unholy attempt to establish the present kingdom of Satan" (*ibid.*, C6:18/19). "No doubt will be raised by any intelligent Christian concerning the truth that it is within the range of divine power to

transform society in this age, or at any other time” (Chafer, *D*, 41%). “...the present age... Relatively few are saved. The world becomes, in fact, increasingly wicked as the age progresses... The apostles are notably silent on any program of political, social, moral, or physical improvement of the unsaved world. Paul made no effort to correct social abuses or to influence the political government for good. The program of the early church was one of evangelism and Bible teaching. It was a matter of saving souls out of the world rather than saving the world. It was neither possible nor in the program of God for the present age to become the kingdom of God on earth” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 134).

These purposes are now being fulfilled. “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it**” (Matt. 16:18). “**Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; **and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age**” (Matt. 28:19–20). “Simeon has related how **God** first concerned Himself about **taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name**” (Acts 15:14). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel **until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “God’s purpose, no matter how adverse at times the Church’s circumstances, how hostile the world, how corrupt her mixed condition, etc., will and must be inevitably carried out” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:592). “No age, no century, no year, with its encompassing infirmities, but has brought forth, through the church, the called and adopted” (*ibid.*, p. 636). “Christianity also, no matter what apostasy and evil exists, is constantly fulfilling the design of this dispensation... viz., to gather out a people for His name” (*ibid.*, 3:141). “Missionaries, ministers, and others, engaged in proclaiming the Gospel have no reason to be discouraged at the apparent want of success; for whether men accept or reject the truth, the appointed work of procuring these elect ones is going on, and also that of making the Gospel a witness” (*ibid.*, p. 197).

The Ultimate (Future) Purposes of the Church

The ultimate (and future) purposes of the church are to be Christ’s wife, to exalt redeemed men and to display the infinity of God’s grace.

The church is *to be Christ’s wife*. “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband**, that **to Christ** I might present you as a pure virgin” (2 Cor. 11:2). “And one of the seven angels

who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb**’ (Rev. 21:9). “One Eve was thus specially made for Adam, and according to the uniform testimony of Scripture there is one woman or people peculiarly chosen and formed and specially designed for the most intimate union with the Second Adam in the age to come, viz., the married wife... this woman is ‘an help as before him’ (i.e. one corresponding to him, one adapted to him, a counterpart of himself, etc.), which finds its counterpart in the association, companionship, coheirship, joint rulership, etc., of the saints with the Second Adam in His Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:431) (See our discussion of the identity of the church as the bride of Christ in our section *The Identity of the Church* above, our discussion of the fact that one of the *current* purposes of the church is to espouse a wife to Christ in our section *The Current Purpose of the Church* above, and our discussion of the bridegroom’s fetching of the bride in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

The church will *exalt redeemed men*. “And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and **whoever humbles himself shall be exalted**” (Matt. 23:12). “Do you not know that **we shall judge angels**? How much more, matters of this life?” (1 Cor. 6:3). “But **God**, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and **raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places**, in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4–6) “**He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne**, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Rev. 3:21). “In Old Testament terminology, sometimes angels are called *sons of God* while men are called *servants of God*. In the New Testament, this is reversed. Angels are servants, and Christians are sons of God. This peculiar order may be due to the fact that, in the Old Testament, men are seen as related to this sphere over which angels are superior; while, in the New Testament, saints are seen as related to their final exaltation into the likeness of Christ, compared to which estate the angels are inferior” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:23).

And, the church will *display the infinity of God’s grace*. “**He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us** in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, **according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us**. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of **His will**,

according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him” (Eph. 1:5-9) “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, **in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast” (Eph. 2:4-9). “To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles **the unfathomable riches of Christ**” (Eph. 3:8) “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to **make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,** to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen” (Jude 24). “The final and supreme motive of God in the salvation of men is declared in Eph. 2:7: ‘That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus’” (Chafer, *G*, 12%). “All intelligences will know the depth of sin and the hopeless estate of the lost. They will, in turn, behold men redeemed and saved from that estate appearing in the highest glory, — like Christ. This transformation will measure and demonstrate the ‘exceeding riches of his grace’” (*ibid.*). “And, again, the purpose of God, which is to shew the exceeding riches of His grace, reaches beyond the boundaries of this age and is the supreme divine purpose in the whole creation, preservation, and consummation of the universe” (*ibid.*). “The complete manifestation of divine grace which is to be revealed in the glory will be by means of all that combines in Christ — the Glorious Head, together with His redeemed Body, every member of which will have been transformed into His very image. What a spectacle for angels and archangels, principalities and powers, mankind and demons! Yea, what a spectacle for God Himself; for He will then gaze on that surpassing manifestation of His grace to His own ‘exceeding joy’ (Jude 24)” (*ibid.*, 13%)! “Whether there have been greater motives which have actuated God in permitting sin to enter the world than He has revealed, none can say. It is certain, however, that the greatest motive that He has been pleased to reveal is to be inferred from the fact that grace cannot be exercised where there is no demerit, and that He designs above all else that His saving grace shall have an actual and adequate demonstration in all the ages to come” (Chafer, *G*, 13%) “Heaven’s glory will not be a display of human character; it is to be the unveiling of the riches of grace in Christ Jesus” (*ibid.*, 95%).

“The divine purpose in the outcalling of the church is to display the infinity of His grace. Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 3:228-29] writes: ‘There was that in God which no created being had ever seen. They had seen His glory, His majesty, His wisdom, and His power; but no angel or man had ever seen His grace. Other attributes might be subject to a variety of demonstrations; but the manifestation of grace is restricted to what God may do for those among men who, in spite of the fact that they deserve His judgments, are objects of His grace. As every other attribute or capacity of God must have its perfect exercise and exhibition—even for His own satisfaction—in like manner His grace must also have its infinitely perfect revealing within the restricted undertaking by which He saves the lost. To say that a sinner is saved by grace is to declare that, on the ground of a Substitute’s death and in response to faith in that Savior, God has wrought a work so perfect in its entirety and so free from the cooperation of other beings that it is a complete all-satisfying-to-God demonstration of His grace. A statement of this kind may be made as easily as words form a sentence; but who on earth or in heaven is able to comprehend the infinity of such a salvation? This demonstration, it should be added, will by the very nature of the case, have its outshining in the life of each individual thus saved. It may be assumed that, had but one of all the human family been selected for the supreme honor of exhibiting eternally before all created beings the infinity of sovereign grace, the salvation of that one would be no different than the salvation of any one of the unnumbered throng from every kindred, tribe, and people who are saved by grace.’ It would seem, then, that God, in this present age, is pursuing a program through which His infinite grace shall be perfectly displayed throughout all eternity” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 133). (See also our discussion of the manifestation of divine grace as one of the reasons why evil was allowed by God in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*.)

The Career of the Church on Earth

The career of the church on earth involves the chronology of the Church Age, developmental details of the church and the fact that God is gathering the church now.

Chronology of the Church Age

While the Bible does not offer a precise or detailed *chronology* of the Church Age, it does present several overviews of the age, with certain events and circumstances serving as milestones.

The members of the church were chosen before the foundation of the world. “just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the**

world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love **He predestined us** to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:4–6). “The ‘election’ of the Church antedates the ‘election’ of Israel, for Israel was chosen in Abraham from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34), while the Church was chosen in HIM (Jesus) BEFORE the Foundation of the World. (Eph. 1:4-6)” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 75) “Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit **the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**”” (Matt. 25:34).

The church was foreseen by Jesus (it was still future at Jesus’ time). “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18). “The church is not directly seen as present in Matthew’s Gospel, excepting as her presence is implied in chapter 13, and is anticipated in 16:18” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:115). “Chafer [in *Kingdom in History and Prophecy*, pp. 15-16] identifies these ‘called out ones’ as the Church which was founded at Pentecost in Acts two. That it did not exist even in the gospel period is evident from the fact that when Christ first mentioned the Church it was still future” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 442).

The “*keys of the Kingdom*” were given to Peter. “And I also say to you that you are **Peter**, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. **I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven**; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:18–19). “But **Peter**, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: ‘**Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem**, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words... **Men of Israel**, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him **in your midst**, just as you yourselves know — this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power... **Brethren**, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His

flesh SUFFER DECAY. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: "THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET'" Therefore **let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ** — this Jesus whom you crucified.' Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, **'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself.'** And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation'" (Acts 2:14-40)! "And opening his mouth, **Peter said: 'I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him. The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) — you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea,** starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him. **And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem.** And they also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. God raised Him up on the third day, and granted that He should become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. **And He ordered us to preach to the people,** and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that **through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.'** While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. **And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also.** For they were hearing them speaking with

tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, ‘Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have **received the Holy Spirit just as we did**, can he?’ And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days” (Acts 10:34–48). “The Keys of the ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ that were given to Peter were the ‘Keys’ by which he opened the way into the ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ to the Jews at Pentecost, Acts 2:14-40, and later to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius at Caesarea. Acts 10:34-48” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 77).

The church began at Pentecost. “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18). “And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, ‘Which,’ He said, ‘you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but **you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now**” (Acts 1:4-5). “And **when the day of Pentecost had come**, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And **they were all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance” (Acts 2:1–4). “And as I began to speak, **the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning.** And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit” (Acts 11:15-16). “For **by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). “Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is good for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you,’ etc. (John 16:7)... why the Holy Spirit... could not come unless Jesus went away... because the sinfulness of the nation had postponed the predicted promised Coming of the Spirit with the Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:624) “The Church, therefore, could not have been in existence before there was a Head, for God does not make headless things... 1 Cor. 12:12, 13... ‘by one Spirit are we baptized into One Body’... it is the ‘Baptism of the Spirit’ that incorporates us into the ‘BODY OF CHRIST.’ Therefore there could be no Church until the ‘Day of Pentecost.’ Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 75) “Amillenarians usually hold that the Spirit indwelt saints in the Old Testament, regenerated them, and empowered them in much the same manner as in the New Testament. By contrast, premillenarians normally view the present work of the Holy Spirit in the church as distinct from all other ages, and the bap-

tism of the Holy Spirit as unique” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 75). “The dispensationalist insists that the Church was born at Pentecost and not with Adam or Abraham” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 421). “There is no biblical evidence that the Church began either with Adam or Abraham or that it existed in the Old Testament. The use of the future tense in Matthew 16:18 shows it did not exist in the gospel history either” (*ibid.*, p. 681).

The duration of the Church Age is from Pentecost to the Rapture of the church. “Dispensationalism limits the invisible Church to the elect of the period between Pentecost and the Rapture” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 176). “...the Mystery Kingdom is limited in time, from the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus until the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 670)

No detailed chronology of the Church Age is given in the Bible. “Since to the Church, from the day of its birth on Pentecost, the coming of the Lord is always imminent, obviously there could be no chronological chart of ecclesiastical history given in advance” (McClain, *GK*, p. 449). “If in the seven churches [of Revelation chapters 2 and 3] there was prophetically revealed the entire history of the Church in seven successive eras, and if these eras could be identified with certainty in advance of the history, then it is obvious that the coming of the Lord could not occur at any point short of the seventh era” (*ibid.*). “The true explanation may be that in the seven churches of the Apocalypse the Holy Spirit did give a latent revelation of the Church’s career on earth, but so obscure that it could not be clearly discerned until the last or Laodicean era had been reached... Such a method of revelation is not novel in Scripture; for the Second Advent of our Lord could not be certainly identified in Old Testament prophecy until the First Advent had been realized in history” (*ibid.*).

Rather than resulting in the conversion of the world, the last days of the church are to be days of apostasy, unbelief, wickedness, self-sufficiency, lukewarmness, sleepiness and failure. “There are last days for Israel and last days for the church, a distinction which the amillennialists do not make” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 317). There will be *apostasy*, “**Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’**” (Matt. 7:22–23). “For if one comes and preaches **another Jesus** whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a **different gospel** which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully” (2 Cor. 11:4). “Now we request you, brethren, **with regard to the coming**

of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy comes first**, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction” (2 Thes. 2:1-3) “The term *Day of the Lord* is always a reference to the Tribulation period” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 67). “But the Spirit explicitly says that **in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons**, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth” (1 Tim. 4:1-3). “But realize this, that **in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power**; and avoid such men as these. For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so **these men also oppose the truth**, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards the faith. But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, as also that of those two came to be. But you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me! And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But **evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived**” (2 Tim. 3:1-13). “For **the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths**” (2 Tim. 4:3-4). “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And **many will follow**

their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep” (2 Pet. 2:1-3). “**Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation’**” (2 Pet. 3:3-4). “and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is **the spirit of the antichrist**, of which you have heard that **it is coming**, and now it is already in the world” (1 John. 4:3). “But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, **‘In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.’ These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit**” (Jude 1:17-20). “If men have erred, if even the multitude have gone astray, it is only what the Bible has predicted, has threatened, has warned us against, and has pointed out as the natural result of human wisdom, weakness, and depravity. Hence, as in the present case, when but few really entertain the truth on a given subject, instead of feeling that this is antagonistic to the truth, we ought rather to say that it precisely corresponds with what God Himself asserts respecting it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:329). “The reader will observe that if our doctrine had always remained the generally received doctrine of the church it would not meet the requirements of prediction respecting the lack of faith in Christ’s coming, the attitude of professed servants who say that He delayeth His coming, the abounding of unbelief and apostasy, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 520) “...this dispensation... as one that will end in unbelief and Apostasy, just like previous dispensations, proving both the continued inherent depravity of man and the non-erection of the covenanted Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 588) “...the predicted blindness and lack of faith in Christ’s coming and Kingdom, characteristic of the world and the Church before the Sec. Advent... This is the position of the multitude—just as the Word predicts” (*ibid.*, p. 667). “Churches, counting their thousands upon thousands, utterly reject a personal Sec. Advent, and the leaven is penetrating far and wide” (*ibid.*, 2:184). “We hold to this Pre-Mill. Coming as personal, because we are plainly told that as the Millennial age draws nigh, the world, and even the professed Church, will be disinclined to believe in a personal Coming. The world shall reject the doctrine and ridicule it; the Church as a body shall slumber and sleep; professed servants shall say, ‘My Lord delayeth His Coming;’ and many shall declare, ‘Where is the promise of His

Coming?’ ‘When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?’ Surely He would find such, if the earth just emerged from Millennial glory, but in the darkness, etc., preceding that age, faith is almost extinct in His Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 186). “...it would require time, and probably a long time, for such an apostasy to develop itself into the giant form of wickedness predicted” (*ibid.*, p. 210). “...the assault against the Bible and Christianity with a boldness and a success (because acceptable to human nature), that is astonishing” (*ibid.*, 3:115). “...the treatment of prophecy by unbelief in and without the Church. Its neglect, scornful allusions, contempt, etc., evidence that we are nearing the end” (*ibid.*, p. 131). “Much that men eloquently describe as ‘light’ is ‘darkness’ with God, and this holds good both in and out of the professing Church” (*ibid.*, p. 137). “Truth did not gain the victory from creation to the deluge, nor from the deluge to the First Advent, nor from the First Advent to the present... the three great eras in the history of the race... The primitive Christianity did not obtain the alleged victory, for the history of the Church conclusively proves that the Alexandrian philosophy, the hierarchical tendencies, etc. prevailed, and that colossal error gained the day, as witnessed in the fearful usurpations and the dark ages that followed” (*ibid.*, p. 258). “The general character of these days—always to be dissociated from the last days for Israel (cf. Acts 2:17 [“**AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS, God says, THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;**”])—is described in a well-defined body of Scripture (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; James 5:1-10; 2 Pet 2:1ff.; Jude 1:1-25; Rev 3:14-22)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:395). “Before the Tribulation is to begin, the apostasy must come first. Thus, it was inevitable that the church would become apostate in the closing days of its history” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 67). “1 Timothy 4:1-3... This passage declares that the source of apostasy is demons, for apostates have essentially given in to seducing spirits and are preaching a system of doctrine which is a doctrine of demons... their conscience has become insensitive” (*ibid.*, p. 68). “2 Peter 2:1-22... Reading through the passage, one does not see Peter displaying any attitude of love or tolerance toward the apostates. The Bible is not tolerant toward apostasy and it castigates it very severely, as these verses clearly show” (*ibid.*, p. 70). “What, after all, is the mark of the apostate? In 2 Peter 2:1, their teachings are portrayed as destructive denials: ‘...denying even the Master that bought them’... the content of apostate teaching involves the denial of the Person (the Master) and work (bought them) of the Messiah... 1 John 2:22-23:

‘...Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father’... Thus, the teachings of apostasy involve the destructive denials of the Person and work of the Messiah, especially with regard to His place in the Trinity, His deity, His incarnation as the God-Man by means of the Virgin Birth, and the fact that He is coming back physically” (*ibid.*). “Jude 17-19... ‘...mockers...’ One type of deed that will be performed by apostates is mockery (vv. 17-18). They will mock the fundamentals of the faith such as the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the Virgin Birth, the substitutionary death of the Messiah, and His physical resurrection from the dead” (*ibid.*, p. 71). “So throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, apostasy took over the schools and trained ministers for the denominational churches. In an effort to stem the tide, in 1910 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church issued the Five Fundamentals of the Faith, which included: *first*, the inspiration of Scriptures; *second*, the Virgin Birth; *third*, the substitutionary atonement; *fourth*, the resurrection of Jesus; and *fifth*, the miracles of Jesus. Those who subscribed to these five points were labeled ‘Fundamentalists,’ and so a new word was coined. Those who denied these fundamentals were called Modernists or Liberals. The General Assembly issued these in 1910 and reaffirmed them in 1916 and 1923” (*ibid.*, p. 73). “...the visible church is primarily apostate today” (*ibid.*, p. 74). “...experience... of God... The most common evidence is that it makes them feel happy and joyful, though this does not take into account that any kind of emotional release of this nature will make one feel better. Even unbelievers can have this same experience. Furthermore, Satan would not be a very good deceiver if he made one feel badly, would he? Satan can give people joyful and happy experiences, and doing so would be in his best interest if that—rather than the Word of God—becomes the final authority for determining spiritual truth” (*ibid.*). “...verbal pronouncements, such as ‘Praise the Lord’ or ‘Praise Jesus,’ or some similar-sounding phrase that is consistently repeated. What the Bible-based observer must realize is that this is merely a formula, much like those who recite a *mantra* in eastern religions... they have learned to fear God on the basis of man-made and man-induced experiences, rather than on the basis of the Word of God... More and more, as people seek deeper and deeper experiences, they spend less and less time actually in the discipline of studying the Word of God, and they reach a point where they begin to totally lack understanding of the Word of God. While they can regularly do ‘God-talk’ and ‘Jesus-speak,’ when they begin to deal with the concrete details of the Word of God, they are at a total loss. The more experiential they become, the less they understand of the Word of God” (*ibid.*, p. 77). “Matthew 7:22–23... No doubt, it was their frequent use of Jesus’ name

that deceived so many... *prophesy... cast out demons... many mighty works...* Here one has all the ingredients of some of the things that are happening in the new wave of apostasy. The name of Jesus is heavily used in almost ritual-*mantra* style, all kinds of signs and wonders are claimed to occur, and yet, by themselves these things do not prove anything because Satan can duplicate these” (*ibid.*, p. 81). “Because the Corinthian Church based so much about its life on experience and the supernatural, that is what opened it up for deception by false teachers” (*ibid.*). “2 Corinthians 11:4... ‘...preaches another Jesus of the same kind, whom we did not preach...’... It should be noted that the name being used to foster the work of deception is the name of Jesus... But the mere usage of the name ‘Jesus,’ even in the context of words like ‘praise,’ ‘glory,’ etc., does not and should not authenticate anyone’s ministry” (*ibid.*, p. 82). “What will attract an audience is people who can do things to make one feel good, even if the feeling is nothing more than an emotional release; but if the feeling can be ascribed to a supernatural work of God, the recipient has been deceived” (*ibid.*, p. 83). “First Corinthians 4:6 states: ‘...not to go beyond the things which are written;...’ The focus on the experiential only showed that they were not spiritual, but carnal (1 Cor. 3:1-3). Paul must especially admonish a church of this nature *not to go beyond the things which are written*” (*ibid.*). “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to **men of flesh**, as to **babes in Christ**. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for **you are still fleshly**. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men” (1 Cor. 3:1-3)? “2 Timothy 3:12-4:4: ‘...all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution... abide in the things which you have learned... that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work...’ Paul gives a simple message that is largely ignored by much of the modern movements today: those who seek to live godly lives will suffer persecution (v. 12). The truth is that health and wealth are not signs of divine favor or spirituality. Rather, it is being persecuted for the faith that is a sign of a truly godly person... The word *abide* has the basic meaning, ‘to make your home.’ He is to make his home in the sacred writings... *furnished completely unto every good work...* One can become spiritual and mature in the faith through the Scriptures alone. However, this will take the discipline of studying the Word of God, spending hours, days, weeks, and years of a lifetime to comprehend more and more of the Word of God. But in this technological age, people have become lazy and, therefore, seek the ‘instant breakfast’ approach to spirituality, sometimes even feeling they have become a

god themselves” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 84). “2 Timothy 4:3... ‘...endure sound doctrine...’ We are living in a day when the majority of believers in our churches simply cannot *endure sound doctrine*. In place of expository teaching of the Word, there are, instead, ‘Christian amusement parks’ and Christian talk shows that carry little, if any, doctrinal substance. A speaker who causes people to become hysterical or act like animals or fall down, can fill up entire stadiums with thousands upon thousands of people who will eventually be asked to empty their pockets for the offering. But one who comes to expound the Word of God, to impart an understanding of the Scriptures and sound doctrine, will draw a relatively tiny audience. Indeed, the time and day have arrived when men cannot *endure sound doctrine*” (*ibid.*, p. 86). “Most mega-churches today were not built up through expository teaching, but through entertainment. Church programs are based on what people want, not what they need” (*ibid.*). “The reason Timothy will not be swept aside to follow fables is because he is basing his entire life, teaching, and ministry on *the sacred writings*” (*ibid.*). “and that **from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus**” (2 Tim. 3:15). “Satan... he tries to keep believers from growing in the faith by overwhelming them with circumstances or by keeping them away from the Word of God through shallow teaching and focusing on experiences” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 658). “...the carnal man ([1 Cor.] 3:1-3)... he seeks to fill his spiritual needs through worldly things and experiences” (*ibid.*, p. 659) “([2 Tim.] 4:3-4)... For *the time will come when they [believers] will not endure the sound doctrine*; therefore, they will run to teachers who scratch their itching ears” (*ibid.*, p. 660). *unbelief*, “Even the very condition of unbelief assumed by the Church and the world respecting the means to inaugurate the Kingdom and the Kingdom itself, confirms our faith, seeing that such a state of unbelief in God’s predictions, and promises, and mode of procedure, is to be characteristic of the last times. Unbelief in the covenanted and predicted restored Theocratic Kingdom is pre-eminently characteristic of the Church and world today” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:588). *wickedness*, “Wickedness is always proportionate to the amount of light enjoyed, and if the advantages, privileges, testimony, etc., of the present day are regarded, the wickedness is far greater than at any other time, being the more inexcusable” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:123). *self-sufficiency*, “**Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you**. Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. **It is in the last days**

that you have stored up your treasure! Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. **You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.** You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you. **Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.** Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for **the coming of the Lord is at hand.** Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, **the Judge is standing right at the door.** As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord” (James 5:1–10). “Because you say, **“I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,”** and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked” (Rev. 3:17) “we ‘have need of nothing,’ i.e., we are indeed rich, having enough of everything. Having wealth, with a spirit of self-complacency, they deem themselves elevated to a high and favored condition” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 129). “the churches... are largely leavened with unbelief and pleased with their prosperity” (*ibid.*, p. 133) “Ch. Sabine (a layman) in his letter to Dr. Raffles, author of the Jubilee Hymn (a hymn illustrative of this sign), says: ‘We find that some ministers are preaching that the world is ripening into glory; others, that it is ripening for judgment. We know that both cannot be true. We take the standard of truth in our hands at home, in our closets, and we find that one class is teaching a Bible truth, the other a Popish fable. Ought these things so to be? “If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?” If one pulpit proclaims: “Peace and safety The Lord delayeth His Coming,” and another, “Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh,” who can be surprised if the joyous world looks on, listens and laughs? And listen and laugh it does—such a laugh of merry mockery! And Satan listens and laughs too—oh, such a laugh of malicious joy. And the harlot laughs as she hands round the gilded cup, and sings for very wantonness, “I sit a queen forever; I shall see no sorrow. The Lord delayeth His Coming. Thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Eat, drink and be merry.” ... In this connection the student will not forget that the Church itself is represented as esteeming itself rich and on the road to prosperity, when really on the broad road to a terrible ordeal. Alas the blindness of men” (*ibid.*, p. 136). “The richer the endowments, the more extended the

investments, the less inclination is there to return to the early belief of the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 249). *lukewarmness*, “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: “I know your deeds, that **you are neither cold nor hot**; I would that you were cold or hot. So because **you are lukewarm**, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that **you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked**, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 3:14-22). *sleepiness*, “And what I say to you I say to all, “**Be on the alert**”” (Mark 13:37)! “The contrast between the two views is great. The one prophesies ‘smooth things,’ administering to the Church, what Mather called ‘the sleeping medicine’” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 198) *and failure*. “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write:... “I know your deeds... **because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth**. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that **you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked**, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that **the shame of your nakedness** may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see” (Rev. 3:14-18). “The Bible does not tell us that down to the Sec. Advent the Gospel will be accepted by the masses, but exactly the reverse” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:732). “The visible church, too, is a failure in her testimony for Christ. See Revelation 2 and 3, as well as the epistles of Paul” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 246). “...pretribulationists assign Matthew 24:14 and Revelation 7:1-8 to the Jewish remnant at the end of Israel’s age... the church... fail to do in two thousand years what a Jewish remnant will accomplish in seven years... Sadly enough, is not the final record of the church on earth one of failure (cf. the church of Laodicea in Rev. 3 and Paul’s epistles with Peter’s and John’s), just as Israel was a failure in her mission before the beginning of the times of the Gentiles?”

Why cavil at whomever it pleases God to use in any age to accomplish His glorious purpose among men? Let God be praised that it is done” (*ibid.*, p. 301)! However, even in the darkest of the last days, God will retain some, if but few, faithful believers. “It is reasonable to expect from the past dealings of God, that, in His providence, He will raise up men, who, amid sarcasm, ridicule, charges of error, heresy, folly, enthusiasm, fanaticism, etc., will, Noah-like, faithfully point to this personal Coming, and warn the Church and world of its approach by direct appeals” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:186). “Thus we have the Spirit, in the most various and accommodating forms, shaping His revelations to sustain our weakness and preserve us from forsaking ‘the old paths’ of belief” (*ibid.*). “2 Tim. 4:3, 4... No matter how great the apostasy, how mighty the defection, yet as the design of this dispensation is to gather out them that believe, to call and save some in order to form a chosen body in the Theocratic ordering, there always must, and will be, a true and faithful people of God; not indeed, as some foolishly and arrogantly claim, all belonging to this or that body of professing believers, but found in the various denominations, God-obeying and fearing men and women who have heartily embraced the Saviour provided for them” (*ibid.*, 3:120). “As the end approaches it is reasonable to expect that a clearer conception of the nature of the Kingdom and its cognate doctrines will be presented, but this very exhibition will meet with continued unbelief and opposition” (*ibid.*, p. 259).

And, *the Church Age concludes with the Rapture of the church.* (See our discussion of the fact that the Rapture of the church closes the Church Age in the *Purposes of the Rapture* section of our next chapter *The Rapture of the Church.*)

Developmental Details of the Church

Many of the *developmental details* of the church are outlined in the “Mystery Kingdom” parables of Matthew chapter thirteen and in the letters to the seven congregations of Revelation chapters two and three. “The age from the rejection of the Messiah by Israel unto His reception by Israel at the second advent is outlined in two portions of the Word: Matthew thirteen and Revelation two and three; the former from the viewpoint of God’s kingdom program, and the latter from the viewpoint of the church program” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 138).

Matthew Chapter Thirteen

In Matthew chapter thirteen, immediately following Jesus’ rejection by the Jewish leaders in chapter twelve (see our chapter *Rejection of the King*), Jesus outlined the new, never-before-disclosed “Mystery” facet of the Kingdom that was now to transpire during the time period between His

rejection and His Second Coming. “Jesus answered them, ‘To you it has been granted to know **the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven**, but to them it has not been granted’” (Matt. 13:11). “And He was saying to them, ‘To you has been given **the mystery of the kingdom of God**, but those who are outside get everything in parables’” (Mark 4:11) “And He said, ‘To you it has been granted to know **the mysteries of the kingdom of God**, but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND’” (Luke 8:10). “Let any man with unprejudiced mind consider the opinions that the Disciples, Apostles and early Church entertained, and then compare them with those now so prevalent, and he will see abundant reason for a most careful re-examination of the whole subject, for between the two there is a most decided conflict... the parables were designed, as some assert (*Lange Com.*, Matt., vol. 1, p. 237), to show the difference between the true Kingdom of Christ and ‘the carnal’ expectations of the Jews... In this discussion, the vital difference that exists between our view and that of others is, that we hold that the parables teach what is preparatory or introductory to the Kingdom, whilst they maintain that the parables refer directly to a Kingdom already in existence, and describe its condition, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:17) “The parables cannot be opposed to the oath-bound Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 19). “We assert, in view of what has already been proven respecting the Kingdom, that no mere human intellect could have devised such a skilfully arranged mode of conveying the most unpalatable (i.e. to Jews) truths” (*ibid.*). “Acts 1:6... the parables and the expounding of them privately by Jesus did not remove the Jewish conception of the Kingdom out of the minds of the disciples... the Apostles (accusing them of gross misconception and of having preached a Kingdom never to be realized)” (*ibid.*) “And so **when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel’**” (Acts 1:6)? “The Kingdom is one thing and the mysteries pertaining to it quite another. Neither Covenant nor prophecy present us a hidden Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:17). “and when they were alone He expounded all things to His disciples.’... Either the expounding of Jesus amounted to nothing or availed nothing, or else it confirmed the disciples in the covenanted Kingdom as believed in by them. The latter is the truth, honorable both to Jesus and Apostles” (*ibid.*, p. 22). “The parables of Jesus... teach... what are the preparations for the Theocratic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 25). “The end of the mystery parables does not coincide, however, with the end of the church age, because the tares and bad fish are disposed of after the end of the church age. The tares of the mystery kingdom, a part of professing Christendom, continue on and are absorbed

in mystery Babylon, which is destroyed during the Tribulation period” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 152). “This particular series of parables is not only concerned with ‘the kingdom of heaven,’ or ‘of God,’ but more specifically with the ‘*mysteries*’ of that Kingdom (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 324). “Among the mysteries of the Kingdom revealed here privately to the disciples by the Lord, the most important has to do with the mystery of an *interregnum* which is to follow the arrival of the King and continue until His second coming. Though implicit there, this is something not revealed in Old Testament prophecy, and it could not be made known clearly until the King’s rejection had become historically certain. But now, in the progress of events, the time has come for its revelation to the disciples, and this is done in the Lord’s explanation of the parable of the ‘tares of the field’ (Matt. 13:36-43)” (*ibid.*, p. 325). “What is certain in the teaching of these difficult parables is that the present age, viewed from the standpoint of the Kingdom, is a time of preparation. During this period the Son of man is sowing seed (vs. 37), generating and developing a spiritual nucleus for the future Kingdom, a group called ‘sons of the kingdom’ (vs. 38, ASV). At the same time He is permitting a parallel development of evil in the world under the leadership of Satan (vss. 38-39). It is the purpose of God to bring both to a ‘harvest,’ when the good and bad will be separated, and then to establish the Kingdom in power and righteousness (vss. 41-43, 49)” (*ibid.*, p. 441). “The absence in Matthew 13 of any mention of the ekklesia, or of its pretribulation Rapture, is not strange; for such mention at this point would be completely unhistorical in the progress of divine revelation” (*ibid.*). “In approaching Matthew 13, one should observe first that the truth about the church as the body of Christ has not yet been introduced, as this is not mentioned until Matthew 16:18. Further, the doctrine of the Rapture has not been introduced either, and the disciples were unaware of the truth of the translation of the saints at the end of the church age. Accordingly, the truth presented in Matthew 13 deals with the whole period between the First and the Second Advents” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 182). “...the time period covered by the parables in Matthew 13 extends from Israel’s rejection until its future reception of the Messiah. Thus this new program began while Christ was still on the earth, and it will extend until His return to the earth in power and great glory... This period includes within it the period from Pentecost in Acts 2 to the Rapture, that is, the age of grace (which we can also call the age of the Holy Spirit, or the age of the church). Although this period includes the Church Age, it extends beyond it, for the parables of Matthew 13 precede Pentecost and extend beyond the Rapture. Thus these parables do not primarily concern the nature, function, and in-

fluence of the church. Rather, they show the previously unrevealed form in which God's theocratic rule would be exerted in a previously unrevealed age, made necessary by Israel's rejection of Christ" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 220). "Following the rejection of Christ's offer of Himself as the Messiah by the leaders in the nation, Christ revealed a new form in which the theocratic kingdom would be administered in the age falling between Israel's rejection of Christ as Messiah, the Son of God, and the nation's future acceptance of Him as Messiah at His second advent. Christ revealed the essential features of the new form of the kingdom in the parables which He taught, recorded mainly in Matthew 13" (*ibid.*, p. 228).

These "Mystery Kingdom" parables are found primarily in Matthew chapter thirteen, with some additions and some duplication in Mark and Luke.

The first "Mystery Kingdom" parable is that of *The Sower*. "And He spoke many things to them in **parables**, saying, 'Behold, **the sower** went out to sow; and as **he sowed**, some seeds fell **beside the road**, and the birds came and ate them up. And others fell **upon the rocky places**, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell **among the thorns**, and the thorns came up and choked them out. And others fell **on the good soil**, and yielded a crop, **some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty**. He who has ears, let him hear'" (Matt. 13:3-9). "Hear then **the parable of the sower**. When anyone hears **the word of the kingdom**, and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown **beside the road**. And the one on whom seed was sown **on the rocky places**, this is the man who hears the word, and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom seed was sown **among the thorns**, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown **on the good soil**, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, **some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty**" (Matt. 13:18-23). (See also Mark 4:2-9, 13-19 and Luke 8:4-8, 11-15.) "in the parable of the Sower 'the seed' is 'the word of the Kingdom,' i.e. a word which tells of and prepares for the Kingdom" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:27) "It is to be understood, then, from that parable that during the time the kingdom is not

established on earth as prophesied, there will be only a partial success for the Word that is preached. In the parable of the sower and the one following, the emphasis of truth seems to be placed upon the beginning of the kingdom in mystery form” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 136). “During the course of the age there will be a decreasing response to the sowing of the seed, from ‘a hundredfold’ to ‘sixty’ to ‘thirty.’ Such is the course of the age” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 146). “While this parable is commonly called ‘The Parable of the Sower’ (i.e., the NIV heading), it might perhaps better be entitled ‘The Parable of the Soils’” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 221).

The second is the parable of *The Seed*. “And He was saying, ‘The kingdom of God is like **a man who casts seed upon the soil**; and goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and **the seed sprouts up and grows** — how, he himself does not know. **The soil produces crops by itself**; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. But **when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come**’” (Mark 4:26-29). “...the fruit depends not on the sower but on the life that is in the seed itself” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 221).

The third is the parable of *The Tares Among the Wheat*. “He presented another parable to them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed **good seed** in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed **tares** also among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’” And he said to them, “An enemy has done this!” And the slaves said to him, “Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?” But he said, “No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. **Allow both to grow together until the harvest**; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into **my barn**’”” (Matt. 13:24-30). “Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.’ And He answered and said, ‘The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and as for **the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and**

those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear” (Matt. 13:36-43). “...‘to establish His (Christ’s) Kingdom as a real one, more and more widely among men, and subdue the world to his dominion.’... flatly contradicted by the parable of the tares and wheat” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:649) “The parable of the Tares and Wheat... above all things His hearers desire to know when it will be established... this parable locates the establishment of the Kingdom at the period of the harvest... ‘the end of the age,’ when the righteous, the gathered wheat, shall ‘shine forth as the Sun’ in the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, 2:21). “The ‘Tares,’ or ‘Darnel,’ so closely resembles Wheat that its true nature cannot be seen until it has matured” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 89). “This gathering together of the ‘Tares’ into bundles is going on now in the formation of false religious systems such as ‘Christian Science,’ ‘New Thought,’ ‘Millennial Dawnism,’ ‘Spiritualism,’ ‘Mormonism,’ ‘Theosophy,’ etc.” (*ibid.*) “The ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ is not the Church, but Christendom” (*ibid.*). “The parable reveals that professing Christendom will be the sphere of activity, not only for the Son of Man and His servants, but also for the devil and his emissaries. Good and bad will be found in the kingdom in its mystery form from the beginning to the end. Only the harvest in a coming day will reveal who are the good and who are the bad” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 137). “Christendom has a portion within it that is only profession and not possession” (*ibid.*, p. 270). “This parable speaks of a seed-sowing, a period of growth, and a harvest. The harvest is definitely set at the ‘end of the age’ (vs. 39, lit.), or ‘the end of this age’ (vs. 40, lit.)... the interregnum caused by Israel’s rejection of her King... The length of the interregnum is not revealed in the parable, whether long or short” (McClain, *GK*, p. 325). “Through this parable Jesus prepared these men to be on guard for Satan’s work of sowing false seed, or false doctrine, while they were sowing the good seed. Satan’s false kingdom would continue to exist alongside the new form of God’s kingdom” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 222). “The future harvest through the ministry of God’s children will see many taken into the Lord’s earthly millennial kingdom, which will be established at His second advent... The ‘barn’ into which the wheat will be gathered is Messiah’s millennial kingdom that has been promised to Israel” (*ibid.*). “Since Satan is an imitator, the weeds he sows bear a striking resemblance to the real thing; and it is not possible until the harvest to distinguish between the wheat and the weeds” (*ibid.*, p. 235). “Jesus described Christendom between His two comings as having both wheat and tares, believers and unbelievers (Matt. 13:24-30)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:119).

The fourth is the parable of *The Mustard Seed*. “He presented another parable to them, saying, **The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed**, which a man took and sowed in his field; and this is smaller than all other seeds; but **when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants**, and becomes a tree, so that **the birds of the air come and nest in its branches**” (Matt. 13:31-32). “And He said, ‘How shall we picture **the kingdom of God**, or by what parable shall we present it? It is **like a mustard seed**, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, yet when it is sown, **grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants** and forms large branches; so that **the birds of the air can nest under its shade**” (Mark 4:30-32). “Therefore He was saying, ‘What is **the kingdom of God** like, and to what shall I compare it? **It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree; and the birds of the air nested in its branches**” (Luke 13:18-19). “These present enemies, however, like the unclean birds in the mustard tree, have taken shelter under her branches” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:104). “The kingdom in mystery comprises the church invisible, but it also has many who, like the birds of the air who seek lodging in the mustard tree, are mere professors and not really children of the kingdom” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 137). “The parable of the Mustard Seed teaches that the Mystery Kingdom will assume huge outer proportions; it will have an abnormal external growth until it becomes a monstrosity which in turn becomes a resting place for birds. According to the first parable, the *birds* represent agents of Satan and, therefore, a negative element. Within the umbrella of Christendom will include all types of groups, such as cultic groups which use Christ’s name but deny His deity” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 613). “In the parable of the mustard seed (Mark 4; Luke 13), ‘the kingdom of God’ represents the tree of Christendom that shelters many creatures (Mark 4:32)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:462).

The fifth is the parable of *The Leaven*. “He spoke another parable to them, **The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three pecks of meal, until it was all leavened**” (Matt. 13:33). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Watch out and **beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees**’” (Matt. 16:6). “How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But **beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees**.’ Then they understood that He did not say to **beware of the leaven of bread**, but of **the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees**” (Matt. 16:11-12). “And He was giving orders to them, saying, ‘Watch out! **Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod**’” (Mark 8:15). “Under these circum-

stances, after so many thousands of the multitude had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, He began saying to His disciples first of all, **‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy’**” (Luke 12:1). “And again He said, ‘To what shall I compare **the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of meal, until it was all leavened**’” (Luke 13:20-21). “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little **leaven** leavens the whole lump of dough? **Clean out the old leaven**, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old **leaven**, nor with **the leaven of malice and wickedness**, but with the **unleavened bread of sincerity and truth**” (1 Cor. 5:6-8). “You were running well; who **hindered you from obeying the truth?** This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. A little **leaven** leavens the whole lump of dough” (Gal. 5:6-10) “The ‘Mustard Tree’ represents the ‘external’ growth and condition of the visible Church and the ‘Leaven’ the ‘internal’ development” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 89). “‘Leaven’ in this Parable is false or corrupting doctrine” (*ibid.*). “...fire alone can arrest the work of leaven” (*ibid.*, p. 90). “The Parable of the Leaven teaches that the Mystery Kingdom will be marked by inward doctrinal corruption. Frequently, a woman used symbolically is a symbol of a false religious system resulting in spiritual fornication (Rev. 2:20; 17:1-18). Whenever the word leaven is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of sin (1 Cor. 5:6-8) and frequently the specific sin of false doctrine (Matt. 16:6, 11-12). The three measures of meal in which the leaven is hidden points to the fact that Christendom develops into three main divisions: Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism. All three, to a greater or lesser degree, will have false doctrine” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 613).

The sixth is the parable of *The Hidden Treasure*. “**The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field**” (Matt. 13:44). “The ‘Treasure’ still remains ‘hid’ in the ‘Field.’ Christ purchased the ‘Field’ on the Cross, but He has not taken possession as yet, and will not until the time comes for the ‘Redemption of the PURCHASED POSSESSION.’ Eph. 1:14. Until that time Israel must remain hid among the Nations. This is one of the ‘Mysteries’ of the ‘Kingdom of Heaven.’ ...Rom. 11:25” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 91). “In Him we have **redemption through His blood**, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind inten-

tion which He purposed in Him with a view to **an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.** In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to **the redemption of God’s own possession,** to the praise of His glory” (Eph. 1:7–14). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this **mystery,** lest you be wise in your own estimation, **that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “The King was here speaking of the nation Israel, the peculiar treasure of the Lord, hidden as it now [in 1936—*ed.*] is throughout the world, but yet to be brought forth for blessing attendant upon the establishment of the kingdom in the earth” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 138). “Throughout the Old Testament, Israel was called God’s ‘treasured possession’ (Ex. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; Ps. 135:4). In the parables of Matthew 13, Christ had already interpreted the field to mean the world (v. 38). Therefore, this parable clearly pictures Israel, God’s peculiar treasure, being taken out of their land because of discipline and scattered throughout the world. This condition became a reality when Titus invaded Jerusalem and expelled the people from the land. Now, in order for the man in the parable to regain the treasure of which he was deprived, it was necessary for him to purchase the field where the treasure was hidden. This Christ did by His death: ‘He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world’ (1 John 2:2). And it will not be until the Second Advent that this treasure will become the possession of its rightful Owner (Matt. 24:31)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 224). “**And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other**” (Matt. 24:31). “The Parable of a Treasure Hidden in a Field may emphasize that God will receive to Himself some from among Israel during this present age (Rom. 11:5)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 236). “In the same way then, **there has also come to be at the present time a remnant** according to God’s gracious choice” (Rom. 11:5). “Treasure is an Old Testament symbol of Israel (Exod. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; Psalm 135:4). This teaches that in spite of the two previous problems [agents of Satan and sin or false doctrine], the Lord will gain a remnant from Israel and there will be

Jews who will come to saving faith” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 613). “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own **possession** from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine” (Ex. 19:5) “For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a people for his own **possession**, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth” (Deut. 14:2). “For Jehovah hath chosen Jacob unto himself, And Israel for his own **possession**” (Ps. 135:4). “In Matthew 13:44, the Mystery Kingdom is compared to a treasure hidden in the field; the point of this parable is that during the period of the Mystery Kingdom, God will gain a remnant from Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 820). “...the hidden treasure... Christ came to purchase His treasured possession (Israel)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:483).

The seventh is the parable of *The Costly Pearl*. “Again, **the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it**” (Matt. 13:45-46). “We see from this Parable that the purpose of this Dispensation is not the conversion of the World, but the securing (formation) of the Church” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 91). “The... parable of the pearl of great price has reference to the church, for which the King gave himself” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 138). “...a pearl comes out of the sea, and quite frequently in Scripture the sea represents Gentile nations” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 224). “...the pearl comes from the sea, and the sea symbolizes the Gentile world (Dan. 7:2-3; Rev. 17:1, 15). Finally, the pearl comes from the oyster, which itself was unclean in the Law of Moses but made clean by the Law of Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 668). “Daniel said, ‘I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And **four great beasts were coming up from the sea**, different from one another” (Dan. 7:2-3). “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you the judgment of **the great harlot who sits on many waters**” (Rev. 17:1) “And he said to me, ‘**The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues**” (Rev. 17:15). “...the pearl... Christ gave His life to provide redemption for the church” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:483).

The eighth is the parable of *The Dragnet*. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a **dragnet** cast into the sea, and **gathering fish of every kind**; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and **gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away**. So it will be **at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous,**

and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 13:47-50). “...this new form of the kingdom will conclude in a judgment separating the righteous from the unrighteous... Matthew 25:1-30 [parables of the ten virgins and of the talents—*ed.*], where Christ predicted judgment on the nation Israel, and in verses 31-46 [the sheep and goats judgment—*ed.*] where He described judgment on living Gentiles” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 224). (See our discussions of the judgments that immediately precede the inauguration of the Kingdom in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

And the ninth is the parable of *The Householder*. “And He said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like **a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old**” (Matt. 13:52). “...the householder ([Matt. 13] v. 52), which teaches that some features of the new form of the kingdom are identical to features previously revealed about the millennial kingdom. It also teaches that other features are entirely new and have no correspondence to what had been revealed about the millennial form of the kingdom... Christ has presented some previously revealed truths that could be called ‘old’; He has presented other truths not previously revealed, and therefore ‘new’” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 225).

See also our discussion of the fact that upon the Jewish leaders’ rejection of Jesus in Matthew chapter twelve Jesus’ method of teaching changed from plain speech to parables in our chapter *Rejection of the King*.

Revelation Chapters Two and Three

In Revelation chapters two and three the resurrected and glorified Jesus gave seven individually-tailored messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Some dispensational scholars believe that in addition to the messages’ immediate references to the seven named churches in the first century, these seven churches also represent seven various “kinds” of churches found in all periods of church history, and/or seven discernible sequential periods of time in church history. Whether the seven represented “kinds” of churches are chronologically contemporaneous or sequential or both is a matter of debate. This writer tends toward the “both” view, especially with the present-day advantage of hindsight and also with the increasing manifestation of “Laodicean” characteristics in today’s professing church. George Peters disagrees with the sequential idea, but others agree with it. “We cannot accept of the opinion (so Vitranga, etc.) that these seven churches are typical or representative of seven *successive* periods of Church history” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:377). “We prefer the simple idea that the seven churches, as they contemporaneously existed, are typical, representative,

prophetical of seven prominent phases or conditions of the Church, contemporaneously present, but becoming more and more intensive as we near the Second Advent” (*ibid.*, p. 379). “Far more was intended than seven addresses to seven literal, obscure, individual churches” (*ibid.*). “Lange (*Com. Rev.*, p. 139)... ‘Were there no Philadelphia in the very last time, where would the Lord find His Bride’” (*ibid.*)? “Every professor of Christianity is either an Ephesian in his religious qualities, a Smyrnaote, a Pergamite, a Thyatiran, a Sardian, a Philadelphian, or a Laodicean... Every age, every denomination, and nearly every congregation contains specimens of each” (*ibid.*). “Dr. Schaff (*His. Apost. Church*, p. 604) presents the most simple and consistent explanation, when he makes these churches to ‘represent the whole Church in its various forms and tendencies’” (*ibid.*). “...this representative character of the seven churches, almost universally conceded by able writers” (*ibid.*, p. 381) “A conversion of the world, as multitudes advocate, is entirely removed from the description” (*ibid.*). “The special promises to incite to faithfulness are not made dependent upon death, but upon this Sec. Coming” (*ibid.*). “Indeed, these epistles if in agreement with the general analogy of the Word, must, of necessity, make the Church a probationary and preparatory stage, and must designate with special prominence the Second Advent, because then the glorious promises of God, covenanted and predicted, will be amply realized” (*ibid.*). “A ‘Candlestick’ requires a light which is self-consuming, while a ‘Lampstand’ is simply the ‘Holder’ of a lamp whose light is fed from a reservoir of oil, thus typifying the oil of the Holy Spirit. Thus Christ looks upon the churches as not the Light, but simply the ‘Light Holder.’ The use of the figures ‘Lampstands’ and ‘Stars,’ which are only for service in the night, indicates that we are living in the ‘Night’ of this Age” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 128). “It is worthy of note that the ‘Messages to the Seven Churches’ are inserted between Two Visions, the ‘Vision of Christ’ in the midst of the ‘Seven Lampstands’ in chapter one, and the ‘Vision of the Four and Twenty Elders’ round about the Throne, in chapter four” (*ibid.*). “If it had been clearly revealed that the Seven Churches stood for ‘Seven Church Periods’ that would have to elapse before Christ could come back, the incentive to watch would have been absent” (*ibid.*). Feinberg suggests, “In Revelation 2 and 3 there is given to us a marvelously accurate outline of the spiritual course of the church age, so much so that some church historians have taken it for the outline of their works. The letter to the church at Ephesus shows the condition of the church at the end of the apostolic age; she had lost her first love and was growing colder in her orthodoxy. The Smyrna church represents the time of the Roman persecutions in the church. The letter to Pergamum reveals the condition in the

church when it unites with the state. Some believe that condition goes on to the end, as in the Church of England and the state church of Scandinavia. Thyatira is a church illustrative of the corruption and degeneration that came into the church when Rome held unrivaled sway during the Middle Ages. The letter to Sardis discloses the course of the church during the Reformation period, which was lacking in emphasis on the Holy Spirit and the subjective side of salvation. Philadelphia represents the presence in the professing Church of the true church. Laodicea speaks to us of the low spiritual state of the church in the last days of the present age. This is supported by the prophecies in 2 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, and 2 Peter. The church age is not one in which the good finally triumphs over the evil and all along the way things get better and better in the world. Exactly the opposite is true of the course of the church age” (*M*, p. 153). “...‘seven’ here speaks of a *totality of characteristics*. In the seven churches we have both every kind of church and also every kind of member, which not only existed on earth in John’s generation but also will exist throughout all ecclesiastical history” (McClain, *GK*, p. 446). “So universal and persistent is this mixture of good and bad in the churches that in each case the final exhortation to hear and the promise of reward are addressed to individual members. In every one of the seven epistles the call is, ‘*He* that hath an ear, let *him* hear’; and the promise in every case is, ‘To *him* that overcometh’ (italics supplied). Among the churches on earth to which the Revelation was addressed, there is not even one which the Lord could present as an ekklesia ‘that overcometh’” (*ibid.*, p. 448).

The first of the seven churches is the church of *Ephesus*. “To the angel of the church in **Ephesus** write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: “I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that **you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.** Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that **you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God”” (Rev. 2:1-7). “Name: Ephesus; Meaning of the name: Desired (beloved); Approximate dates: Pentecost to

100 A.D.; Characteristic: Time of sowing, organization, and evangelism” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153).

The second church is the church of *Smyrna*. “And to the angel of the church in **Smyrna** write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: “I know **your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)**, and **the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan**. Do not fear what **you are about to suffer**. Behold, **the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days**. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death”” (Rev. 2:8-12) “Name: Smyrna; Meaning of the name: Myrrh (bitterness); Approximate dates: Nero to 300 A.D.; Characteristic: Persecution. Enemy revealed” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153). “Smyrna is one of the two churches that Jesus had nothing against” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 53)

The third is the church of *Pergamum*. “And to the angel of the church in **Pergamum** write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: “I know **where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith**, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But **I have a few things against you**, because **you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam**, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality. Thus **you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans**. Repent therefore; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it”” (Rev. 2:12-17). “Name: Pergamos; Meaning of the name: Thoroughly married; Approximate dates: 300 to 800 A.D.; Characteristic: Worldly alliance. Great external growth” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153).

The fourth is the church of *Thyatira*. “And to the angel of the church in **Thyatira** write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: “I know your deeds, and **your love and faith and service and perseverance**, and that **your deeds of late are greater than at first**. But **I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel**, who calls herself a prophetess, and

she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them — I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”” (Rev. 2:18-29). “Name: Thyatira; Meaning of the name: Continual sacrifice; Approximate dates: 800 to 1517 A.D.; Characteristic: Papal domination. Doctrinal corruption” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153).

The fifth is the church of *Sardis*. “And to the angel of the church in **Sardis** write: He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars, says this: “I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but **you are dead**. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you. But **you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments**; and they will walk with Me in white; for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”” (Rev. 3:1-7). “Name: Sardis; Meaning of the name: Those escaping; Approximate dates: Reformation; Characteristic: Empty profession. Rise of the state church” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153).

The sixth is the church of *Philadelphia*. “And to the angel of the church in **Philadelphia** write: “He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: I know your deeds. Behold, **I have put before you an open door which no one can shut**, because **you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name**. Behold, **I will**

cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews, and are not, but lie — behold, I will make them to come and bow down at your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”” (Rev. 3:7-13). “...the Church at Philadelphia... It was to be kept from the ‘hour of temptation’ (Tribulation), that shall come upon all the world. As the Church at Philadelphia is still in existence... while it suffered more or less under the ‘Ten Persecutions’ of the ‘Smyrna Period,’ it has never yet suffered in a persecution that was world-wide. This ‘hour of temptation’ then must be still future and refers doubtless to the ‘Great Tribulation’... as the promise is that the ‘Philadelphia Church’ shall not pass through the Tribulation, is not this additional proof that the Church shall be ‘caught out’ before the Tribulation” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 131)? “We must not forget that the characteristics of all these Periods continue on in the Church down to the end. This is true of the Evangelistic and Missionary movements of the ‘Philadelphia Period,’ but they are now more mechanical and based on business methods, and there is less spiritual power, and this will continue until Christ returns” (*ibid.*). “Name: Philadelphia; Meaning of the name: Brotherly love; Approximate dates: The last days; Characteristic: True church of the last days” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153). “Philadelphia... This is the second church for which there is no *condemnation*. Like Smyrna, Jesus finds nothing against this church and is satisfied with it” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 64). “...by 1900 some 250,000 Jews became believers... This is also the period that saw the rise of cults, such as Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Science, and others. One common element among cults is to claim to be the ‘real’ Jews by declaring themselves to be the 144,000 Jews or the ten lost Tribes of Israel. Nevertheless, the Philadelphia Church will win converts among these as well” (*ibid.*). “The Jezebel element in the Thyatira Church will go through the Tribulation, but the Church of Philadelphia will not” (*ibid.*, p. 65). “The *exhortation* is in verse 11. It is for them to continue to do as they are doing, for they are doing well” (*ibid.*).

And the seventh and last church is the church of *Laodicea*. “And to the angel of the church in **Laodicea** write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: “I know your deeds, that **you are neither cold nor hot**; I would that you were cold or hot. So because **you are lukewarm**, and neither hot nor cold, **I will spit you out of My mouth**. Because **you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,”** and **you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked**, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”” (Rev. 3:14-22). “The trouble with the church today is that it thinks that nothing can be done without money, and that if we only had the money the world would be converted in this generation. The world is not to be converted by money, but by the Spirit of God” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 132). “The Church of Laodicea was not only poor, though rich, it was blind. Or to put it more accurately— ‘Near-Sighted.’ They could see their worldly prosperity, but were ‘Short-Sighted’ as to heavenly things” (*ibid.*). “This is the most startling thing recorded in the New Testament, that it is possible for a church to be outwardly prosperous and yet have no Christ in its midst, and be unconscious of the fact” (*ibid.*). “He had withdrawn. Why? The reason is summed up in one word—Worldliness” (*ibid.*). “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to Him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.’ That is, the way to revive a lukewarm church is for the individual members to open their hearts and let Christ re-enter, and thus open the door for His reappearance” (*ibid.*). “The character of the Church today is Laodicean, and as the Laodicean Period is to continue until the Church of the ‘New-Born’ is taken out, we cannot hope for any great change until the Lord comes back” (*ibid.*). “Name: Laodicea; Meaning of the name: People ruling; Approximate dates: Last days; Characteristic: Apostasy” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 153). “All six of the previous churches had at least one word of *commendation*, but this church has none. There is nothing commendable in this church, as it is entirely an unsaved church” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 66). “The hot are the truly saved believers. The cold are those who are not

believers and do not claim to be believers. The lukewarm are those who do claim to believe in Jesus, but are not truly regenerate believers” (*ibid.*).

God is Gathering the Church Now

As of this writing, as we find ourselves within the time period of the “Mystery Kingdom,” and also within the uniquely blessed and gracious Church Age, God is gathering the church *now*.

Regarding the *fact* of the gathering, “Simeon has related how **God** first concerned Himself about **taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name**” (Acts 15:14). “Christ has always maintained a true Church in this evil world” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:188) “The Church as an elect company is being gathered. This achievement, it will yet be seen, is the supreme divine intent in this age” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:39). “The outcalling of the Church is the primary divine objective in this dispensation” (*ibid.*, p. 44).

Regarding the *method* of the gathering, “**Come to Me [Jesus]**, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). “**But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name**” (John 1:12) “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**’ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, “**You must be born again.**” The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is **born of the Spirit**” (John 3:3-8). “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever **believes** in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). “You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me [**Jesus**]; and you are **unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life**” (John 5:39-40). “No one can come to Me, unless **the Father who sent Me draws him**; and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:44). “and **whom He predestined, these He also called**; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Rom. 8:30). “For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and **transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son**” (Col. 1:13) “By divine calling, which is efficacious (Rom 8:30), the Church as an elect com-

pany is being gathered” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:39). “Believers have been brought into ‘the kingdom of his dear Son’ (Col. 1:13) through the new birth.” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 466] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 397). “It is impossible to save people against their will... God cannot save all He desires to save—He can only save those willing to be saved” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:168).

Regarding the visible *results* of the gathering, “These elect, now gathered out, are in the various denominations of Christians. The diversity, even of doctrine and practice, does not interfere with the possession of the living engrafting principle of faith. The former arises incidentally from the liberty allowed to humanity, which, through infirmity, results in doubt and even error being, more or less, mixed with apprehensions of the truth; the latter, however, in the eyes of a just and merciful God, compensates, if followed by corresponding fruit in evidence of its sincerity, for the weakness exhibited in the former. The one could not have been obviated without largely infringing man’s moral agency; the other cannot be negated without interfering with the Divine Will itself” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:417).

Characteristics of the Church Age

This Church Age, unique among all the ages of world history, possesses and exhibits a number of distinct dispensational characteristics.

It was planned from eternity. “just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before Him” (Eph. 1:4). “Is the church extraneous to God’s plan? It is parenthetical from the standpoint of Israel’s national history, since God’s time-clock for Israel stopped at Messiah’s rejection; hence, there is a break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel in which the church fits. However, from the standpoint of God’s plan, there is *not* a break; as we have seen, God’s purpose was to provoke the Jews and provide salvation for the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13-15 [But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might **move to jealousy my fellow countrymen** and save some of them. For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?]). No wonder Paul concludes this section as he does: ‘Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!’ (v. 33)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:487).

It is disconnected from the previous and the following dispensations. “The world situation that will obtain in the coming tribulation is not a concatenation, or sequence, or development growing out of the present age; it rather is joined directly to the Mosaic age which closed with the death of

Christ. This, apparently, is why the Roman empire—the iron kingdom—must be revived and complete that predicted of it (cf. Dan 2:40-45; 7:7-14). Whatever the history of the Christian era may record for the benefit of a future age, from a religious, political, or racial viewpoint, it will be as though the present age had never existed. When this age is completely written out of the order of earthly history, it is seen that the tribulation follows directly upon the death of Christ. Israel receives at once their request, ‘His blood be on us, and on our children,’ the King returns, Gentiles are judged, and the wrath of God falls upon a Christ-rejecting world. Certainly, under this consideration of world history in its continuity there is no Church to enter the tribulation. She is as foreign to that which follows her history on the earth as she was to that which preceded” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:321). “There are a number of ways in which this previous age differs from all the ages that preceded. (1) In all previous ages Christ was anticipated, but in this present age He has not only come, but has died, been resurrected and is looked to now in His position at the right hand of the Father. (2) The Holy Spirit, who in previous ages came upon certain men to empower them to a given task, has taken up His residence in every believer. (3) In previous ages the good news announced was anticipatory, but in this present age the declaration of the good news announces an accomplished salvation through Christ. (4) The revelation in previous ages was incomplete, but in this present age, since Christ came to reveal the Father, revelation is completed. (5) Since this present age is marked by antagonism to God and His anointed, it bears a distinct characterization as an evil age, which was not applied to any previous age. (6) This age is, consequently under the domination of Satan, its god, in a unique and unprecedented way. (7) The nation Israel has been set aside as the particular object of God’s dealing and can not expect the fulfillment of her promises during this age” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 132). “The ultimate proof of the teaching that the present age is a parenthesis is in the positive revelation concerning the church as the body of Christ and the related truths that reveal the church to be an organism, a body of believers subject to translation and being caught away to heaven. The church is regarded as a bride being prepared for the bridegroom. These distinctive truths establish the concept that the church is to be in this dispensation only. As such, the church is distinguished clearly from the saints who appear on earth during the time of the Tribulation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 28). (See also our discussion of the mystery aspects of the Church Age in our section *The Mystery of the Church* above.)

It is characterized by the bodily absence of the King. “And He said to the disciples, **The days shall come when you will long to see one of**

the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it” (Luke 17:22). “And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, ‘**A certain nobleman went to a distant country** to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return’” (Luke 19:11–12). “Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, “Where **I am going**, you cannot come”” (John 13:33). “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go** to prepare a place for you.’ And if **I go** and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that **where I am**, there you may be also” (John 14:2-3). “Luke 17:22... one of the days of the Son of Man... 1 Cor. 4:3, 4, 5... ‘man’s day’... This, then, is ‘man’s day’—a day in which the absence of the Lord is self-evident, and in which man’s attachment to the world and disregard of God and His dear Son makes it a time peculiar in accord with his views, feelings, passions, etc... the bridegroom is absent and the marriage postponed to His Coming... All days previous to the day of the Lord are man’s days” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:412). “But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any **human court**; in fact, I do not even examine myself. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but **wait until the Lord comes** who will both bring to light the **things hidden in the darkness** and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God” (1 Cor. 4:3–5). “But for me it is the very smallest matter that I be examined of you or of **man’s day**. Nor do I even examine myself” (1 Cor. 4:3, DRBY). “and to me it is for a very little thing that by you I may be judged, or by **man’s day**, but not even myself do I judge” (1 Cor. 4:3, YNG) “But to me it is a very small thing to be judged by you or by **man’s day**. But neither do I judge my own self” (1 Cor. 4:3, DOUAY). “In general, it will be a period of time characterized by the bodily absence of the Messianic King, a prospect which already was troubling the hearts of the disciples. The period therefore will begin with His departure: ‘Little children, yet a little while I am with you,’ He said to them, and ‘I go to prepare a place for you’ (John 13:33; 14:2). And the period will end with His return: ‘I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also’ (John 14:3)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 374).

It is centered in Jesus’ sacrificial death. “Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the

word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, **that Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1-4) “This new age of the Gentiles was also to have its hope centered in Jesus Christ, but in His sacrificial death rather than His kingly reign” (Chafer, S, C2:14/37).

It is characterized by primarily spiritual blessings. “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, **I [Jesus] am with you always, even to the end of the age**” (Matt. 28:20). “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is **the Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and **will be in you**” (John 14:16-17). “I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you.** After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but **you will behold Me**; because I live, you shall live also. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and **I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.**’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, what then has happened that **You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?**’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and **My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him**” (John 14:18-23). “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by **the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior**” (Titus 3:5-6) “Behold, **I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me**” (Rev. 3:20). “It is true that the church in this age is enjoying many of the *spiritual* blessings that the Old Testament connects with the future Messianic kingdom, such as pardon for sin (Isa. 55:4-7), justification by faith and imputed righteousness (Jer. 23:6), regeneration (Ezek. 36:24-28), and the coming of the Holy Spirit on men (Joel 2:27-28). Some of those blessings were possible to believers in the time of Abel (Heb. 11:4) and Abraham (Rom. 4:3), long before Moses and David” (Feinberg, M, p. 147). “Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not; and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of Jehovah thy God, and for the

Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee. Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for **he will abundantly pardon**" (Isa. 55:4-7). "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: **Jehovah our righteousness**" (Jer. 23:6). "For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. And **I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them.** And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Ezek. 36:24-28). "And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be put to shame. And it shall come to pass afterward, that **I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;** and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:27-28) "**By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous,** God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks" (Heb. 11:4). "For what does the Scripture say? '**AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS**'" (Rom. 4:3). "The interval of His bodily absence will be a period when He will manifest Himself to His own in a spiritual way: 'I will not leave you comfortless,' He promises, 'I will come to you' (John 14:18)... this coming is wholly spiritual in nature" (McClain, *GK*, p. 375) "During the entire age of His bodily absence, for those who obey His words, the promise holds good: 'lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age' (Matt. 28:20, lit.)" (*ibid.*). "The period of Christ's bodily absence will be a time of special ministry by the Holy Spirit. The large place given the Holy Spirit in Christ's farewell discourse has often been noted by students of the Word of God. In answer to our Lord's prayer, He will come to the disciples and abide forever with and in them (John 14:16-17). He will be their teacher, bringing to their remembrance the words of the absent Christ (vs. 26). He will testify of Christ (15:26), convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (16:8-11). He will speak to the eleven disciples of

things which, before Christ's departure, they were not yet ready to hear; and also reveal 'things to come' (vss. 12-14). The primary application of these promises was certainly fulfilled in the Spirit's guidance of those who would write the Scriptures of the New Testament, but the promise of His ministry is applicable to all believers of the present age during the absence of Christ. This does not mean, as some have wrongly assumed, that there could be no such ministry of the Spirit while Christ is once again bodily present on earth. This false notion has been wrongly based on the words, 'If I go not away, the Comforter will not come' (John 16:7). But the first clause here refers to the whole of Christ's path back to the Father—His death, resurrection, and ascension. Without all this, the present special ministry of the Spirit in the Church would have been impossible. On the basis of Christ's finished work, the Spirit's ministry becomes possible, not only in the age of Christ's absence, but also during His bodily presence in the coming age of the Kingdom" (*ibid.*).

It exhibits spiritual unity among the genuinely regenerated. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if **you have love for one another**" (John 13:35). "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because **we love the brethren**. He who does not love abides in death" (1 John. 3:14). "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and **whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him**" (1 John. 5:1). "Had an external unity been the aim of God, then undoubtedly the apostles would have presented us with a regular ecclesiastical government (something, perhaps, like the Papacy developed), Canon laws, a Synoptical Confession of Faith, etc. But we are told that, for wise purposes (as e.g. to test character, faith, life), diversity and antagonism were permitted, so that through trial and suffering, fighting and struggling, the faithful members may be perfected... Unity now, however, exists (not outwardly but) between Christ, the Head, and all faithful, believing members (inasmuch as all receive from Him the same blessings, spiritual life, etc.), and even between such believers when the inward religious experience is permitted to testify (for all having the same faith, the same graces of the Spirit, same experience in spite of denominational ties, the likeness in one will respond to the same in another)... The union between Christ and His members is necessarily spiritual, invisible, until the day that He appears with them, and such union is openly revealed" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:335). "...the Romish idea of external unity... the only true Church, possessing the only true faith and practice. We may safely lay it down as a rule, that the louder this claim is urged and the more pretentious it is made, the less credence should be given to it, see-

ing that in its intense bigotry and intolerance it violates at every step the greatest of Christian graces, love” (*ibid.*, p. 339).

It features no centralized, authoritative church government. “The church at its commencement lacked one of the essentials of a Kingdom, viz.: a regularly constituted form of government” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:638). “A Kingdom, to be such, must, of necessity, have some form of government allied with it” (*ibid.*) “To allow special and specific claims to eldership or rulership, etc., under the specious plea of being directed by the Holy Spirit, is the visionary notion of a mystical enthusiasm, and tends to bring us under the subjection of false claims and pretenses” (*ibid.*, p. 640). “The church was simply a community of believers... without basing unity in a complete outward uniformity” (*ibid.*, p. 1;665)

It is marked by suffering. (See our discussion of the fact that church members today are suffering, not reigning, in our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom.*)

It contains a mixture of good and evil, truth and error. “He presented another parable to them, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed **good seed** in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed **tares** also among the wheat, and went away. But **when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also.** And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, “Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?” And he said to them, “An enemy has done this!” And the slaves said to him, “Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?” But he said, “No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. **Allow both to grow together until the harvest;** and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn’”” (Matt. 13:24-30). “Protestantism, overlooking the design intended by the Church meets the charge by endeavoring to make out an invisible unity, which is truly so ‘invisible’ that no one has yet been able to discern it” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:635). “The Church cannot be utterly condemned or unduly exalted without doing violence to it. Neither blackening nor whitewashing, neither defaming nor extravagantly praising, meets the divine portraiture as given in the Scriptures” (*ibid.*). “Lord Bacon... ‘Our Saviour Christ delivered it for an ill-note to have outward peace. And reason teacheth us that in ignorance and implied belief it is easy to agree, as colors agree in the dark; or if any country decline into Atheism, the controversies wax dainty, because men do not think religion scarce worth falling out for; so as it is weak divinity to account controversies an ill sign in the Church.’ So long as tares

and wheat continue mixed—which is down to the Sec. Advent—so long will this state continue” (*ibid.*, p. 637). “To carry out the design of the church does not necessarily require unity... ‘Them that believe’ are found in all denominations; those that are savingly united to Christ are found in Roman Catholic and Protestant churches; admixture of error, difference in Ch. government, etc., has not prevented, in the opposing camps, persons to become justified by faith, adopted by grace, and engrafted as the elect... Many contend that union now is essential, or at least necessary. Keeping in view the object intended by this dispensation, we may concede its desirableness to expedite the gathering of the elect, but it is not absolutely requisite for this purpose. At the very commencement of the Christian Church, as every historian concedes, even in the Apostolic age, there was a tendency (even among the Apostles), to diversity, which has continued down to our day, and we are assured by the Word will continue until Christ ushers in the Mill. Kingdom” (*ibid.*). “Even with the greatest care and utmost watchfulness, unqualified and uncalled men have been foisted on the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 640). “It is eminently true to-day, that while ‘many’ profess and loudly too, the real followers of Christ are ‘few’” (*ibid.*, 3:119). “The immense majority of the professing Church is only nominally Christian” (*ibid.*).

It is free from coercion by God. “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; **let the one who wishes** take the water of life without cost” (Rev. 22:17). “...the probationary and not kingly condition of the church which could not be avoided without destroying man’s free moral agency” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:636)

It is devoid of angelic manifestations. “In the plan of God, the present age is evidently void of angelic manifestations. This could easily be due to the fact that, as in no other age, the saints of God are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and are subject to His leading, which leading is more constant, vital, and exalting than angelic visitations could possibly be” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:23).

It is devoid of spectacular miracles. “But the constant repetition of such ‘signs’ would weaken if not defeat, their significancy. Habitual and commonplace, they would altogether lose their representative character. To sustain even this position consistently and honorably it must be shown that the truths they attest, the doctrines they authenticate, the Divine Plan they substantiate, are worthy of the Supernatural” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:78). “The First and Second Advents, owing to their instrumentality in Redemption, etc., are co-joined, this dispensation being intercalary, and nothing is expressed to indicate its long continuance for the reasons previously given

(which such a temporary revocation would imply); hence the gifts are linked with the Advents as expressive of the Supernatural" (*ibid.*, p. 79).

In it self-preservation is enjoined. "And He said to them, 'When I sent you out without purse and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?' And they said, 'No, nothing.' And He said to them, '**But now, let him who has a purse take it along, likewise also a bag, and let him who has no sword sell his robe and buy one**'" (Luke 22:35-36). "It was during the last supper that the Lord, in a striking passage recorded by Luke alone (22:35-36), sought to prepare His disciples for the changed conditions which would obtain between His departure and His return to establish the Kingdom. He begins by reminding them of the special care bestowed on them during their earlier ministry of proclaiming the Kingdom of heaven as at hand. 'When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing' (vs. 35). Indeed, they told the truth! During the presence of the Messianic King, the disciples had surely tasted the 'powers of the age to come' (Heb. 6:5, lit.), so far as physical blessing had been concerned. There is no record of any illness among them. For friends and relatives, healing was available without reserve (Matt. 8:14-16). Even death itself was no longer irreversible (Mark 5:35-43; John 11:1-47). If food and drink were lacking, the miracle-working power of the King was sufficient for the emergency (John 2:1-11; 6:1-15). For His disciples and Himself there was a supernatural immunity to the ordinary hazards of life (Matt. 14:24-33; Luke 4:28-30). Even such mundane things, as a need for tax money and the means of daily livelihood, were not beyond His interest and power (Matt. 17:24-27; Luke 5:2-9). By no process of 'spiritualization' can these things be robbed of their physical reality. So much for the past. 'But now,' Christ warns, things will be different: 'he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet; and he that hath none, let him sell his cloak, and buy a sword' (Luke 22:36, ASV). These are radical words from the lips of Christ, suggesting a radical change of conditions just at hand, and too little attention has been paid to their signification. What He had formerly commanded them *not* to take (Matt. 10:9-10), He now commands them to take! With an accurate sense of what was about to take place, Van Oosterzee has described the change between the past and the future: 'Then they had in no respect had want, no care had oppressed them; but now it was another time. So unacquainted are they as yet with that which tonight impends, that the Savior can bring to them in no other way a presentiment of it than by holding up to them the sharp contrast of then and now. He enjoins on them the direct opposite of that which He had then commanded them. Once the least care was superfluous, now the most anxious care was

not too much.’ [quoting Lange’s *Commentary*, on Luke 22:36] What our Lord here enjoins upon His disciples is simply the *duty of self-preservation* as the need may arise under the new conditions. They must now give thought to two things: first, the physical requirements of life, as indicated by a ‘purse’ for money, and the ‘wallet’ for provisions; and, second, some measure of defense against external physical dangers, as indicated by the ‘sword.’ This certainly is no warrant for any disciple to devote his life exclusively to the accumulation of physical wealth, any more than to devote his life thus to military pursuits. As a matter of fact, where government exists, as Paul reminds us, the State takes charge of the ‘sword’ (Rom. 13:4), so that the Christian is not left to defend himself. But where such protection does not exist the disciple is not to throw away his life recklessly and uselessly” (McClain, *GK*, p. 371).

And, *it exhibits a conspicuous silence of God*. “But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, And that thou hast taken my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, And castest my words behind thee? When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him, And hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, And thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; Thou slanderest thine own mother’s son. These things hast thou done, and **I kept silence**; Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, **Lest I tear you in pieces**, and there be none to deliver: Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth me; And to him that ordereth his way aright Will I show the salvation of God” (Ps. 50:16-23). “And **they say, How doth God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?** Behold, these are the wicked; And, being always at ease, they increase in riches. Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart, And washed my hands in innocency; For all the day long have I been plagued, And chastened every morning. If I had said, I will speak thus; Behold, I had dealt treacherously with the generation of thy children. When I thought how I might know this, It was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God, And **considered their latter end**” (Ps. 73:11-17). “And **I will wait for Jehovah, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him**. Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion. And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards, that chirp and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony! if

they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them” (Isa. 8:17-20). **“Jehovah will go forth as a mighty man; he will stir up his zeal like a man of war: he will cry, yea, he will shout aloud; he will do mightily against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself:** now will I cry out like a travailing woman; I will gasp and pant together. I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and will dry up the pools” (Isa. 42:13-15). **“He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.** By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due” (Isa. 53:7-8)? **“And of whom hast thou been afraid and in fear, that thou liest, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of long time, and thou fearest me not”** (Isa. 57:11)? **“Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Jehovah? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore”** (Isa. 64:12)? **“I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly”** (Hos. 5:15). **“He returned to heaven at the ascension from the Mount of Olives. He will not come back to the earth until the offense that caused Him to return to heaven is acknowledged or confessed. The national Jewish offense committed against the person of Jesus is not, as so many people think, in killing Him. The actual killing of Christ was done by Gentile, not Jewish, hands. He was condemned and sentenced by a Gentile judge. He was crucified by Gentile soldiers. All this is ultimately irrelevant, for regardless of Jewish acceptance or Jewish rejection, Jesus would have had to die anyway to become the sacrifice for sin. The national offense of Israel was in the rejection of His messiahship. According to this verse, only when this offense is acknowledged or confessed will Christ come back to the earth”** (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 782). **“For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: After glory hath he sent me unto the nations which plundered you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall be a spoil to those that served them; and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah. And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee. And Jehovah shall inherit Judah as**

his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem. Be silent, all flesh, before **Jehovah**; for **he is waked up out of his holy habitation**" (Zech. 2:8-13). "**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD'**" (Matt. 23:37-39)! "And He said to the disciples, **'The days shall come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it'**" (Luke 17:22). "Jesus said to him, **'Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed'**" (John 20:29). "for we walk by faith, not by sight —" (2 Cor. 5:7) "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1:8) "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). "...answer the question proposed by unbelief, why Jesus Christ does not personally manifest Himself, at least now and then, to remove the unbelief of the world. The reply is, that having been rejected by the covenanted elect nation, and that nation suffering the consequences of such rejection, the Kingdom itself being postponed until the time arrives for the removal of the inflictions imposed, the withdrawal of the Messiah is part of that punishment entailed. Until 'the times of the Gentiles' are ended, an open, visible manifestation cannot be reasonably expected. Besides this, the engrafting of Gentiles is, as we have shown, done on the principle of faith and not of sight. It ill becomes the dignity of the King to appear before the time fixed for the cessation of punishment and the gathering out of an incorporated people by faith" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:624). "The taunt so long used by scientists and others, that if such a God as the Bible describes does exist, He should then manifest Himself by direct Divine interference, will then be effectually removed. For, then God, so long withdrawn, will again, as He has promised, reveal Himself to man and exert His marvellous power in his behalf, but, mark it, only in the one direction always observed by Him, viz., in that of the only nation under heaven favored with a covenanted Theocratic relationship. This relationship, for a time held practically in abeyance, He cannot restore until the time comes of His return. The Divine Sovereignty now exercised in a way only susceptible to faith and to reason under the influence of grace, will

again give place to that direct manifestation of power, etc., under the restored Theocratic rule. Hence it is important in regarding this repentance to notice (what, alas! so many overlook) that it is controlled by the principles of the incoming dispensation. ‘The times of the Gentiles’ having ended, Jewish times are again in the ascendancy, so that in reference to the manner of this repentance, the order laid down, the miraculous influences connected with it, the time in which the work is to be effected, etc., we are to be governed solely by what is predicted; and no attempt should be made to prescribe how it must be done, or to force it within the limits assigned to present times. It is sufficient for us to know, that God’s mode of procedure has always been at variance with that which man in his wisdom vainly proposes; and that when a new era has arrived, it has been inaugurated strictly in accord with His own Word but never in accord with popular expectations. The views so universally prevalent on this subject, so opposite to the simple language of the Bible and the child-like faith of the early Church, are, on this ground alone, open to suspicion. It is enough for us to receive predictions, and, actuated by the past literal fulfillment, by faith in God, to believe in them as recorded without the addition of another and differing sense, and of apologies for ancient weakness and credulity” (*ibid.*, 2:80). “In the very nature of the case these scientists demand an exhibition of powers, etc., which the Bible shows, owing to sinfulness, has been withdrawn until a certain period of time has expired and a certain number of believers are obtained, when it shall again be restored. Presuming the Bible to be true, the demand is presumptuous; if it be false, how then are we to explain some facts, (1) that such power, just as the prophets have predicted, has been withdrawn; (2) that God does not now, just as predicted, condescend to act as an earthly Ruler as He once did; (3) that this nation, just as predicted, is preserved notwithstanding its dispersion, thus indicating the restoration of this rule, as also predicted; (4) the gathering of believers going on, as predicted, during this period of withdrawal, etc. Now, if there are so many particulars verified, why may not the rest be? This line of argument is only briefly given—as suggestive of the true method of dealing with the prophets, etc., as fairness and honesty require. The Theocratic Rulership being withdrawn, it is not reasonable to expect God’s direct intervention, until the time comes when it shall be restored; then it comes again with great power” (*ibid.*). “The question is sometimes asked why God does not reveal Himself to a nation as He did to Israel; why He does not personally communicate with man as He once did. The answer, from our position, is plain and decisive. Because no nation occupies a Theocratic relationship; when this is restored then He will again be present and accessible. Until a

people is prepared for a Theocratic ordering, the dignity and honor of the Mighty One refuses such a personal communication. Preparatively He only reveals Himself in and through faith, training a people for the coming revelation of Himself. But the time is near when God will again reveal Himself and dwell with man in the Person of Jesus the Christ” (*ibid.*, 3:438). “Thus unbelief asks, why does not God come now, in this dispensation, and manifest Himself as He once did under the Theocracy and in behalf of the Jews? The answer is plainly given in the Word. The withdrawal of the Theocracy and, as a consequence, of God, is a punishment inflicted for an allotted period. We are now in ‘the times of the Gentiles.’ Respect for His own official position as Theocratic King and a due regard for the fulfillment of His threatened punishment, causes this hiatus of direct Personal Supernatural guidance and intervention. It is only when the time has arrived for the restoration of the Theocracy that God’s special presence is again restored; this is clearly revealed” (*ibid.*, p. 503). “...why the withdrawal of God personally from the world continues” (*ibid.*, p. 504) “For eighteen centuries the world has never witnessed a public manifestation of His presence or His power” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 10). “With all who believe the Bible the great difficulty respecting miracles is not their occurrence but their absence” (*ibid.*, p. 24). “...so long as the kingdom was being preached to the Jews, miracles abounded, but that when the gospel appealed to the heathen world, miracles lost their prominence, and soon entirely ceased” (*ibid.*, p. 49). “...the contrast between the earlier and the later chapters of the Acts of the Apostles” (*ibid.*) “But miracle there was none; for, the special testimony to the Jew having ceased, the purpose for which miracles were given was accomplished” (*ibid.*, p. 58). “In this Christian dispensation God is not imputing their sins to men. Were it otherwise the silence of Heaven would give place to the thunders of His judgments. Every question of judgment was either settled for ever at the Cross, or has been postponed to the day that is still to come... the day of judgment is not yet” (*ibid.*, p. 141). “When faith murmurs, and unbelief revolts, and men challenge the Supreme to break that silence and declare Himself, how little do they realise what the challenge means! It means the withdrawal of the amnesty; it means the end of the reign of grace; it means the closing of the day of mercy and the dawning of the day of wrath” (*ibid.*, p. 146). “If God is silent now it is because Heaven has come down to earth, the climax of Divine revelation has been reached, there is no reserve of mercy yet to be unfolded” (*ibid.*, p. 147). “‘our God shall come and shall *not* keep silence.’ (Ps. 1:3)” (*ibid.*, p. 148) “God’s own ‘apology’ for His inaction is that He is ‘longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to

repentance.’ (2 Pet 3:9)” (*ibid.*, p. 149) “God points to that Cross as the unreserved manifestation of love so inconceivably infinite as to answer every challenge and silence all doubt for ever” (*ibid.*, p. 150). “The dispensation of law and covenant and promise—the distinctive privileges of the favoured people—was marked by the public display of Divine power upon earth. But the reign of grace has its correlative in the life of faith. Ours is the higher privilege, the greater blessedness of those ‘who have not seen and yet have believed.’ And walking by faith is the antithesis of walking by sight. If ‘signs and wonders’ were vouchsafed to us, as in Pentecostal days, faith would sink to a lower level” (*ibid.*, p. 153). “...miracles... Greatest of them all is the miracle of the new birth by the Spirit of God, with its outward side of conversion from a life of selfishness or sin to a life of consecrated service... Christian men have carried it [the gospel] to some of the most degraded races of the heathen world, with results that surpass all previous records, giving overwhelming proof of its Divine character and mission. To men like these there is a sense in which Heaven is not silent” (*ibid.*, p. 157). “The purpose of the miracles, moreover, was to accredit the Messiah to Israel, and not, as generally supposed, to accredit Christianity to the heathen. And therefore, as Scripture plainly indicates, they continued so long as the testimony was addressed to the Jew, but ceased when, the Jew being set aside, the gospel went out to the Gentile world” (*ibid.*, p. 162). “The era of the reign of grace is precisely the era of the silence of God. To grace, therefore, we look to explain the silence. Christianity is the supreme and final revelation of the Divine ‘kindness and love-toward-man.’ Therefore when God again declares Himself it can only be in wrath, and wrath must await ‘the day of wrath’” (*ibid.*, p. 164). “And now a silent Heaven gives continuing proof that this great amnesty is still in force, and that the guiltiest of men may turn to God and find forgiveness of sins and eternal life. God is silent because He has spoken His last word of mercy and love, and judgment must await the ‘day of judgment’—there can be no place for it in this ‘day of grace’” (*ibid.*, p. 165). “In proportion to our appreciation of the Christian revelation will be our appreciation of the argument that God cannot now intervene, or declare Himself, directly and openly” (*ibid.*). “...miracles... the later Epistles are wholly silent respecting them” (*ibid.*, p. 177). “Even the people of God have been deeply perplexed at times about the long silence of God, so far as any apparent supernatural intrusions of power on earth are concerned (cf. Ps. 73:11-17)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 175). “‘I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.’ In the meantime the people of God are enjoined not to seek spurious signs of supernatural power, but to rest in the written word of God (Isa. 8:17-20)”

(*ibid.*). “The long period of God’s judicial silence, which men have perversely construed as an evidence of moral indifference instead of long-suffering mercy on the part of God, will come to an end (Ps. 50:21)” (*ibid.*, p. 209). “...physical miracles of any sort would eventually become the exception rather than the rule... What needs to be emphasized, however, is that these conditions are not descriptive of the final age of human history, but belong only to the interim before the coming of the Kingdom age” (*ibid.*, p. 372). “When miracles take place during the present era of the Church, as I am sure they do, they are generally veiled by the providential devices of God, thus permitting the willful sceptic to attribute the miracle to causes which are secondary, and often making it difficult, if not impossible, for the believer to ‘prove’ its supernatural character. This is in harmony with the chief characteristic of the life of the Church, which is faith in Christ in the sense of unlimited willingness to trust Him in all things. In the face of the inexplicable problems of human life, the mysteries of the divine will, the apparent inequalities of divine justice, and human perplexity under the sombre shadows of a silent heaven, the Church must ‘walk by faith, not by sight’ (2 Cor. 5:7). There is nothing inherently sinful about believing on the evidence of sense experience; but there is a special blessing for those who have believed without seeing (John 20:29), who, against the often adverse testimony of human experience, continue to believe and trust without reserve in Him who today is not visible, ‘Whom having not seen, ye love’ (1 Pet. 1:8). In the Church, God is preparing a special people, called out and tested in the crucible of adversity, who are destined to occupy the highest place of responsibility in the future Kingdom of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 412).

Chapter 21: The Rapture of the Church

The Church Age, which was in Old Testament times a yet-to-be-revealed “mystery” in relation to God’s theocratic Kingdom program with Israel (see our previous chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*), fittingly concludes with a mystery: the Rapture of the church (see our discussion of the four elements of the mystery of the church, one of which is the Rapture, in the *The Mystery of the Church* section of our previous chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*). The Rapture is the church’s “blessed hope” (Titus 2:13) and should be eagerly anticipated by every member of Christ’s body.

Definition of the Rapture

The Rapture can be *defined* as Christ’s “catching up” into the air of all those in Him, whether dead or alive, at the end of the Church Age. Those alive at that time will be caught up together with all those who had previously died in Christ who will at that time be (bodily) resurrected, so the entire church will be raised up, glorified, and forever be with her Bridegroom, Head and Lord. The Rapture is defined primarily in three passages of Scripture: 1. “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also**” (John 14:1-3). 2. “Behold, I tell you **a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**” (1 Cor. 15:51-53). 3. “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be**

with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13-18). “Some writers (as Rev. Wilson in *Proph. Times*, vol. 12, p. 131) make the language (John 11:25, 28) of Jesus to Martha applicable to this period: ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live’ (i.e. by the power of the resurrection); ‘and whoever liveth and believeth on me’ (i.e. at the time of resurrection) ‘shall never die’ (i.e. he shall experience a translation)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:314). “...the translation of living saints at the Advent of Jesus... while it was a special object of hope and desire to the early believers and to succeeding ones, it is only more recently, since eschatology has received remarkable study and investigation, that important additions (resulting from comparing Scripture with Scripture) have been made to our knowledge respecting it” (*ibid.*). “If His return is said to be fulfilled in the death of a believer, because of the fact that he then goes to be with Christ, there is a sad ignoring of every predicted event accompanying that return and a hopeless confusion of what the Scriptures call the ‘last enemy’ and ‘the blessed hope’” (Chafer, *KHP*, 75%). “The Lord’s return for His Bride (only mentioned in the New Testament) should technically be designated the rapture, resting on the wording of 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (‘caught up’ answers to the Latin *rapio*, whence rapture, the verb being so employed in the Latin Vulgate)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 297). “The word *rapture* is from *rapere*, found in the expression ‘caught up’ in the Latin translation of 1 Thessalonians 4:17” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 12). “...the principal rapture passages (John 14:3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)” (*ibid.*, p. 177) “Pretribulationists hold that at the Rapture we have a reversal of what occurs on the day of Pentecost—namely, that every believer was indwelt and baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ. Certainly before Pentecost people were empowered by the Spirit and born again, even if they were not necessarily all indwelt or baptized by the Spirit” (*ibid.*, p. 243). “...the rapture of the church, including both resurrection and translation” (*ibid.*, p. 247) “While the words *rapture* and *translation* are not quite identical, they refer to the same event. By the term *rapture*, reference is made to the fact that the church is ‘caught up’ from the earth and taken to heaven. By the term *translation* the thought is conveyed that those who are thus raptured are transformed in their physical bodies from natural and corruptible bodies to spiritual, incorruptible, and immortal bodies. Strictly speaking, the dead are raised while the living are translated. In common usage, however, this distinction is not normally maintained” (*ibid.*, p. 269). “The word translated ‘caught up’ in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 is the same word translated ‘caught up’ for Jesus’ ascension or rapture to heaven (Rev. 12:5) and for the rapture of the man who was transported

to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2-4)” (Showers, *M*, p. 163). “And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was **caught up to God and to His throne**” (Rev. 12:5). “I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a man was **caught up to the third heaven**. And I know how such a man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows — was **caught up into Paradise**, and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak” (2 Cor. 12:2-4). “It is important to note that John 14:2-3 presents a coming of Christ that does not bring Him to the earth. Instead, the combined concepts of John 14 and 1 Thessalonians 4 indicate that in this coming Christ will descend from heaven to the air above the earth, receive believers unto Himself by catching them up from the earth to meet Him in the air, and then return with them to heaven to dwell together there” (Showers, *M*, p. 164). “The Greek word used here, *harpazo*, means ‘to be caught up.’ The English term *rapture* comes from a Latin source which is the Latin equivalent to the Greek term meaning the same thing: ‘to be caught up’” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 145). “Pretribulationism holds that the Rapture of the church occurs *before* the Tribulation, during which the church, Christ’s bride, will be in heaven, standing before His judgment seat (2 Cor. 5:10) and preparing for His return to earth. Pretribulationism holds that Christ’s coming *for* His saints will be in the air and before the Tribulation; after the Tribulation, Christ will come *with* His saints and *to earth* to reign for a thousand years. Charles Ryrie, John Walvoord, and Dwight Pentecost expound this view” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:612). “‘*caught up*’... (1 Thess. 4:16-17)... The Greek word for ‘rapture,’ translated *caught up*, is *arpadzo*, which is translated in the Latin Bible (the Vulgate) as *rapturo*, from which we get the word *rapture*” (*ibid.*, p. 621).

The Fact of the Rapture

The *fact* of a future (as of this writing) Rapture for the church is evident from several passages of Scripture, and is either implied or alluded to in a number of others. “Jesus said to her, **I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die**. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26)? “When Jesus comes back He will be the ‘Resurrection’ to the ‘Dead in Christ,’ and the ‘Life’ to those who are ‘Living’ and Believe In Him” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 78). “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a**

place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3). “Peter therefore seeing him said to Jesus, ‘Lord, and what about this man?’ Jesus said to him, ‘**If I want him to remain until I come**, what is that to you? You follow Me!’ This saying therefore went out among the brethren that **that disciple would not die**; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, ‘If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you” (John 21:21-23)? “Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we shall not all sleep**, but **we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality”** (1 Cor. 15:51-53). “‘We’ shall not all sleep... ‘WE’ a certain class of person, the saints that shall be alive when that event occurs, whether in his day or at some later time” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 15). “In 1 Thessalonians 4, the question was whether those who had died in Christ would have the same benefits and experience as those who were translated. In 1 Corinthians 15, the question is whether those who are translated will have the same experience and benefits as those who have died and who are resurrected. The two passages together give a complete answer to the basic questions concerning the Rapture as an important prophetic event” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 246). “This discussion of the Rapture comes at the close of a great theological passage dealing first with the death and resurrection of Christ, then the resurrection of believers and the necessity of it. Having established the doctrine of resurrection, the discussion in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 is, in large measure, a presentation of the fact that the Rapture is the major exception to the normal rule of death followed by resurrection. It is Paul’s revelation that a whole generation of Christians will not die but will be raptured and given bodies that will last forever, exactly like the bodies of those who were resurrected from the grave” (*ibid.*). “knowing that **He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you”** (2 Cor. 4:14). “For our citizenship is in **heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself”** (Phil. 3:20-21). “and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is **Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come”** (1 Thes. 1:10). “1 Thessalonians, probably the first epistle that Paul wrote, contributes more to the doctrine of the Rapture than any

other book of the New Testament. It is most significant that this truth is given such prominence in teaching a young church that is being introduced to basic truth. The Rapture is mentioned in one way or another in every chapter of this book (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23)” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 197) “1 Thessalonians... Obviously, if the Great Tribulation is going to precede the Rapture, it would be natural to state this in a book dedicated to the exposition of the doctrine of the Rapture” (*ibid.*). “1 Thessalonians 1:10... Here the hope of the Lord is seen as... an event that preceded the coming wrath” (*ibid.*, p. 198). “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even **you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?** For you are our glory and joy” (1 Thes. 2:19–20). “1 Thess. 2:19-20... No preceding events are mentioned” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 199). “so that He may **establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**” (1 Thes. 3:13). “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For **if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.** Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13-18). “Their expectations of the rapture of the church were as certain as the historical fact that Jesus had died and risen again (1 Thess. 4:14)” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 201). “Paul pointed out [in 1 Thess. 4:14] that when Jesus came, He would bring those with Him who were asleep in Christ. By this He was referring to Christians who had died and whose souls had gone to heaven. When He returned from heaven to the air above the earth, He would bring the souls with Him. This would make possible the reentry of souls into the resurrected bodies of the saints who had died; and together with those translated, they would meet the Lord in the air” (*ibid.*). “First Thessalonians 4:13-18 is the most extensive New Testament passage dealing with the Rapture of the church” (Showers, *M*, p. 198). “Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night. While

they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But **you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief**; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but **let us be alert and sober**. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since **we are of the day**, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, **the hope of salvation**. For **God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing**” (1 Thes. 5:1–11). “Taken as a whole, the pretribulation point of view gives sense and meaning to 1 Thessalonians 5 and explains why this is introduced after the Rapture. In effect, Paul was saying that the time of the Rapture cannot be determined any more than the time of the beginning of the day of the Lord; but this is of no concern to believers because our appointment is not the wrath of the day of the Lord but rather the salvation that is ours in Christ” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 222). “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and **may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Thes. 5:23). “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, **when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is**” (1 John. 3:2). “so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **shall appear a second time for salvation** without reference to sin, **to those who eagerly await Him**” (Heb. 9:28). “keep yourselves in the love of God, **waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life**” (Jude 1:21). “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you **stand in the presence of His glory** blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen” (Jude 1:24-25). “**Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown**” (Rev. 3:10–11). “The phrase, ‘He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches’—with which each letter ends [e.g. 3:13]—is proof of the universal

application of these postascension messages from Christ” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:56). “A clear reference to the Rapture is found in Revelation 3:10-11” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 255). “**After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.’** Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. And **around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads**” (Rev. 4:1-4). “...the first stage of the Advent (which introduces a resurrection and translation of living ones)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:88) “At the coming of the Lord some of His people will pass to heaven, as Elijah did, ‘with death untasted and the grave unknown’” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 110). “The *parousia* of our Lord will cover a period of time and include a whole series of events. The first of His acts will be the removal of the Church of the present age from the earth, an event which Paul will later describe in detail (1 Thess. 4:13-18)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 374). “Taken as a whole, the evidence for the Rapture in Matthew’s Gospel does not stand careful examination. The only [gospel] passage clearly indicating a rapture is in John 14:1-3” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 193). “When the church is completed, Christ will return and rapture her to heaven (1 Thess. 4:16-18). *Then* will come the marriage and supper of the Lamb, when the bride will be united with her Bridegroom forever” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:96).

Identity of the Rapture

In order to correctly *identify* the Rapture, it is important for us to carefully distinguish *what it is* from *what it is not*, especially in relation to Christ’s Second Coming.

The Rapture is Not the Second Coming

If by Christ’s *Second Coming* we mean specifically Jesus’ future visible return to earth (see our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*), the Rapture is *not* Christ’s *Second Coming*. It is instead a separate event which is to occur before and in preparation for the Second Coming. Some scholars, such as George Peters, identify the Rapture as the first *stage* of a two-stage Second Coming. “In reference to the First Advent, the reader will observe that it is predicted that the Messiah comes as the Babe of Bethlehem, as en-

tering the temple, as riding on an ass, as coming to Jerusalem, as appearing in Galilee, etc., and the history of Jesus embraces their respective fulfillment in separated stages of the same Advent. So careful comparison evidences a similar succession of acts in the Second Advent—two of which are held up—owing to their significance and results—with great prominence, viz., the thief-like Coming or presence, and the open, visible Coming or presence” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:319). “For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night**” (1 Thes. 5:2). “**But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief;**” “Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, **I will come like a thief**, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you” (Rev. 3:3). “(Behold, **I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments**, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.)” (Rev. 16:15) “...distinguish His visible Coming *with* the saints... from that of His Coming *for* them, preparatory to the former. Several stages of the same Advent, leaving a sufficient interval for the development of those things between them, is, as the ablest prophetic writers have asserted and proven, the only possible way in which to reconcile the condition attached to the Sec. Advent (as e.g. coming in a time of peace and coming in a time of war, etc.), and places it at the same time in the position given to it by the Spirit, viz., as something that may occur at any moment, and for which we are constantly to watch without looking first for the fulfillment of intervening things” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:331). “the Advent (in the sense we use it, viz., as embracing dif. stages)... His visible open Coming with His saints. But this is very different from His previous Coming *for* those saints, who participate with Him in the destruction of Antichrist, and thus leads us to allow an interval (short or long, as the case may be) before such a Coming in ‘vengeance.’... even before this last Confederation is formed... and the great tribulation is entered... saints are removed... this Advent—concealed to the world and known only by experience to the favored ones—precedes for a time—not given by such dates—the visible world manifestation and destruction of Antichrist” (*ibid.*, 3:96). “Numerous writers of marked ability contend for the suddenness of the Advent, its impending imminency, but weaken their language (and even raise an antagonism) by not observing the difference between the first and last stage of the Sec. Advent... the last stage of the Advent (the open Parousia of Jesus *with* His saints)... the first stage (the thief-like Parousia of Jesus *for* His saints)” (*ibid.*, p. 159) “...the Second Advent, like the First, is expressive of a period of years; that its beginning is characterized by a thief-like, concealed Com-

ing and its end by an open Advent” (*ibid.*, p. 302). “The Day of the Lord (of which the Tribulation is a part) is definitely not the day of the rapture, which precedes it” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 289). “Christ will not only be glorified in his saints when He comes for them (1 Thess. 4), but when He comes with them as well (2 Thess. 1)” (*ibid.*). “Undoubtedly after the church is translated, tribulation saints will be able to see the distinction of the coming for translation and the coming to establish the kingdom in a similar clarity” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 94). “John 14:2-3... none of the phenomenal features accompanying the Second Coming are mentioned here” (*ibid.*, p. 195). “...the church will be raptured from the earth more than seven years before Christ’s coming with his angels” (Showers, *M*, p. 189) “*Parousia* means ‘arrival’ or ‘presence,’ and it is biblically used of the arrival of human beings (see 1 Cor. 16:17) as well as of Christ. He will arrive and be present at the Rapture as well as at the Second Coming; nothing about the term limits it to one or the other... The same is true of the word revelation (Gk: *apokalypsis*), which is used of both aspects of Christ’s return (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:628) “Jesus’ discourse in Matthew 24-25 *does* make sense in context, since the disciples were asking him about ‘signs’ and ‘the end of the age,’ which refer to His Second Coming, not the Rapture” (*ibid.*, p. 655).

The Rapture and the Second Coming were *revealed to the prophets separately*. “Paul had stated that the revelation of the Rapture was by ‘the Lord’s own word’ (1 Thess. 4:15)... From a pretribulational point of view, it is most significant that Paul did not quote any of the Old Testament passages on the second coming of Christ, but rather he claimed that the Rapture was a direct revelation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 202).

These two events are *spoken of separately in Scripture*; never together. “It must be stressed that ‘the precise teaching of the translation of the Church is never found in passages dealing with the return of Christ to establish His kingdom on earth’” [quoting J. F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*, p. 169-70, 199] (Feinberg, *M*, p. 179). “Where does the Scripture join the rapture and the revelation in one passage” (*ibid.*, p. 296)? “It is doubtful whether there is any specific reference at all to the Rapture or translation in the entire context of Matthew 24-25” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 101). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Rapture is not mentioned in any of the Second Coming passages in our discussion of the “Not Post-Tribulation” Rapture in our section *The Timing of the Rapture* below.)

There are numerous *distinctions between the Rapture and the Second Coming, including their timing, participants, direction of travel and results*. George Peters summarizes, “The Scriptures describe a Coming of Je-

for or *in behalf* of His saints (as e.g. 1 Thess. 4:14-17; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52), and then again another *with all* His saints (as e.g. Zech. 14:5; Rev. 19:14; 1 Thess. 3:13; Jude 14, 15), and these two, differing thus in an important particular, indicate separate stages or manifestations pertaining to the same Second Advent. Without allowing something of this kind, several acts pertaining to the one great Coming to this earth, it is impossible to reconcile such passages. For they are sustained in their difference not only by the simple act of coming *for* and *with* the saints, but in the design of such a Coming, viz., as to the former, for the purpose of salvation and glorification, and as to the latter, for the direct overthrow of the enemies of God, the restoration of the Jewish nation, and the glory (thereby promoted) of the saints" (*TTK*, 2:318). "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.** For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,** and thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:14-17). "Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and **the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed**" (1 Cor. 15:51-52). "And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and **Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee**" (Zech. 14:5). "And **the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses**" (Rev. 19:14). "so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at **the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**" (1 Thes. 3:13). "And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, 'Behold, **the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment** upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him'" (Jude 1:14-15). Dr. Feinberg itemizes fourteen distinctions between the Rapture and the Second Coming: "There are some fourteen distinctions discernible between the coming of the Lord for His own and the return with His saints. (1) The

rapture is spoken of in the Scriptures as a mystery. In the two extended passages on that truth in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4, the coming of Christ for His saints is treated as that which was never known by or revealed to Old Testament prophets. But the visible and glorious coming of the Messiah to earth is a subject upon which much is to be found both in the Old Testament and the New. It is certainly a vital distinction that definitely separates the two events. [‘Behold, I tell you **a mystery**; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.’ (1 Cor. 15:51-53) ‘But **we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren**, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For **this we say to you by the word of the Lord**, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.’ (1 Thes. 4:13-18)] (2) The coming of the Lord Jesus for His own will not be seen by the world, whereas His visible appearing will be seen by all when He comes in power and great glory with His holy angels. (3) At the first event believers will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ for rewards for satisfactory service, whereas at the second advent the nations will be judged as to their fitness to enter into the millennial kingdom of the Son of David. (4) Christ will appear to the church as Bridegroom, Lord, and Head; to Israel in the revelation He will come as King, Messiah, and Immanuel. (5) The rapture hope is centered in the fact that the Lord is at hand; with regard to the visible return of the Lord, the central thought is that the kingdom is at hand. (6) When the church is caught up to be with Christ, creation will remain unchanged; when the revelation takes place all creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption. (7) The first event has no relation whatever to the nations; the second event sees their judgment. The remaining distinctions are just as clear. (8) In the rapture the church will be removed from the earth; in the revelation she will be returning with Christ. (9) At the first event Israel will be unaffected; in the second she will have all her covenants fulfilled. (10) Evil will not come into view when Christ takes

His own to Himself; when He comes with them, evil will be ended, Satan will be judged, and the beast and the false prophet will be destroyed. (11 & 12) In the first event there will be no signs to mark its approach, and it is a timeless event; in the second event there will be signs that precede its approach, and it will have a specific time and place in the prophetic scheme of the Scriptures. (13) One is spoken of as the 'Day of Christ' and the other is referred to as the 'Day of the Lord.' In the former, Christ will come as the 'Morning Star'; in the latter, He will appear as the 'Sun of Righteousness' who brings healing in His wings. (14) Finally, at the rapture Christ will come into the air and will not set foot on earth; at the revelation His feet will stand once again on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. Surely, then, premillennialists are warranted in distinguishing between the rapture, which is solely church truth, and the revelation, which concerns all the earth also" (*M*, p. 287). Dr. Pentecost identifies seventeen distinctions: "There are a number of contrasts to be drawn between the rapture and the second advent which will show that they are not viewed as synonymous in Scripture. The fact of two separate programs is best seen by a number of contrasts drawn in Scripture between the two events. (1) The translation entails the removal of all believers, while the second advent entails the appearing or manifestation of the Son. (2) The translation sees the saints caught up into the air, and in the second advent He returns to the earth. (3) In the translation Christ comes to claim a bride, but in the second advent He returns with the bride. (4) The translation results in the removal of the church and the inception of the tribulation, and the second advent results in the establishment of the millennial kingdom. (5) The translation is imminent, while the second advent is preceded by a multitude of signs. (6) The translation brings a message of comfort, while the second advent is accompanied by a message of judgment. (7) The translation is related to the program for the church, while the second advent is related to the program for Israel and the world. (8) The translation is a mystery, while the second advent is predicted in both Testaments. (9) At the translation believers are judged, but at the second advent the Gentiles and Israel are judged. (10) The translation leaves creation unchanged, while the second advent entails the change in creation. (11) At the translation Gentiles are unaffected, while at the second advent Gentiles are judged. (12) At the translation Israel's covenants are unfulfilled, but at the second advent all her covenants are fulfilled. (13) The translation has no particular relation to the program of God in relation to evil [but will not evil become unrestrained at the removal of the restrainer?—*ed.*], while at the second advent evil is judged. (14) The translation is said to take place before the day of wrath, but the second ad-

vent follows it. (15) The translation is for believers only, but the second advent has its effect on all men. (16) The expectation of the church in regard to the translation is ‘the Lord is at hand’ (Phil. 4:5), while the expectation of Israel in regard to the second advent is ‘the kingdom is at hand’ (Matt. 24:14). (17) The expectation of the church at the translation is to be taken into the Lord’s presence, while the expectation of Israel at the second advent is to be taken into the kingdom” (*TTC*, p. 206). “These, and other contrasts which might be presented, support the contention that these are two different programs and can not be unified into one event” (*ibid.*, p. 207). Dr. Walvoord lists nine distinctions and makes several related observations: “These contrasts can be stated by comparison of details of the translation designated (A) and details of the Second Coming designated (B). (A) At the time of the translation, the saints will meet the Lord in the air. (B) At the time of the Second Coming, Christ will return to the Mount of Olives, which on that occasion will undergo a great transformation, a valley being formed to the east of Jerusalem where the Mount of Olives was formerly located (Zech. 14:4-5). (A) At the coming of Christ for the church, the living saints are translated. (B) At the coming of Christ to establish His kingdom, there is no translation whatever. (A) At the translation of the church, Christ returns with the saints to heaven. (B) At the Second Coming, Christ remains on the earth and reigns as King. (A) At the time of the translation, the earth is not judged and sin continues. (B) At the time of the Second Coming, sin is judged and righteousness fills the earth. (A) The translation is before the day of wrath from which the church is promised deliverance. (B) The Second Coming follows the Great Tribulation and outpoured judgment and brings them to climax and culmination in the establishment of the millennial kingdom. (A) The translation is described as an imminent event. (B) The Second Coming will follow definite prophesied signs. (A) The translation of the church is revealed only in the New Testament. (B) The second coming of Christ is the subject of prophecy in both Testaments. (A) The translation concerns only the saved of this age. (B) The second coming of Christ deals with saved and unsaved. (A) At the translation, only those in Christ are affected. (B) At the Second Coming, not only men are affected but Satan and his hosts are defeated and Satan is bound” (*TRQ*, p. 93). “1 Thess. 4:13-18... Another tremendous truth is implicit in the passage: the translation and resurrection take place before Christ actually returns to the earth. From a doctrinal standpoint both the order of these events and the time they occur distinguish them from the second coming. In passages concerning the second coming to the earth the separation of saints from the unsaved takes place uniformly after the the return of Christ. Matthew

25:31-46 pictures this in regard to the Gentiles as taking place after a throne is established on earth subsequent to the Lord's return. Ezekiel 20:33-38 portrays the judgment of Israel and separation of the saved of Israel from the rebels as taking place after the regathering is completed, a time-consuming process and occurring after the second advent. The event pictured in 1 Thessalonians, therefore, cannot be identified as the second coming of Christ pictured in Matthew and in the Old Testament" (*MK*, p. 243). "The fact of translation of saints, if occurring at the second advent, would be in contradiction of the teaching of Matthew and Ezekiel that the separation of saints from the lost at the time of the second advent deals with those still in the flesh upon the earth. In neither Matthew nor Ezekiel is any translation involved—in fact, it is foreign to the passages. The righteous in both cases enter the kingdom and the land of Palestine as their immediate reward" (*ibid.*, p. 244). And Dr. Showers, concerning the order of the "harvest" events, observes: "John 14:2-3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17 indicate that the Rapture will involve the removal of believers from the earth, but the unbelievers will be left on the earth to enter the next period of history. By contrast, several things in the Scriptures indicate that at the coming of Christ with His angels, all unbelievers will be removed from the earth in judgment, but the believers will be left on the earth to enter the Millennial Kingdom" (*M*, p. 176). "The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares. In Matthew 13:24-30 [‘He presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away... Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, **‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn’**”]... the reapers would *first* gather together the tares and burn them, then gather the wheat into the barn" (*ibid.*, p. 177). "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and **they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire**; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom** of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear" (Matt. 13:41-43). "...when He sends forth His holy angels at the end of the age, they will gather out of His kingdom ‘all’ unbelievers and cast them into a furnace of fire ([Matt. 13] vv. 41-42). ‘Then’ the righteous (the believers) will function in God’s Kingdom (v. 43)” (Showers, *M*, p. 177). "The Parable of the Dragnet. In Matthew 13:47-50 [“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and

gathering fish of every kind; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away. So it will be at the end of the age; **the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire;** there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”]... In His interpretation of this parable, Jesus indicated... The angels will ‘sever the wicked from among the righteous, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire’ (vv. 49-50)... We should note three things from Jesus’ interpretation. First, when the holy angels come forth at the end of the age, the wicked, not the just will be taken out or removed. Second, when the wicked are taken out, they will be removed ‘from among’ the just. These two things indicate that the just will be left when the wicked are removed. Third, when the wicked are taken out, they will be cast into a horrible place of torment. Thus, their taking out will result in judgment” (*ibid.*, p. 178). “This reverse order prompts the following conclusions: The Rapture of the church and the coming of Christ with His angels must be two separate events, and they must take place at two different times” (*ibid.*, p. 186).

Concerning these two separate (but related) events, the Rapture of the church and the Second Coming, we should point out that *two “comings” of Christ is not a problem*. “While posttribulationists often ridicule the teaching that there should be more than one ‘coming’ of Christ, there is no more reason why there should not be more than one future coming than there is against their own doctrine of a past coming and a future coming. To the Old Testament saint the division into one coming for suffering and another for glory and judgment was equally difficult to comprehend” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 174).

Participants in the Rapture

The *participants* in the Rapture will be *all and only members of the church, both dead and alive*. “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but **we shall all** be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and **the dead** will be raised imperishable, **and we** shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51–52). “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about **those who are asleep**, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him **those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive**, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede **those who have fallen asleep**. For the Lord Himself

will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ** shall rise first. Then **we who are alive and remain** shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13-18). “To insure a first res. (or a translation) there must be a corresponding fitness, and therefore this res. itself is evidence of the Divine acceptance of the person experiencing its power. An antecedent estimate of character and worthiness must, of necessity, exist. This is based on justifying faith which releases from condemnation and insures eternal life through Jesus; while the position and honor of the saint after resurrection is graduated by the works done in his life of faith” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:306). “There is a distinction between the true church and the professing church. The true church is composed of all those in this age who have received Christ as Saviour. Over against this we have the professing church composed of those who make a profession of receiving Christ without actually receiving Him. Only the true church will be raptured” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 199). “‘we all’ in 1 Corinthians 15:51. The partial-rapture theory is probably the least popular of all the rapture viewpoints” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 251). “It is inconceivable if the church is formed by grace that it should be divided by works” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 99). “The works principle immediately breaks down when the question is asked: How much works” (*ibid.*, p. 110)? “The issue of reward is properly settled at the judgment seat of Christ, not before, and not in a partial translation” (*ibid.*, p. 112) “A division such as partial rapturists teach is unthinkable in view of the doctrine of the one body” (*ibid.*, p. 113). “The partial rapture view has been embraced by only a small fragment of evangelical Christians and has not been recognized by any evangelical Protestant group. It is an interpretation limited to a few and cannot be regarded as within the bounds of normal biblical premillennialism” (*ibid.*). “The completion of the Church comes with the Rapture, which concerns the resurrection of only those who died in Christ, which excludes those saints who died before the first coming” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 453). “...all believers will be raptured, both the living and the ‘dead in Christ’ (1 Thess. 4:16-17)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:648).

Types of the Rapture

While the Rapture, as part of the “mystery” church program, is not found in Old Testament prophecy, some scholars do find in the Old Testament some possible *types* of the Rapture. However, since most these possi-

ble types are not confirmed to be such in the New Testament, they should be received as speculative only.

Enoch was taken up without seeing death. It's interesting that he was also the first one to prophesy of Christ's Second Coming. "And **Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him** [before the Flood—*ed.*]" (Gen. 5:24). "By faith **Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God**" (Heb. 11:5). "And about these also **Enoch**, in the seventh generation from Adam, **prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones'**" (Jude 1:14) "Enoch, a type of the 'Translation Saints,' was caught out 'before' the Flood, and the Flood is a type of the Tribulation, and Noah and his family of the 'Jewish Remnant' or 144,000 sealed ones of Rev. 7:1-8, who will be preserved through the Tribulation" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 79).

Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder; and **Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven**" (2 Kings. 2:11).

Lot was removed from Sodom before destruction came upon the city. "And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, who married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place. For Jehovah will destroy the city. But he seemed unto his sons-in-law as one that mocked. And when the morning arose, then **the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters that are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city**" (Gen. 19:14–15). "Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but **in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all**" (Luke 17:28–29) "and if **He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter; and if He rescued righteous Lot**, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day with their lawless deeds), then **the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment**, and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties" (2 Pet. 2:6–10)

Rebekah, Isaac's bride, appears to be a type of the church in several particulars. "REBEKAH A TYPE OF THE 'BRIDE OF CHRIST.' 1. As Rebekah believed and yielded to the pleadings of Eliezer, so the Church believes and yields to the pleadings of the Holy Spirit. 2. As Rebekah was willing to separate herself from her kinsfolk for Isaac's sake, so the Believer is willing to separate himself from his kinsfolk for Jesus' sake. 3. As Eliezer on the way to Isaac told Rebekah all about his Master Isaac, and what was in store for her, so the Holy Spirit as we journey on our earthly pilgrimage tells us what is in store for us when we shall meet our Isaac—Jesus. 4. As Rebekah was a Gentile bride, so the Church of Christ is a Gentile Bride. 5. As Rebekah did not have to pass through any tribulation before she left her home to go to Isaac, so the Church will not have to pass through the Tribulation before meeting Jesus. 6. As Isaac left his home and went out into the field to meet Rebekah, so Jesus will descend from heaven to meet His Bride, the Church, in the air. 7. As it was 'eventide' when Isaac met Rebekah, so it will be the eventide of this dispensation when Jesus meets His church" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 154).

Asenath became Joseph's wife before the famine/tribulation. "And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him to wife **Asenath, the daughter of Poti-phaera priest of On**. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt" (Gen. 41:45). "Joseph was a type of Christ and he was espoused to, and married Asenath, A Gentile bride, during the time of his 'rejection by his brethren,' and 'before the famine,' which typified the Tribulation, because it was the time of 'Judgment of his Brethren.' This is the time of Christ's rejection by 'His Brethren'—the Jews, and to complete the type He must get His bride—the church, 'before' the Tribulation" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 79).

Moses' wife *Zipporah* was given to him after his rejection and before the Israelites' tribulation in Egypt. "And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon to-day? And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and moreover he drew water for us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where is he? Why is it that ye have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses **Zipporah** his daughter" (Ex. 2:18–21). "Moses, who is also a type of Christ, got his bride, and she a Gentile, 'after' his rejection by his brethren, and 'before' they passed through the Tribulation under Pharaoh. Ex. 2:23-25" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 79). "And it came to pass in the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of **the bondage**, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by

reason of the bondage. And God heard **their groaning**, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge of them” (Ex. 2:23–25).

Daniel was not on hand during the time of testing when Nebuchadnezzar had set up an image for worship on the plain of Dura (as the church will not be on hand when the false prophet demands universal worship of Antichrist). “*The Apoc. Expounded* (vol. 1, p. 207, given by Seiss in *The Apoc.*, p. 230) makes Daniel ‘a type of those kept out of the hour of temptation. When all nations, kindreds, and people are required to worship the image of the plain of Dura, he is not there’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:325).

The Jewish Wedding Analogy

The traditional *Jewish wedding* appears to be an exceptionally fitting and detailed type of the wedding of the church to Christ. Since this type has at least some confirmation in the New Testament, it seems more plausible in this writer’s mind than most of the other, more speculative types. “Which is **as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber**, And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course” (Ps. 19:5) “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. **When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together** she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly” (Matt. 1:18–19). “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to **ten virgins**, who took their lamps, and **went out to meet the bridegroom**. And five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, “Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the prudent answered, saying, “No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they were going away to make the purchase, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast**; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, “Lord, lord, open up for us.” But he answered and said, “Truly I say to you, I do not know you.” Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Matt. 25:1–13). “Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps alight. And **be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast**, so that they may immedi-

ately open the door to him when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves” (Luke 12:35–38). **“He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice.** And so this joy of mine has been made full” (John 3:29). **“In My Father’s house** are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you.** And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also**” (John 14:2–3). “In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, **‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood;** do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death **until He comes**” (1 Cor. 11:25–26). “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband,** that to **Christ** I might present you as a pure virgin” (2 Cor. 11:2). “For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel,** and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord**” (1 Thes. 4:16–17). “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to **the marriage supper of the Lamb.**”’ And he said to me, ‘These are true words of God’” (Rev. 19:6–9). George Peters comments, “[the parable of the ten virgins]... the bridegroom comes after the wedding to his own house, and his friends await him there to receive the procession and participate in the proposed marriage feast, finds its precise fulfillment in Jesus... taking His course to His own inheritance, to Jerusalem, where He meets a body of His ‘own’ people... this remnant of Jews... those who wait expect the coming of a bridegroom (not themselves to be the bride) and a participation in the marriage feast in the bridegroom’s inheritance... the terrible persecu-

tion endured, the proclamation of the truth... during the interval, the precise realization of the prophetic announcements in their own experience, the culmination of their tribulation as foreshown by the Spirit in connection with Jesus of Nazareth, has at length caused this remnant at Jerusalem to decide favorably to Jesus of Nazareth, and to await His Coming as the promised One, even as the bridegroom... the reception of some and the rejection of others, owing to that of preparation and attitude occupied, finds its exact parallel in the verifications of the predictions that a portion of the Jews will be accepted and another portion be rejected—that a sifting and separation will ensue... the posture occupied by the virgins is indicative of a belief in a Coming, expected Messiah, and this is in accord with the Jewish position then occupied, for seeing the accurate fulfillment in the distress accumulated upon them by the last Antichrist, they will also believe in the promised deliverance (as e.g. shown in Zech. 14), and some will be suitably prepared (morally) while others will neglect preparation... the prophecy preceding (comp. Mark 13 and Luke 21) had a special mention of the Jewish nation, of its long-continued tribulation, etc., and it is reasonable that in the final result Jesus should illustrate the condition of the Jews, addressing Himself to them... the Second Advent of the Messiah has a twofold specific relationship... viz., first, to the Church which is associated with Him in the highest Theocratic relationship, in rulership, etc.; and second, to the Jewish nation which occupies a subordinate, but as to other nations a supreme, Theocratic position; in view of this, it is reasonable to suppose that the duty of watching and being prepared would be enjoined upon both; (1) the virgins are invited guests, specially called to participate in the marriage feast ushering in the Millennial era, and so numerous predictions call and invite the Jews to that ‘feast of fat things,’ and we are assured of a response” (*TTK*, 3:303) “Besides this, the parable [of the ten virgins] shows that when the cry was raised, both wise and foolish were aroused by it and acknowledged that Coming, etc., which is not true of any warnings uttered by Pre-Millenarianism... Indeed, before the first stage of the Advent it could not possibly be applied, as the Church is represented as faithless, etc., on the subject. It pertains to the interval between the two stages, when these virgins recognize this marriage, acknowledge their relationship to the bridegroom and bride (as predicted), and then, just when the bridal procession is to be awaited, anticipate its coming... The cry itself does not, as claimed, come from the wise virgins; they themselves are aroused by it. It proceeds either from heralds preceding the procession, or from the procession itself, or else from Gentiles. The most probable opinion, however, is that it proceeds from Elijah, who (as we show elsewhere in detail) is specially sent to

the Jews during this interval to prepare them for the open Parousia” (*ibid.*, p. 307). “A Hebrew marriage has three stages: (1) the legal marriage consummated by the parents of the bride and groom; (2) the groom goes to take his bride from her parents’ home; (3) the wedding supper or feast... Romans 7:4 indicates that legally the church is already the wife of Christ. At the Rapture, Christ will come for His bride. At the return to the earth, the wedding feast will be held” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 163). “Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, **that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead**, that we might bear fruit for God” (Rom. 7:4). Dr. Showers explains in some detail, “Jewish Marriage Customs in Bible Times: The first major step in a Jewish marriage in Bible times was betrothal, the establishment of a marriage covenant. By Jesus’ time, such a covenant was usually established when the prospective bridegroom took the initiative. He would travel from his father’s house to the home of the prospective bride, where he would negotiate with the father of the young woman to determine the price (*Mohar*) he must pay to purchase her. Once the bridegroom paid the purchase price, the marriage covenant was established, and the young man and woman were regarded as husband and wife (cp. Mal. 2:14; Mt. 1:18-19). From that moment on, the bride was declared to be consecrated or sanctified, set apart exclusively for her bridegroom. As a symbol of the covenant relationship that had been established, the groom and bride drank from a cup of wine over which a betrothal benediction had been pronounced. After the marriage covenant was established, the groom left his bride at her home and returned to his father’s house, where he remained separated from his bride for approximately 12 months. This afforded the bride time to gather her trousseau and prepare for married life. During this period of separation, the groom prepared a dwelling place in his father’s house to which he could bring his bride later. At the end of the period of separation, the groom came usually at night to take his bride to live with him. The groom, best man, and other male escorts left the groom’s father’s house and conducted a torch-light procession to the home of the bride. Although the bride was expecting her groom to come for her, she did not know the time of his coming. As a result, the groom’s arrival was preceded by a shout, which forewarned the bride to be prepared for his coming. After the groom received his bride, together with her female attendants, the enlarged wedding party returned from the bride’s home to the groom’s father’s house, where the wedding guests had assembled. Shortly after their arrival, the bride and groom were escorted by the other members of the wedding party to the bridal chamber (*huppah*). Prior to entering the cham-

ber, the bride remained veiled so that no one could see her face. While the groomsmen and the bridesmaids waited outside, the bride and groom entered the bridal chamber alone. There, in the privacy of that place, they entered into physical union for the first time, thereby consummating the marriage that had been covenanted approximately one year earlier. After the marriage was consummated, the groom came out of the bridal chamber and announced the consummation of the marriage to the members of the wedding party waiting outside (Ps. 19:5; Jn. 3:29). Then, as the groom went back to his bride in the chamber, the members of the wedding party returned to the wedding guests and announced the consummation of the marriage. Upon receiving this good news, the wedding guests remained in the groom's father's house for the next seven days, celebrating with a great wedding feast. During the seven days of the wedding feast, the bride and groom remained hidden in the bridal chamber (Gen. 29:21-23, 27-28) for 'the seven days of the *huppah*.' Afterwards, the groom came out of hiding, bringing his bride with him, but with her veil removed so that everyone could see who she was. This is the way that the Jews normally conducted marriages in Jesus' time" (*M*, p. 164). "In the same way that the Jewish groom and bride drank from a cup of wine as a symbol of the marriage covenant that united them as husband and wife, so Christ has given the cup of communion to the church to drink from periodically as a recurring symbol of the new covenant that has united Him and the church spiritually as husband and wife (1 Cor. 11:25-26)" (*ibid.*, p. 167). "Just as a procession of the groom and male escorts from the groom's father's house came to fetch the bride from her home, so a procession of Christ and the angelic escort descending from Christ's Father's house in heaven will fetch the church from the earth (1 Th. 4:16-17)" (*ibid.*). "In the same manner as the Jewish wedding party found wedding guests assembled in the groom's father's house when they arrived, so Christ and the church will find the souls of Old Testament saints (those who were saved in Old Testament times before the church began and who, therefore, are not part of the church) assembled in His Father's house in heaven when they arrive. These souls will serve as the wedding guests for Christ and the church" (*ibid.*, p. 168). "Just as the Jewish bride and groom remained hidden for a period of seven days after they arrived at the groom's father's house, so Christ and the church will remain hidden for a period of seven years after they arrive in heaven. While the seven years of the 70th week of Daniel 9 are taking place on the earth, Christ and the church will be in heaven, totally hidden from the view of those living on the earth" (*ibid.*). "In the same way that the Jewish bride and groom came out of hiding after seven days, now with the bride's veil

removed so that all could see who she was, so Christ and the church will come out of hiding from heaven after the seven years of the 70th week, in full view of all who are still alive on the earth, so that everyone can see who the true church is. Paul wrote to members of the church, ‘When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory’ (Col. 3:4)” (*ibid.*). “The only view of the John 14:3 coming of Christ that fits the Jewish marriage analogy implied by Christ in that passage is the future-coming view. As a result, the Jewish marriage analogy is a significant evidence for that view” (*ibid.*, p. 169). Dr. Fruchtenbaum suggests, “The Rapture is the fetching of the Bride” (*FM*, p. 161). “In order to fully comprehend what is happening in Revelation 19:6-9, it is first necessary to understand the Jewish wedding system that was common in Jesus’ day and was still used among Jews until the beginning of the twentieth century. The Jewish marriage system had four distinct stages, all of which are to be found in the relationship of the Church as the Bride of the Messiah. In the *first* stage, the father of the groom made *the arrangement* for the bride and paid the bride price. This first stage might happen when the children are very young, or one year prior to the marriage. Thus, a long period of time could transpire between the first and second stage. The minimum was one year. Often the bride and groom did not meet each other until their wedding day. Eventually came the *second* stage, known as *the fetching of the bride*. In this second stage, the groom would go to the home of the bride in order to fetch her and bring her to his home. This was often done in accompaniment with a wedding procession. However, the father of the groom determined when the fetching would occur. Furthermore, it had to wait until the groom had a place prepared for her. Then came the *third* stage, which was *the marriage ceremony* to which only a few would be invited. This was preceded by a ritual immersion for ritual cleansing. Finally came the *fourth* stage, *the marriage supper or feast*, which would last for as long as seven days. Many others not invited to the ceremony were invited to the feast” (*ibid.*, p. 587). “While the first stage has already been completed, the other three stages are still future” (*ibid.*). “The second stage was *the fetching of the bride*... This fetching of the Bride is referred to today as the Rapture of the Church and is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18” (*ibid.*, p. 588) “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For **the Lord Himself will descend from**

heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.** Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13–18). “The third stage, the marriage ceremony, will take place in Heaven just prior to the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation. This is described in Revelation 19:6–8” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p.588) “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in **fine linen, bright and clean;** for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:6–8). “The reason the Bride will now be fully ready for the marriage ceremony is because she will have her entire bridal gown on ([Rev. 19] v. 8)... this also shows that the marriage ceremony takes place after the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, when the saints are rewarded for their deeds on earth (1 Cor. 3:10–15). All the wood, hay, and stubble has been burned away and all the gold, silver, and precious stones have been purified. This corresponds to the ritual cleansing of the Jewish wedding system. The ones present at the marriage ceremony are the ‘few,’ that is, only those in Heaven at the time” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 589). “After the marriage ceremony will come the fourth stage, the marriage feast, as described in Revelation 19:9” (*ibid.*) “And he said to me, ‘Write, “**Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.**”’” And he said to me, ‘These are true words of God’” (Rev. 19:9). “Since many are bidden and invited to come to the marriage feast, this passage indicates that the marriage supper or feast will be at a different place than the marriage ceremony. According to the Word of God, the Old Testament saints are resurrected not with the Church before the Tribulation, but after the Tribulation (Dan. 12:2). John the Baptist, who was the last of the Old Testament prophets, called himself *a friend of the bridegroom* and did not consider himself to be a member of the Bride, the Church (Jn. 3:27–30). Hence, the ‘many’ who are bidden to attend the marriage feast on earth are all the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints resurrected after the Second Coming. While the marriage ceremony will take place in Heaven just before the Second Coming, the marriage feast will take place on earth after the Second Coming. In fact, it would seem that the marriage feast is what begins the Millennium or the Messianic Kingdom; the Church’s co-

reigning with the Messiah will start with a tremendous marriage feast. Hence, the Kingdom parables are at times connected with the wedding feast (Matt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13). With the marriage feast, all four stages will be complete” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, 589). (See our discussion of the identity of the church as the bride of Christ in our section *The Identity of the Church* in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*, our discussion of the fact that one of the *current* purposes of the church is to espouse a wife to Christ in our section *The Current Purpose of the Church* in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*, our discussion of the fact that one of the *ultimate* purposes of the church is to be Christ’s wife in our section *The Ultimate (Future) Purpose of the Church* in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*, and our discussion of the bridegroom’s fetching of the bride in the section *Purposes of the Rapture* below.)

Purposes of the Rapture

The Rapture of the church, being one of the most supernatural and momentous events in all of world history, has *purposes* both for the church and also for those left behind.

Purposes for the Church

The *purposes of the Rapture for the church* include saving the church, closing the Church Age and preparing the church for the Kingdom.

The first major purpose (which in turn is made up of several component purposes, which we’ll itemize immediately below) of the Rapture is *to save the church*. “so **Christ** also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him**” (Heb. 9:28). “Salvation is to be completed through His Sec. Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:554). “The Rapture is part of salvation, which is begun and completed by God (Phil. 1:7), not by our works (Titus 3:5-7; Eph. 2:8-9)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:647). “Believers work only for rewards (1 Cor. 3:11; Rev. 22:12), not to participate in the Rapture, which is part of their salvation—the third and final part, called glorification” (*ibid.*, p. 648).

The Rapture will *transfer the church from earth to where Jesus is*, as per Jesus’ desire. “But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to **escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man**” (Luke 21:36). “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a**

place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3). “Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24). “to be caught up in the clouds (or as some, in clouds) to meet the Lord in the air,’ from which it is wrongfully assumed that the Lord and the saints remain in the air” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:533) “In John 14:1-3, it is disclosed that Christ will receive His own unto Himself: not into the mansions, but into the place which He has gone to prepare” (Chafer, *MBT*, 20%). “When its membership is complete, the Church will be taken up from the earth by rapture and resurrection to be personally ‘with’ her divine Head. And this conjugal relationship will be everlasting, never to be broken by divorce, nor marred by any separation” (McClain, *GK*, p. 478). “...these ‘saints’ shall be with Him when He comes to reign (1 Thess. 3:13). It would be inconceivable that the Lamb’s ‘wife,’ after the blessed consummation of the marriage in heaven should ever again be separated from her glorious Bridegroom” (*ibid.*). “so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at **the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**” (1 Thes. 3:13). “In His promise, Jesus made it clear that He, not someone else, would come and receive His believers and that He would receive them unto Himself. This implies that this coming to receive believers is so significant to Him personally that He will not entrust this activity to another. In light of this, Pink wrote, ‘The Lord will not *send* for us, but come in person to conduct us into the Father’s House. How precious we must be to Him!... To have us with Himself is His heart’s desire” [quoting Arthur W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*, p. 352] (Showers, *M*, p. 157). “Here in John xiv the Lord gives a new and unique revelation; He speaks of something which no prophet had promised, or even could promise. Where is it written that this Messiah would come and instead of gathering His saints into an earthly Jerusalem, would take them to the Father’s house, to the very place where He is? It is something new... He speaks then of a coming which is not for the deliverance of the Jewish remnant, not of a coming to establish His kingdom over the earth, not of a coming to judge the nations, but a coming which concerns only His own” [quoting Arno Clemens Gaebelein, *The Gospel of John*, p. 268] (*ibid.*, p. 159). “The adverb translated ‘ever’ in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 means ‘always, at all times.’ Once the church meets the Lord in the air at the Rapture, it will never be separated physically from Him again. From that time, wherever Christ goes, the church will go with Him” (*ibid.*, p. 164). “Then we who are alive and remain

shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall **always** be with the Lord” (1 Thes. 4:17). “then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we **ever** be with the Lord” (1 Thes. 4:1, ASV).

It will *deliver the church from God’s wrath*. “But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to **escape all these things that are about to take place**, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36). “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, **we shall be saved from the wrath of God** through Him” (Rom. 5:9). “**There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**” (Rom. 8:1). “and to **wait for His Son from heaven**, whom He raised from the dead, that is **Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come**” (1 Thes. 1:10). “For **God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:9) “Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, **I also will keep you from the hour of testing**, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). “Rev. 3:10... Dr. Craven (Lange’s *Com. loci*) points out that ‘It is also to be observed that the promise is not of preservation in trial (or testing), as was the promise to Peter, Luke 22:32; but of preservation from (ek) the hour or period of trial’ (comp. 2 Pet. 2:9)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:324). “Analogy favors the removal of the righteous in a time of severe and terrible judgment intended for the wicked, as in the case of Noah, Lot, the early believers at Jerusalem, etc., while previous translations are not lacking, as in the case of Enoch and Elijah” (*ibid.*, p. 315). “Dr. Brookes (*Maranatha*) saying of the judgments still future: ‘We might argue from analogy that a heavenly people, the Church, would be preserved from it, like Enoch; and that an earthly people, the faithful remnant among the Israelites, would be preserved through it, like Noah; while the ungodly who have despised His love would be overwhelmed by it, like the antediluvian world’” (*ibid.*, p. 546). “To demand that believers must experience the terrible judgment and destruction which must fall on unbelievers is to do violence to every feature of the saving grace of God” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:365). “It was fitting that Paul referred to Him as Jesus, because that name means ‘Savior’ (Mt. 1:21), and in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 Paul indicated that He is the one who delivers or saves church saints from wrath” (Showers, *M*, p. 193). “Paul indicated that Christ delivers church saints from future wrath by separating them from it, not by sheltering or protecting them from the wrath while they are in its midst” (*ibid.*, p. 194). “1 Thessalonians 5:9... God has not appointed them to wrath.

The context of Paul's declaration indicates that he was referring to the future Day of the Lord wrath (5:2-3)" (*ibid.*, p. 196). "For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then **destruction** will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thes. 5:2-3). "Paul, the Thessalonian believers, and Christians today will escape all aspects of God's wrath, general and specific, including the Tribulation period. The clear implication of this verse is that Paul hoped in the Lord's imminent return. Otherwise Paul would have told his readers to prepare for the Tribulation" [quoting Constable, *1 Thessalonians*, p. 693] (Showers, *M*, p. 198). "God's intention for them is not the wrath that will come on the earth in the Day of the Lord, but the full salvation that will be theirs when the Lord returns for them in the clouds. The wrath of God referred to here clearly refers to the Tribulation; the context makes this apparent. Deliverance from that wrath is God's appointment for believers. That temporal salvation comes through the Lord Jesus Christ just as does eternal salvation" [quoting Constable, *1 Thessalonians*, p. 706] (*ibid.*, p. 206). "There is now *no condemnation* for those who are in Christ Jesus' (Rom. 8:1). Because Christ bore God's wrath for us, we do not have to endure it. The Tribulation will be an unprecedented time of God's wrath, which there is no reason for the church to experience (1 Thess. 5:9)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:634).

And, it will *deliver the church from persecution*. "Jesus removes saints from a coming persecution, hence in this dispensation" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:104) (See our discussion of the persecution associated with the Tribulation period in the section *Characteristics of the Tribulation* in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

The second major purpose of the Rapture is *to close the Church Age*. "**After these things [the seven churches of Rev. 2-3] I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.'** Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. And **around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads**" (Rev. 4:1-4). "Grace in its fullest aspects began to be manifested when the Law was done away... that grace, I say, will terminate at the

catching away of the Body of Christ to be ever with the Lord” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 214). “...the reinstatement of the Law for Israel after the age of grace in the Tribulation period and subsequent to it, as held by premillennialists” (*ibid.*, p. 219). “This age is in a particular sense the ‘dispensation of the Spirit,’ for He works in a way uncommon to other ages as an abiding Presence within the children of God... The church age commenced with the advent of the Spirit at Pentecost, and will close with a reversal of Pentecost, the removal of the Spirit. This does not mean that He will not be operative—only that He will no longer be resident” [quoting Gerald Stanton, *Kept from the Hour*, p. 110] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 262).

The third major purpose (which again, in turn, is made up of several component purposes, which we’ll itemize immediately below) of the Rapture is *to prepare the church for the Kingdom*. “...for specific purposes (viz., to raise, translate, and glorify His saints, to inaugurate the preliminaries of his Kingdom, etc.)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:319).

The Rapture will *transform (glorify) the church*. “Paul’s reasoning includes the outcome or the result, and not the mode of operation; but this embraces so much, viz., that the future body sustains some relation to the dead body in the grave, although when raised and glorified it is very different from this mortal body, having other powers, qualities, attributes, etc., to fit it for its intended glorified use” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:233). “As the regeneration of the Lord Jesus (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5; 1 Cor. 15:20) is separate from, precedes, and yet is connected, with the ultimate renewal of creation itself, so the regeneration of the believers, accounted worthy to obtain this Kingdom, is separate from, precedes, and yet stands related to, the mighty changes which shall transform nature into the Edenic state so rapturously delineated by the prophets” (*ibid.*, p. 477). “**He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything**” (Col. 1:18). “and from **Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth**. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood” (Rev. 1:5) “**But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep**” (1 Cor. 15:20). “Every believer is now in the chrysalis state of grace, but then in the perfected state” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:66).

The Rapture will transform the church *from flesh and blood to otherwise*. “Now I say this, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for

the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we shall be changed**" (1 Cor. 15:50–52). "...a conversion by which flesh and blood is excluded" (Peters, *TTK*, p. 232) "If this is the Kingdom of heaven, how can the flesh and blood of fallen man inherit it?... a confounding of those who inherit (i.e. the glorified saints, who actually receive a rulership in the Kingdom) with the subjects of the Kingdom" (*ibid.*, 2:552). "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.' To this we reply: most certainly, because this pertains alone to the inheritors of a Kingdom (not to the subjects), fitting and qualifying them for their immortal, Christ-like ridership... Any other Kingdom, however derived from a few disconnected passages, is mythical, and destroys the unity that God's Spirit places in this one Kingdom. All difficulties vanish when the student observes that in this Kingdom there are higher and lower orders to carry out its end" (*ibid.*, 3:464).

It will transform the church *from non-spiritual to spiritual*. "**it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body**. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44). "A great deal of nonsense is written respecting 'the spiritual body,' and because the word 'spiritual' is used, many jump to the conclusion that the body is 'spirit.' No one mistakes concerning 'the natural body' as one under the influence and control of nature, and no one should misapprehend (after the usage of 'spiritual') 'the spiritual body' as one under the influence and control of the spirit" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:234). "...being transformed, made like unto the body of Christ, glorified, it becomes 'a spiritual body,' i.e. a body perfectly controlled by Spirit and not dependent any longer on nature for its support (although like angels, because of future supping with Jesus, etc., food and drink may be partaken of—not as a matter of necessity, but rather of pleasure)" (*ibid.*, p. 238). "Being glorified, fashioned after Christ, made 'equal unto the angels,' neither space nor physical obstructions can prevent their ministrations. Having 'spiritual bodies' (i.e. bodies subject to the will of the Spirit) they can assume visibility or invisibility, they can visit with ease and celerity through great distances, at pleasure. Thus endowed, they can (as Peter, etc.) discern the very heart, the requirements, the necessities of their subjects. Thus pressing want can never be concealed from them, worth can never remain unrecognized by them, and deception can never be practised upon them" (*ibid.*, p. 614). "This future Baptism, with glorification, gives them the power of transporting themselves at will like Christ and the angels, of assuming different appearances at pleasure, of appearing in glory or veiling it, of performing wonderfully, having the elements under control, of opening doors or entering without opening as angels and Jesus, of eating

and drinking with men, of supplying and multiplying food, of healing the sick, of supplying food, of protecting from evil, of delivering out of trouble, etc., etc.” (*ibid.*) “The Baptism of Pentecost is a pledge of fulfillment in the future, evidencing what the Holy Ghost will yet perform in the coming age” (*ibid.*, 3:66). “The apostle in 2 Cor. 1:22; ch. 5:5; Eph. 1:14, tells believers that they have ‘the earnest of the Spirit,’ which implies that what they now realize through the Spirit is only a kind of firstfruits or pledge of what this same Spirit will perform in ‘the day of the Lord Jesus.’ For in that day both body and soul shall experience this remarkable baptism of the Spirit; the body in the Spirit’s resurrecting, quickening, glorifying power (comp. Rom. 8:11; 2 Cor. 5:15; John 6:63; Eph. 1:13, and 4:20; 1 Pet. 3:18, etc.), and the soul in the Spirit’s conferring wisdom, knowledge, utterance, prophecy, miraculous gifts, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 67) “the one, natural, refers to a body under the control and laws of nature, the other, ‘spiritual,’ to a body under the control and laws of Spirit” (*ibid.*, p. 464)

It will transform the church *from natural to supernatural*. “This does not, of course, forbid the power—like angels—of rendering themselves, at pleasure, invisible to mortal eyes, etc. The latter feature is designed to facilitate the power, discrimination, etc., of the glorified ones” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:576). “Jesus and His saints can and will come transported in the aerial by supernatural power” (*ibid.*, 3:25)

It will transform the church *from imperfect to perfect*. “but **when the perfect comes**, the partial will be done away” (1 Cor. 13:10). “because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not **be made perfect**” (Heb. 11:40). “To affirm that mortal and sinful men are already admitted to have part in His functions of universal rule, and are empowered by Him to govern the nations, is a proud and presumptuous ante-dating of the Kingdom. His kings must first be made like Him, immortal and incorruptible... then can they exercise His heavenly authority” [quoting S. J. Andrews, *God’s Revelations of Himself to Men*, p. 293] (McClain, *GK*, p. 338). “Knowledge of God is knowledge of an infinite good; once one directly sees infinite good, it will no longer be possible for him to do evil, for to be directly informed in one’s mind by absolute good is to become completely conformed to it. Hence, the Beatific Vision makes sin impossible. Just as seeing absolute beauty will spoil one forever from longing for anything ugly, likewise, beholding the absolutely holy will overpower any attraction to or desire for the unholy” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:306). “Though heaven makes sin impossible, it does not destroy but instead *fulfills* our freedom” (*ibid.*, p. 307). “God is both free and unable to sin; it will be likewise for us... the perfection of our freedom is the freedom *from* sinning, not

the freedom *of* sinning. The best freedom is the freedom to do the best; beholding and loving the absolute best (which makes sin impossible) is the best thing we can ever do" (*ibid.*).

It will transform the church *from unholy to holy*. "What bliss is in store for true ones! The body glorified, the soul sanctified, love perfected, then no sin will grieve the soul and no yielding to temptation will bring remorse to the heart and tears to the eyes, for a sweet self-consciousness of purity and nobleness of character will ever be present to the saint" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:613).

It will transform the church *from mortal to immortal*. "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we shall be changed**. For **this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**" (1 Cor. 15:51-53). "It is the present body that is raised, but in the sense that its identity is utterly merged into, and deposited within, the new body" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:151). "Mortality is wholly a physical term and its opposite, immortality, is no less so. The phrase, 'the immortality of the soul,' cannot but mislead and is without the slightest Biblical warrant" (*ibid.*, p. 153).

And, it will transform the church *from lowly to glorious*. "For **our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself" (Phil. 3:20-21). "**When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory**" (Col. 3:4). "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, **when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is**" (1 John. 3:2). "These not only see His glory, but partake of the same, 1 Jno. 3:2; Phil. 3:21, etc., for of them it is said: 'When Christ' (notice, as 'Christ'), 'who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory', Col. 3:4" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:560). "The exaltation of the Redeemed to such nearness and association with Him in His offices and authority, evinces the highest position to which humanity can attain, and when the honors and dignities of kingship and priesthood are once enjoyed this will be witnessed and acknowledged" (*ibid.*, p. 613). "It follows that if 'The Christ,' having all power and majesty, promises such exaltation at His appearing, it will be exceedingly great" (*ibid.*). "As Jesus the Messiah is represented in His glorified condition, so His associated priests will likewise

appear, even to the raiment” (*ibid.*, p. 616). “...the associated Rulers, for they are represented as partaking of the divine both in soul and body—in soul specially baptized by the Spirit, thus imparting of the fulness given to Jesus, and in body made like unto Christ by the power of resurrection and glorification” (*ibid.*, 3:447) “There is a part of the work of Christ exclusively confined to the elect, first-born saints who inherit the Kingdom, which so far exceeds all our powers, that it can only be stated, leaving the future, by blessed experience, to determine its nature and glory. ‘Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God,’ i.e. one who is accounted worthy of being a King and Priest in this Kingdom must be such in a different form from the present. To be qualified for rulership he must not only be holy, etc., in reference to soul but must have an immortal, indestructible, mighty, heavenly body as Paul describes in 1 Cor. 15. Hence it is distinctly stated that saints shall be made (1 John 3:2) like unto Christ, and Phil. 3:21, Christ at His appearing ‘shall change this vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body,’ etc. The body itself undergoes a transformation, resulting in glorification. Just as Christ assumed human nature to bring Himself in covenanted relationship to man, and to obtain the covenanted Theocratic order as David’s Son and Lord, and, by virtue of the sacrifice offered by Himself, took upon Himself human nature in its glorified form to be qualified for His reign, so we, if united with Christ in salvation and the higher Theocratic relationship, must, by His aid, take upon ourselves the same transformed nature to receive the proper qualifications. This future identity with Christ and actual assumption of His (i.e. like unto His) transformed human nature, is in some theologies too much abstracted from the glorified state (still future), and applied to the present age or intermediate state. Scripture, however, specifically locates its reception at the Sec. Advent. As there are things connected with Christ in His person and aims, in His divinity and glorified humanity, which transcend the grasp of our present knowledge, so in virtue of this union with Christ and the consequent transformation into His likeness, there are things which, owing to our limited understanding, we see but imperfectly, and others which are now beyond our comprehension” (*ibid.*, p. 457). “The final consequence is identical in either case, being, as it will be, a body like unto the glorious body of Christ (Phil 3:20-21)” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:153). “The resurrection body also has characteristics such as glory, mobility, and agility. It is called a ‘glorious body’ (Phil. 3:21), which assumes that a kind of radiance comes from it, perhaps like with Jesus’ body on the Mount of Transfiguration (cf. Matt. 17). It will have supernatural powers enabling it to move through space (Acts 1:10-11) and perhaps through other material things (cf. John 20:19).

Since Jesus could eat in His resurrection body, assumably we will be able to do so as well. However, since the resurrection body is supernaturally powered (1 Cor. 15:44), we will eat not for nourishment but for pleasure and celebration (cf. Matt. 26:29)” (Geisler, 4:271). “And as they were gazing intently **into the sky while He was departing**, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:10–11). “When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when **the doors were shut where the disciples were**, for fear of the Jews, **Jesus came and stood in their midst**, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you” (John 20:19). “**it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body**. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15:44). ““But I say to you, **I will not drink of this fruit of the vine** from now on until that day when I drink it new **with you in My Father’s kingdom**” (Matt. 26:29).

But even after the transformation, *the church will remain finite*. “...the saints... who, we must never forget, still remain finite beings. What God can and may do in the perfecting of His Church, we must admit, passes beyond present human imagination (1 Cor. 2:9); but we shall never become gods” (McClain, *GK*, p. 485).

The Rapture will *introduce the church to God, face-to-face*. “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but **then face to face**; now I know in part, but **then I shall know fully** just as I also have been fully known” (1 Cor. 13:12). “...after our resurrection, immortal man, in his glorified body, will see God face-to-face... the Beatific (blessed) Vision. At this point the believer will be glorified” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:240). “When we see Him as He is, we will behold beauty—ultimate, infinite, and unadulterated beauty—as it truly is” (*ibid.*, p. 245). “We will not be God’s frozen chosen... our action will not be that of striving but of enjoying, not of seeking but of treasuring what was found. Our minds will be active, not in searching for truth but in rejoicing over the infinite truth discovered (1 Cor. 13:12). Our intellectual and spiritual action in heaven will not be that of desiring God but of delighting in Him” (*ibid.*, 4:308).

The Rapture will *facilitate the judging and rewarding of the church*:

Soon after the Rapture, the church will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. There believers’ works will be judged, and individual believers will consequently suffer loss and/or be rewarded according to their deeds. “Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and **that day** come on you sud-

denly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to **escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man**” (Luke 21:34-36). “But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God**. For it is written, ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall give praise to God.’ So then **each one of us shall give account of himself to God**” (Rom. 14:10-12). “So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but **each will receive his own reward according to his own labor**. For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building” (1 Cor. 3:7-9). “Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, **each man’s work will become evident**; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. **If any man’s work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he shall suffer loss**; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire” (1 Cor. 3:12–15). “Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. Therefore do not go on passing judgment before **the time**, but wait until **the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God**” (1 Cor. 4:1–5). “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one **receives the prize**? Run in such a way that you may **win**. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to **receive a perishable wreath**, but we **an imperishable**. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be **disqualified**” (1 Cor. 9:24–27). “For **we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad**” (2 Cor. 5:10). “in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which **the Lord,**

the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:8). **“For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints”** (Heb. 6:10). **“And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds”** (Rev. 2:23). **“I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown”** (Rev. 3:11). **“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints”** (Rev. 19:6-8). **“And he said to me, ‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.’ ‘Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.’ Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying”** (Rev. 22:10-15). **“There is a difference between mere salvation and the special honor, station, dignity, etc., that God in addition may be pleased to bestow upon certain ones”** (Peters, *TTK*, 2:332). **“The simple scriptural truth presented is this, that for everything done (even for every word spoken) we shall receive our reward, however forgetful of the fact we may be, and however unconscious at the time of its possessing any special merit”** (*ibid.*, p. 380). **“...in the final award... it will be found that many a layman comparatively unknown will stand as high, if not higher, as ministers of extended reputation and eloquence, simply because to the latter much was committed and much required, while of the former less was given and hence less demanded”** (*ibid.*, p. 388). **“How guarded we should be in building, choosing the proper material, lest we suffer loss... the best of us may have cause to regret that with precious things we have mingled inferior things... if such is the criterion respecting the believer, surely then the un-**

believer who rejects the foundation itself can have no hope... This gain or this loss is eternal; although all are happy in salvation, yet the superiority gained or lost will evermore remain" (*ibid.*, p. 390). "No one can plead inability to perform them, since 'God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work' 2 Cor. 9:8" (*ibid.*). "The essential point is to be 'saved by faith'—but it is also of the highest moment to be 'saved by works'—for while the one secures admittance into the Kingdom, the other determines the lot, the reward in that Kingdom. To secure the highest salvation, both must be kept in view, and both must be in unison... A living faith will inevitably produce works, and proportionate to that faith will be the product" (*ibid.*, p. 391). "Whether the secret acts, etc. will be publicly revealed (as some hold, like the failings of Abraham, Moses, David, and Peter) or be privately taken cognizance of by the Lord (as others think), one thing is self-evident, that the lot or position assigned to the believer evidences to all others his past faithfulness in God's service... one thing is certain, that the consciousness of a time departed, in which the greatest honor was within their reach but unattained, will be vividly impressed... such the fulness, joy, and blessedness of a soul in perfected redemption, that neither jealousy, nor envy, nor unhappiness can flow from such differences of degree in glory... and although of different degrees and ranks, every one justified through Christ and being fully redeemed is presented 'faultless before the presence of the Father with exceeding joy'" (*ibid.*). "The judgment unto life is one thing; the judgment unto reward is another thing; the former is decided at death, the other at the Coming of the Lord" (*ibid.*, p. 392). "Men may through lack of proper understanding build imperfectly on the foundation and suffer great loss and yet be saved" (*ibid.*, 3:262) "Though delivered from all judgment due to sin and because of the fact that Christ has borne their sins, the redeemed of this age do, nevertheless, all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, there to receive His approval or disapproval concerning their service for Him (2 Cor. 5:10)" (Chafer, *ST*, 1:343). "It is declared, however, that the believer who suffers loss in respect to his reward for service will himself be saved, though passing through that fire which destroys his unworthy service" (*ibid.*, 3:248). "As for his service, or that which man may do for God, he must yet appear before the judgment seat of Christ, where rewards are to be bestowed and failure in service will be burned (cf. 2 Cor. 5:9-10; 1 Cor 3:15)" (*ibid.*, p. 308). "The basis of the judgment will be solely the works performed after the individual has been brought to God. All those works that have been accomplished through the empowering Spirit of God and through the motivation of the constraining love of Christ with the purpose

of the glory of God will receive reward. The rest will be burned up” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 361). “...which of them should be the greatest (Luke 22:24)... He rebukes them for not seeing that distinctions of rank will be based on willingness to serve and suffer. In the aristocracy of the coming Kingdom there will be no place for self-seeking; but its pattern will be the King Himself who was among them as one who served (vss. 25-28)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 371). “Always the regal rewards for the faithful and the Messianic throne of Christ are future, never present during the era of the churches on earth” (*ibid.*, p. 448). “...rewards are distributed on the basis of effective testimony for Christ” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 278). “As already indicated by Luke 21:34-36, the result of the Rapture is *to stand before the Son of Man*” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 156). “It is not the believer’s sins which will be judged since this has been settled forever at the cross, and there is now no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1)” (*ibid.*). “In [1 Cor. 3] verse 12, this judgment of works will not be based upon quantity, but upon quality. It will not be a question as to *how much* gold, silver, costly stones or wood, hay, stubble; but *was it* gold, silver, or precious stone, or *was it* wood, hay, or stubble” (*ibid.*, p. 157)? “If a believer is doing the will of the Lord, obeys His commandments, and fulfills the ministry for which he received his spiritual gifts, then he is building on the foundation with gold, silver, and precious stones” (*ibid.*). “He will not be punished for his sins any more than a runner in a race is punished for not coming in first” (*ibid.*). “Of course, not all Christians will receive rewards in heaven (1 Cor. 3:12-14); some will be saved ‘as through fire’ (v. 15 NKJV)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:281). “In brief, no believer gets away with sin: ‘*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad*’ (2 Cor. 5:10)” (*ibid.*, p. 282). “1 Corinthians 9:27... ‘I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, *I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*’ Again, Paul is speaking about loss of reward, not of salvation... he speaks of a ‘prize’ to be won rather than a ‘gift’ to be received” (*ibid.*, p. 329). “Every believer’s cup will be full and running over, but not everyone’s cup will be the same size” (*ibid.*, 4:310). “Christ’s Followers Will Be Positionally Rewarded in His Reign... Christ’s disciples will reign with Him, each being rewarded according to his works (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15); in a parable of a king entrusting servants with resources, those who were faithful and industrious were congratulated and promoted (Luke 19:16-19). Jesus said, ‘Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done’ (Rev. 22:12)” (*ibid.*, p. 562). “With the Rap-

ture preceding the Tribulation, believers will receive their rewards in heaven while the Tribulation is occurring on earth” (*ibid.*, p. 618).

Faithful believers will be rewarded with: *Jesus’ confession of his name before His Father and His angels*, “**He who overcomes** shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and **I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels**” (Rev. 3:5). *keeping from the hour of testing*, “**Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth**” (Rev. 3:10). *the morning star*, “**And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him** I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and **I will give him the morning star**” (Rev. 2:26-28). *entrance into the New Jerusalem*, “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and **may enter by the gates into the city**. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying” (Rev. 22:14-15). *white garments*, “**He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments**; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels” (Rev. 3:5). *names written upon him: the name of Christ’s God*, “**He who overcomes**, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and **I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name**” (Rev. 3:12-13). *the name of the New Jerusalem*, “**He who overcomes**, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and **I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name**” (Rev. 3:12-13). and *Jesus’ new name*, “**He who overcomes**, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and **I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name**” (Rev. 3:12-13). *a white stone with a new name*, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes**, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and **I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he**

who receives it” (Rev. 2:17). *crowns*, “...‘crowns’ awarded for faithfulness (Rev. 2:10)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:331) “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. **Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life**” (Rev. 2:10). “1 Corinthians 3:10-15... This passage says nothing about the nature of the reward, but other passages do. They speak of these rewards as being crowns. The Greek language has two words meaning ‘crown.’ One is the word *diadem*, which is a king’s crown. It is the crown of a sovereign and of a person who is royal by his nature and by his position—a king. This is the kind of crown that Jesus wears. The second Greek word is *stephanos*, which is a crown given to an overcomer, a victor, one who has won a race. These are the kinds of crowns available to believers because they overcame in the spiritual warfare and are now crowned at the Judgment Seat of the Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 156). These five crowns are: 1. *the imperishable crown* (for those who achieve victory in the spiritual life), “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games **exercises self-control** in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable **wreath**, but we an **imperishable**” (1 Cor. 9:24-25). 2. *the crown of rejoicing* (for soul-winners), “For who is our hope or joy or **crown of exultation**? Is it not even **you**, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming” (1 Thes. 2:19)? 3. *the crown of righteousness* (for those who have kept the faith, doctrinally and morally, and who have loved His appearing), “**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith**; in the future there is laid up for me **the crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also **to all who have loved His appearing**” (2 Tim. 4:7-8). “Studying prophecy gives one a love and longing for the return of the Messiah. Those believers who love and look for His return are promised a special crown...” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 13) “Looking for His return is the result of sound doctrine and keeping the faith. A life lived in conformity with the New Testament will include the expectation of the soon return of the Lord. For such, there is a *crown of righteousness*” (*ibid.*, p. 159). 4. *the crown of life* (for those who endure trials and for those who suffer martyrdom), “Blessed is a man who **perseveres under trial**; for once he has been approved, he will receive **the crown of life**, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him” (James 1:12). “Do not fear what you are about to **suffer**. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. **Be faithful**

until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). and 5. *the crown of glory* (for those who feed the sheep). “**shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And **when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory**” (1 Pet. 5:2-4). *a dwelling place in the New Jerusalem*, “In My Father’s house are many **dwelling places**; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you**. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that **where I am, there you may be also**” (John 14:2-3). “If believers, let us be careful lest some other man take the mansion that we can attain unto; for it is just as true of the mansion as it is of the crown (the latter being equivalent to or including the former), Rev. 3:11, ‘to hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.’ No crown, no mansion. How terrible, how remorseful, if another man take the position, the dwelling-place, so happy, exalted and glorious, once offered to me and within my reach” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:58). “I go to prepare a place for you.’... the New Jerusalem, the special home of the ransomed... The stations, places, or mansions, determined previously, are bestowed upon those who are worthy of them” (*ibid.*). *being made a permanent pillar in the temple of God*, “Do you not know that **you are a temple of God**, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are” (1 Cor. 3:16-17). “Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For **we are the temple of the living God**; just as God said, ‘I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE’” (2 Cor. 6:16). “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a **holy temple** in the Lord” (Eph. 2:19-21) “**He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore**; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name” (Rev. 3:12). “And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against **God**, to blaspheme His name and **His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven**” (Rev. 13:6). *sitting down with Christ on His throne*, “**He who overcomes, I will grant to**

him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Rev. 3:21). *authority in the Millennial Kingdom*, “And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that **you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”** (Matt. 19:28). “**If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us**” (2 Tim. 2:12) “**And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces,** as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star” (Rev. 2:26-28). “And I saw **thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them.** And I saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus** and because of the word of God, **and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image,** and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and **they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. **This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection;** over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years”** (Rev. 20:4–6). “The judgment spoken of is that of the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, the judgment of the believer’s works. In fact, it is the outcome of this judgment that will determine the position of each Church saint in the Kingdom. A second group of saints who are to co-reign with Him are those who *had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus*. These are the believers who will be martyred during the first half of the Great Tribulation and were mentioned under the fifth Seal (Rev. 6:9-11). A third group are those who did not worship the Antichrist or his image, nor received the mark of 666 on their forehead or on their right hand. Since these things were initiated only at the middle of the Tribulation, this third group of saints are those of the second half of the Great Tribulation. So then, both Church and Tribulation saints will co-reign with the King for one thousand years. The Old Testament saints will have a different destiny” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 394) “...this reign during the thousand years (whatever may be the result afterward) to be given as a reward to those who have been faithful” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:271) “...the saints are manifested before that throne to be assigned their position as rulers in the Kingdom, which apportionment is only done at the manifestation of the

Kingdom itself, and is proportioned to the deeds done in the body” (*ibid.*, p. 364). “The judgment then of saints in the future is not one unto eternal life, but one pertaining to the position to be occupied in the Theocratic Kingdom... future greatness in the Kingdom will be proportionate to present labor and suffering for the truth” (*ibid.*, p. 388). “To reign and to be saved are not necessarily synonymous” (*ibid.*, p. 585). “The Father gives the Kingdom to the Son and the position of the co-heirs is also bestowed by Him, and the stations of these heirs are dependent upon the character formed” (*ibid.*, p. 587). “...it is reasonable to anticipate that under the leadership of the great High-Priest there will be gradations of rank and order in this priesthood. Not all believers will be kings or priests, but only those specially counted worthy of the honor... A diversity in unity, a variety of gifts and ministrations, a distribution of rank and office, enriches the communion and intercourse of the saints with each other and with the nations; it serves as the basis of a mutual impartation of benefit and blessing” (*ibid.*, p. 610). “Resurrected saints are to have positions of responsibility in the millennium as a reward (Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:12-27)” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 500). “These rewards of crowns are for the purpose of determining degree of authority in the Messianic Kingdom and not for the Eternal Order. In eternity, all believers will be equal [?—*ed.*], but not so in the Kingdom where believers may have different positions of authority. In parabolic form, this truth is found in Luke 19:11-27” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 160). “...works do determine the believer’s rewards, and that, in turn, determines the believer’s degree of authority in the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 725). “...the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, the *judgment* of the believer’s works, which determines their position in the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 755). “Reigning is part of a believer’s reward (cf. Rev. 20:6, 22:21)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:330). “...saints who will reign with Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 2:12), some even on their own thrones (cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:17-19)” (*ibid.*, p. 394). “...our reign with Him—which again is a matter of reward, not salvation” (*ibid.*, p. 496). (See our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Church Age is to select and prepare kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom in the *Purposes of the Church* section of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*. Also see our discussion of the fact that believers will reign with Christ in the *Description of the Millennial Kingdom* section of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

hidden manna, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna**, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it” (Rev. 2:17). *authority to eat from the tree of life in Paradise*, “He who has an ear, let him

hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God**” (Rev. 2:7). “Blessed are those who wash their robes, **that they may have the right to the tree of life**, and may enter by the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14). *keeping of his name in the book of life*, “**He who overcomes** shall thus be clothed in white garments; and **I will not erase his name from the book of life**, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels” (Rev. 3:5). *immunity from the second death*, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death**” (Rev. 2:11). *and ability to glorify God*. “**And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever**” (Dan. 12:3). “**Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun** in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears, let him hear” (Matt. 13:43). “And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And **He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light**” (Matt. 17:1-3). “There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for **star differs from star in glory**” (1 Cor. 15:40-41). “**And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly**” (1 Cor. 15:49). “But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, **that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**” (1 Pet. 2:9) “and in the middle of the lampstands one like a **son of man**, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And **His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace**, and His voice was like the sound of many waters” (Rev. 1:13-16) “Inasmuch as reward is associated with brightness and shining in many passages of Scripture (Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43; 1 Cor. 15:40-41, 49), it may be that the reward given to the believer is a capacity to manifest the glory of Christ throughout eternity. The greater the reward, the greater the bestowed capacity to bring glory to God. Thus in the exercise of the reward of the believer, it will be Christ and not the believer that is glorified by the reward. Capacities to radiate the glory will differ, but there

will be no personal sense of lack in that each believer will be filled to the limit of his capacity to ‘show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light’ (1 Pet 2:9)” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 226).

The Rapture will *prepare rulers for the Kingdom*. “This Kingdom—this rulership with Jesus—cannot be inherited by mortal men, it requiring immortal beings who resemble the mighty Theocratic King; for the heirship with Jesus, the identity of associated rule, the unspeakable honor, etc., which can only safely be confided to persons previously prepared for it; the duration, the perfection, design, and results of the reign—all demand this previous resurrection and glorification” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:573). “Tyng (*He Will Come*, p. 159) correctly observes: ‘It is a very false representation of Scripture which pictures the Church as subjects of the coming Kingdom. They shall indeed acknowledge a submission to their Lord, but toward the inhabitants of the earth they will assert a majesty. For this they will have been qualified by their glorification, and to this they have even now been assigned by prophecy and promise’” (*ibid.*, p. 574). “The translation of the saints, as a preparatory measure, is only in agreement with a proposed Theocratic ordering, seeing that such a translation is intended to prepare them for a rulership in it” (*ibid.*, 3:588).

And, the Rapture will *facilitate the marriage of the Lamb*. (See our discussion of the marriage of the Lamb in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Purposes for Those Left Behind

The *purposes of the Rapture for those left behind* include witnessing to those left behind, confirming the literal hermeneutic for the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, unrestraining the Antichrist and reverting God’s earthly program back to Israel.

The first purpose of the Rapture for those left behind is *to witness to those who have been left behind*. “If such an event is to occur it is most reasonable to anticipate that believers in the Word just previous to its occurrence, will proclaim it, so that when it has taken place others may recognize it at once as a part of God’s own divine and gracious ordering. This, then, will alleviate the grief of believers when a beloved one is thus suddenly taken away, because they will rejoice in their having been thus favored, and will strive to prepare themselves and others for the coming struggle, that they too may be accounted worthy of a glorious reunion with resurrected and translated ones” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:334). “In reference to the mighty increase of knowledge predicted of this period, it is sufficient to say that the

gigantic events then taking place, owing to the first stage of the Advent, the resurrection and translation of the saints will give the believer such a dear and decisive understanding of the prophecies, its chronology and the events to be anticipated, that then students of prophecy will see eye to eye, and encourage each other out of the fully comprehended Word of God” (*ibid.*, p. 338).

The second purpose of the Rapture for those left behind is *to confirm the literal hermeneutic for the fulfillment of Bible prophecy*. “Present the scriptural reasons for the early faith, and many, many will absolutely refuse even to consider them. Nothing but the terrible persecution of the future following the translation of the first-fruits, awakening the [false—*ed.*] Church from its false exegesis and application and dreams of prosperity, will cause a revulsion and a return to the scriptural ground, because the modern idea is too extensively advocated by eloquent, talented, pious men to be rooted out by other means” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 304).

The third purpose of the Rapture for those left behind is *to unrestrain the Antichrist*. “And Jehovah said, **My spirit shall not strive with man for ever**, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years” (Gen. 6:3). “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you **another Helper, that He may be with you forever**” (John 14:16) “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, **the Helper** shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, **will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment**” (John 16:7-8) “If any man destroys **the temple of God**, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and **that is what you are**” (1 Cor. 3:17). “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And **you know what restrains him now**, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only **he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way**” (2 Thes. 2:3-7). “Doubtless His restraint operates both directly and through the Church in which He dwells” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:373). “He who was always omnipresent became resident on the Day of Pentecost; He who is now resident will become merely omnipresent on the completion of that which He came on the Day of Pentecost to achieve” (*ibid.*). “The Spirit is omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-12) and cannot be eliminated from anywhere; His special presence in

believers, individually or collectively, is a work that ends on earth at the Rapture” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:630). **“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.** If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in **the uttermost parts of the sea;** Even there shall thy hand lead me, And thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me, And the light about me shall be night; Even the darkness hideth not from thee, But the night shineth as the day: **The darkness and the light are both alike to thee**” (Ps. 139:7-12). “Old Testament believers were not permanently indwelt by the Spirit (Ps. 51:11; 1 Sam. 16:14), yet everyone who enters God’s kingdom must be born again by the Spirit (John 3:3-7), and Old Testament saints are in God’s kingdom (Matt. 8:11). The Spirit’s regeneration is not identical to the Spirit’s indwelling. Even though His restraining influence through indwelling believers will no longer be in the world, He will be present in the Tribulation to regenerate those who believe” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:630). (See also our discussion of the fact that the removal of the church is needed to unrestrain the Antichrist in our section *The Timing of the Rapture* below.)

The fourth purpose of the Rapture for those left behind is *to revert God’s earthly program back to Israel*. “And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, ‘Brethren, listen to me. Simeon has related how **God first** concerned Himself about **taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.** And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, **“After these things I will return, And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, And I will rebuild its ruins, And I will restore it,** In order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,” Says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old” (Acts 15:13–18). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “Just as God took Enoch to heaven while allowing Noah to endure the Flood, even so God will deliver the church before the Tribulation and allow Israel to endure it. It is Israel’s time of trouble and purification (cf. Zech. 12:6), the era that will prepare Israel to receive her Messiah (v. 10; cf. Rom. 11:25). This is a time of God’s wrath on unbelievers, not on believers; Christ has already borne God’s wrath for us” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:617). **“In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all**

the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem” (Zech. 12:6). **“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born”** (Zech. 12:10). **“For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”** (Rom. 11:25) (See our discussion of the Great Tribulation’s purposes in relation to Israel in the *Purposes of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Characteristics of the Rapture

The Rapture of the church possesses several signature *characteristics*. It is *a mystery* (see our discussion of the mystery of the Rapture in the *The Mystery of the Church* section of our previous chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*), *miraculous* (as are all the spectacular acts of God), *awesome* (just picture it in your mind’s eye!), *bodily* (see our discussion of the bodily nature of the first resurrection in the section *The First Resurrection* in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*), *invisible to unbelievers*, “Leading prophetic writers justly have no hesitancy in asserting that no mortal eye of unbelief shall behold the resurrection” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:315). “...the first aspect of this Coming refers to a concealed, hidden Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 319) “The Coming ‘as a thief in the night’ is certainly not the Coming with His angels and saints in great glory and power—so that all shall, ‘every eye,’ see Him—for vengeance, for the former is a secret, and the latter an open Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 322). *instantaneous*, “in a moment, **in the twinkling of an eye**, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:52). (See our discussion of the duration of the Rapture in our section *Chronology of the Rapture* below.), *as a thief in the night*, “And **to the angel of the church** in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars, says this: “I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, **I will come like a thief**, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon

you”” (Rev. 3:1–3). “...when we are not expecting Him... as a thief comes... He takes only the precious things... He does not come to stay. As soon as he secures what he is after he departs... The thief leaves much more than he takes” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 12). and *unexpected by most people* (see our discussion of the fact that not even most Christians have the proper (expectant) attitude toward the Rapture in our section *Attitudes Toward the Rapture* below).

Chronology of the Rapture

The *chronology* of the Rapture involves the timing of the Rapture and its duration. We will explore these two subjects in this section.

Timing of the Rapture

The *timing* of the Rapture is a subject of considerable and lively debate. Even among premillennialists there are differences of opinion concerning the precise timing of the Rapture. Because Scripture does not explicitly state, in unambiguous terms, exactly when the Rapture is to occur in relation to the Tribulation period (for a full discussion of the Tribulation period see our next chapter, *The Great Tribulation*), the matter is left to careful inductive study, and ultimately, of course, to actual occurrence. At the time of this writing, the majority of premillennialists, and nearly all dispensationalists, hold the *pretribulation* (the Rapture occurs *before* the Tribulation) position. A minority hold the *posttribulation* position, and an even smaller minority hold the *midtribulation* (or its variant, “pre-wrath”) position. In this section we will explore the many Scriptural evidences and lines of reasoning that have led this writer to the conviction that the *pretribulation* position is the correct one. Indeed, “the subject is complex and involves many details” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 95) However, “pretribulationism and posttribulationism cannot both be right” (*ibid.*) And, “The differences between pretribulationists and posttribulationists are doctrinal and exegetical, not spiritual, and that worthy and... godly men are bound on both sides of this question” (*ibid.*, p. 149). “One of the problems that face both pretribulationism and posttribulationism is the fact that their point of view is an induction based on scriptural facts rather than an explicit statement of the Bible” (*ibid.*, p. 181).

The Rapture of the church is to occur:

After the signs of the end of the age begin to take place. “And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, ‘As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another

which will not be torn down.’ And they questioned Him, saying, ‘Teacher, when therefore will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?’ And He said, ‘See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, “I am He,” and, “The time is at hand”; do not go after them. And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.’ Then He continued by saying to them, ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name’s sake. It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. But you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, and you will be hated by all on account of My name. Yet not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives. But when you see **Jerusalem** surrounded by armies, then recognize that **her desolation** is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles** until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. **But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.**’ And He told them a parable: ‘Behold the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. Even so you, too, **when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.** Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things

take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But **keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man**” (Luke 21:5–36). “The signs preceding the first stage of the Advent are all of such a nature, that they appear, more or less, in every generation; and hence in view of their continued existence, have caused men in the various succeeding centuries to hold (as e.g. Gregory the Great, Luther, and many others), that the end was very near, because the signs indicative of the same were really present... it is reasonable to suppose that such will assume a greater magnitude as the time of the end draws nigh, or, at least, that they appear in such proportions that the believing (for whom alone they are intended) cannot mistake in their presence and import” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:114). “...the signs which precede the first stage of Christ’s Advent. Not one of them (just as there was none before the First Advent) shall be of a strictly Supernatural nature; all of them are connected with the natural, or are regularly produced in an onward course of development. If men look for other signs, they will woefully deceive themselves” (*ibid.*, p. 132) “Our position in reference to the signs vindicates the attitude of the Primitive Church. Now men sneeringly point to the early Church, and scoffingly tell us that that Church, under the teaching of inspired apostles and their immediate successors, was utterly mistaken and too credulous, evincing an erroneous belief. But we hold, that simple consistency demanded the faith expressed by them, because the Advent (as we have shown) is not limited by any chronological period; the signs predicted to precede such an Advent were witnessed even in their day, and the culminated Antichrist is only revealed between the two stages of the Sec. Advent. Hence their attitude was scriptural and demanded by the times” (*ibid.*, p. 169). “These signs, so saddening because of the evil unfolding, should not unduly depress the believer. They should rather confirm his faith, urge to increased watching and prayer, influence to a firm and vigilant occupying until He comes, and fill him with renewed hope and love at the speedy Coming of the Beloved One. Yea, as the Master declared (Luke 21:28) we should ‘look up and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh.’ For these purposes they are given, and hence a practical application of them to heart and life is designed, and not a mere theoretical acquiescence without a corresponding influence” (*ibid.*, p. 170). “Dr. Seiss (*Last Times*, p. 299), beautifully and forcibly says: ‘God’s method of

progress is to make darkness the way to light, death the prelude to life, despair the introduction to salvation, and corruption and confusion the road to order and glory. It is not in what seems hopeful, but in what seems gloomy and untoward, that we are to look for the signs of the speedy forthcoming of God's wonder-working goodness. It is the stirring upon the face of the dark waters that gives prognostic of the breaking forth of light, life, and beauty. The bursting glories of spring come directly out of the bleak winter. It is from the corrupting seed that we obtain the harvest. The darkest hour is said to be that which immediately precedes the day. The period most hopeful is that when the apparent motives for despondency are most overwhelming. The stress of the controversy between hope and fear always falls upon the eve of triumph. Those dim hours of dismay to the scattered followers of Christ at His Crucifixion, were but the preludes to the bringing in of light and immortality for man. The bloody persecutions under the Roman Emperors which threatened the extinction of Christianity, were the immediate precursors of its victory over even the throne of the Caesars. And so the Scriptures teach that it will be in the ushering in of the great consummation. The sun must darken, and the moon withhold her light, and then shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings.' So Brookes (*Lects. during Lent*, p. 152) remarks: "Though I distinguished only some few signs as in themselves cheering, yet when considered as the tokens of our Lord's approach, all are cheering: therefore He bids us, as in the text, "when we shall see these things only begin to come to pass, to lift up our heads because our redemption draweth nigh." And if the beginnings of these things are calculated to inspire us with hope and Joy, how much more their fulness! Yes those things which are dark and appalling to the world—like the pillar and the cloud—will be as light and brightness to the saints; who, when all is roaring and raging and upheaving round about them, shall be ardently waiting for, but most surely expecting, and in the midst of it obtaining, deliverance from corruption, into the glorious—glorious liberty of the children of God.' We are sometimes censured as taking too gloomy a view of the world existing, and that we entertain 'no love for the world.' Our apology is, that we receive, embrace, and defend the view that the Spirit gives of the present and future, and that it is true, that we strive to set 'our affections on things above and not on things of the world,' well knowing that 'if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,' 1 John 2:15" (*ibid.*). "There is a difference in the events signified: when the signs 'begin,' the disciples are to 'look up' because their 'redemption draweth nigh' (Luke 21:28). But when 'all' the signs have been seen, they are to understand that 'the kingdom of God is nigh' (Luke 21:31; cf. Matt. 24:33)"

(McClain, *GK*, p. 367). “The foregoing facts lead to certain highly important conclusions in the field of New Testament eschatology. First, the Kingdom will not arrive until men have witnessed all the signs described by our Lord. But, second, true believers may legitimately look for the ‘redemption’ of their bodies at any time after the beginning of these things. Thus in Luke’s account of our Lord’s final prophetic discourse we have an intimation of the later Pauline eschatological order of events: first, a rapture of believers; second, a period of world-wide tribulation and judgment; third, the glorious appearing of Messiah; and finally, the arrival of the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 368). “To summarize the chief points in the above discussion: the Kingdom will not come until *all* the things predicted by our Lord have come to pass; but the members of the Church, the royal family in the future Kingdom, could look for the ‘redemption’ of their bodies at any moment after these things *began* to come to pass” (*ibid.*, p. 369). “The Church may see some more pretribulational events just as it has already seen some. But it may not see any more, depending on exactly at what point the Rapture will occur” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 155).

“*At the last trumpet.*” “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed**” (1 Cor. 15:51–52). “**For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and **with the trumpet of God**; and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thes. 4:16). “**After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘Come up here,** and I will show you what must take place after these things.’ Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. And **around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads**” (Rev. 4:1-4). “The Trumpet is a military instrument. It was used in the Camp of Israel to call the Assembly together. The First Trumpet called them to arise and be ready to depart, the Second (last) Trumpet was the signal to march. When God descended upon Mt. Sinai the people were assembled at the sound of the ‘Trumpet of God.’ Ex. 19:9-11, 16-20. And when God was ready to speak to the people it sounded the second time (verse 19). It has been suggested that the descent of God to Mt.

Sinai is a type of the 'Descent of the Lord' into the Air to meet His Church, and that at the sounding of the First Trumpet, the 'dead in Christ' will be raised, and at the sounding of the Second (last) Trumpet, the 'living Saints' will be changed and together with the risen dead ascend to meet the Lord" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 80). "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and may also believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto Jehovah. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their garments, and be ready against the third day; for the third day **Jehovah will come down** in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai" (Ex. 19:9–11). "And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and **the voice of a trumpet** exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled. **And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God**; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when **the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder**, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And **Jehovah came down upon mount Sinai, to the top of the mount**: and **Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mount; and Moses went up**" (Ex. 19:16–20). "We know that the 'Elect of Israel' are to be gathered back to their own land with a 'great sound of a trumpet.' Matt. 24:30-31 ["and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And **He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.**"]. This will occur at the 'Feast of Trumpets' (the Jewish New Year) at the close of the Tribulation Period. The 'Feast of Trumpets' was associated with the 'Feast of Tabernacles' and occurred in the fall of the year, and as Jesus was crucified at the time of the 'Passover Feast,' and the Holy Spirit was given at the time of the 'Feast of Pentecost,' it has been suggested, that as Jesus will reveal Himself to His brethren, the Jews, at the 'Feast of Tabernacles,' a type of Israel's rest in the Millennial Land, that He will call out His Church with the 'sound of a Trumpet' at the 'Feast of Trumpets' seven years before the 'Elect of Israel' are called out. This however is mere speculation" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 80). "Inasmuch as the program for the church differs from that for Israel, each

may be terminated by the blowing of a trumpet, properly called the last trumpet, without making the two last trumpets identical and synchronous as to time” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 189). “There seem to be a number of observations which make it impossible for one to identify these two trumps. (1) The trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52, even the midtribulationist agrees, sounds before the wrath of God descends, while, as it has been shown, the chronology of Revelation indicates that the trumpet in Revelation 11:15 sounds at the end of the time of wrath, just prior to the second advent. (2) The trumpet that summons the church is called the *trump of God*, while the seventh trump is an angel’s trumpet” (*ibid.*). “And **the seventh angel sounded**; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever’” (Rev. 11:15). “the seventh trumpet is near the end of the great tribulation rather than at its beginning” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 250) “The seventh trumpet of Revelation is an announcement of the coming reign of Christ, but there is no indication in the text that the second coming of Christ actually occurs. Many interpreters, including Ladd, a posttribulationist, view the seventh trumpet as only an announcement, not the actual coming of Christ, and place the events of the seven bowls of the wrath of God in Revelation 16 as following the seventh trumpet” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 249). “And **the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever’**” (Rev. 11:15). “In Revelation, the trumpets relate to the judgments and events of the end time and are declared to be trumpets of angels. For the most part, they relate to the unsaved world. The great trumpet of Matthew 24:31 deals with the saints of all ages who are assembled at the time of the second coming of Christ, but it says nothing of either resurrection or translation, though for some resurrection may be involved” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 249). “And **He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other**” (Matt. 24:31). “In 1 Corinthians 15, the ‘last trumpet’ relates to believers only and is a trumpet of God that the context says results immediately and instantaneously in the resurrection and translation of the church. Inasmuch as the trumpet is used in the Old Testament in so many different situations as a signal of an impending event and was also used by the Roman army to signal its maneuvers, to make the term ‘last trumpet’ a technical term, including all the end-time trumpets, has to be based on an assumption rather than on solid evidence. Details of the trumpet in 1 Corinthians 15 and its re-

sults are entirely different from the other trumpets with which some post-tribulationists attempt to equate it” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 250). Dr. Showers suggests four possible meanings of the “last trumpet” of 1 Cor. 15:52: *Possible meaning #1*: “Just as the sounding of ‘the Emperor’s trumpet-call’ summoned citizens together for an assembly where the emperor was present, so the sounding of ‘the trump of God’ or ‘the last trump’ will summon church saints together by rapture for an assembly where Christ will be present in the air (1 Th. 4:16-17)” (Showers, *M*, p. 262). “Since the first trump of God called the people of Israel together to meet with God and be placed under the law, and since the law was the strength of death-causing sin and was a ministry of death, we can conclude that the purpose of the first trump of God was to call people together to God at Mount Sinai and thereby begin that ministry of death (cp. Heb. 12:18-21). By contrast, 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4 indicate that the purpose of the last trump of God will be to call people together to Christ in the air and thereby begin incorruptible, immortal, bodily resurrection and change. Thus, it will call people together for the opposite purpose of that to which the first trump of God called people. It thereby will signal the beginning of the end for death, the last enemy of mankind to be destroyed or abolished, and will fulfill another use of the trumpet in ancient times—that of terrifying an enemy or issuing a warning of coming danger or judgment. Since the *first* trump of God called people to the beginning of the ministry of death, Paul called the trump of God that will call people to the beginning of incorruptible, immortal, physical life ‘the *last* trump.’ He did so, not because no other trumpets will be sounded after it, but because, just as ‘last’ is the opposite of ‘first,’ so this trump of God, which will be sounded in conjunction with the Rapture of the church, will call people together to the opposite of that to which the first trump of God called people” (*ibid.*, p. 263). “The first trump sounded “cursed”—as its awful tones, prolonged and loud, caused Israel to quake and fear. The last trump sounds only blessing as it summons the dead to life and the living to immortality” [quoting J. R. Caldwell, *The Charter of the Church*, Vol. 2, pp. 256-57] (*ibid.*, p. 264). *Possible meaning #2*: “Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum... He wrote... ‘...the longest blast of all, called the *tekiah edgolah*: the great, or “last trump.” Judaism connected this last trump with the resurrection of the dead, and so does Paul. So, Paul’s point here is that the Rapture will be the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets.’ [quoting Fruchtenbaum, ‘A Review of *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*,’ p. 58]... He claimed that the Day of Atonement will ‘be fulfilled by the seven years of tribulation, during which Israel will suffer affliction leading to her national repentance and restoration.’ [*Ibid.*] In light of

this Tribulation fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, Fruchtenbaum concluded that since the Feast of Trumpets occurs before the Day of Atonement, and since the Feast of Trumpets will be fulfilled by the Rapture of the church, the Rapture of the church will occur before the seven-year Tribulation period. [*Ibid.*, pp. 58-59] (*ibid.*) *Possible meaning #3*: “...for the Jews... The last trumpet sounded was the trumpet of reassembly or return from battle... the Israelite army ‘was dismissed and sent home by the trumpet’” [quoting Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VII, p. 79] (*ibid.*, p. 265). “...concerning this last trumpet of war, The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness declared, ‘they shall write on the trumpets of return “The Gathering of God.”’” [quoting Millar Burrows, *Burrows on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, p. 392] The fact that the Jews designated their last trumpet of warfare ‘The Gathering of God’ is significant in light of Paul’s calling ‘the last trump’ of 1 Corinthians 15:52 ‘the trump of God’ in the 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Rapture passage” (*ibid.*). “...it appears that the people of the ancient world consistently had a last battle trumpet. In contrast with the first battle trumpet, which summoned soldiers together to go forth to fight, the last trumpet signaled them to end the battle and reassemble to return to camp or home” (*ibid.*, p. 266). “...1 Corinthians 14:8... military trumpet... ‘If the trumpet does not give a definite signal the troops will not prepare for battle.’ This indicates that Paul had the first trumpet of battle in mind when he wrote 1 Corinthians 14... ‘The term “the last trump,” in 1 Cor. 15:52, is a *military expression*, denoting the trumpet which is sounded... to call the soldiers home’” [quoting Cornelius R. Stam, *Commentary on the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, p. 273] (*ibid.*). “...the biblical teaching concerning the warfare of the church against Satan and his forces” (*ibid.*, p. 267). “Just as the last trumpet of battle signaled the soldiers to end the battle and reassemble to return to camp or home, so the trump of God will signal the end of the church saints’ warfare against Satan and his forces and their assembly with Christ in the air to go with Him to their heavenly home. The trump of God associated with the Rapture of the church will have the same kind of function or purpose as the last trumpet of battle in the ancient world. For this reason, Paul called it ‘the last trump’” (*ibid.*). *Possible meaning #4*: “Just as there was a last trumpet to signal the end of a Roman guard’s watch, so the trump of God will signal the end of the church saints’ watch in the world. The trump of God associated with the Rapture of the church will have the same kind of function or purpose as the last trumpet of a Roman guard’s watch. For this reason, Paul called it ‘the last trump’” (*ibid.*). *Possible combination of meanings*: “It could very well be that Paul had a combination of

both military uses of a last trumpet (the third and fourth possible meanings presented in this chapter) in mind when he called the trump of God associated with the Rapture ‘the last trump’” (*ibid.*).

At the end of the Church Age. (See our discussion of the fact that a major purpose of the Rapture is to close the Church Age in the section *Purposes of the Rapture* above.)

Before the Millennial Kingdom. “Our doctrine... the Millennial age being contingent on the Advent of Jesus and the resurrection of the saints” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:178) (See our discussion of the fact that the (resurrected and translated) church is to reign with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom in the *Description of the Millennial Kingdom* section of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

Before the resurrection of Revelation 20:4. “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and **His bride has made herself ready.** And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the **righteous acts of the saints.** And he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”’ And he said to me, “These are true words of God” (Rev. 19:7-9). “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of **those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:4). “...before the seventieth week begins. If the church is not resurrected and translated here [in Rev. chapters 4 and 5], as some insist, and not until Revelation 20:4, how could the church be in heaven in Revelation 19:7-11” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 209)? “The resurrections related to the second coming of Christ never include anything specific about the church” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 206). “Even if the Rapture were posttribulational, the resurrection of Revelation 20:4 comes later in the sequence of events, as the context demonstrates” (*ibid.*). “What John saw was not all the souls in heaven but a particular generation of martyred dead who had been contemporaneous with the world ruler, the beast out of the sea (13:1). If the church were raptured prior to this event, as premillenarians teach, it would make sense to single out these martyred dead for resurrection. But if the church were not raptured, it would be most unusual to ignore all the martyrs of preceding generations, the church as a whole, and to specify this relatively small group” (Walvoord, *BKC*, p. Rev 20:4).

Before Christ's Second Coming. This must be true because:

1. *The church is already in heaven when Christ returns.* “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and **receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also**” (John 14:3). “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord**” (1 Thes. 4:16-17). “And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, **the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones**’” (Jude 1:14) “And **the armies which are in heaven**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, **were following Him** on white horses” (Rev. 19:14). “Revelation 19, verses 1-10 describe events in Heaven prior to the Second Coming, while verses 11-21 describe the Second Coming and subsequent events... the Church is already in Heaven *before* the Second Coming” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 162).

2. *No translation of living saints is mentioned at Christ's Second Coming.* (See our discussion of the fact that the Rapture is not mentioned in any of the Second Coming passages in our section *Not Post-Tribulation* below.)

3. *At Christ's Second Coming, Christ returns with the church, not for her.* “And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, **the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones**’” (Jude 1:14) “And **the armies which are in heaven**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, **were following Him** on white horses” (Rev. 19:14). “The Difference Between Christ Coming *For* His Saints and Then Later Coming *With* Them Fits a Pretribulation Rapture... He cannot come with them until He has first come for them” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:618). (See also our discussion of the distinctions between the Rapture and the Second Coming in our section *Identity of the Rapture* above.)

Not Post-Tribulation

Posttribulationism, which teaches that the Rapture occurs *after* the Tribulation period, has been the majority view throughout church history and remains the majority view in the church today. “Posttribulationism has long been a common doctrine held by the majority of the church. Most premillenarians today, however, hold to the pretribulation translation of the church. As ordinarily defined, posttribulationism is the teaching that the church will be translated after the predicted Tribulation, and therefore its adherents believe that the church must pass through this prophesied time of trouble. Posttribulationism is the ordinary view of practically all amil-

lenarians and postmillenarians. It is embraced by Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic; it is followed by many Protestant conservatives as well as modern liberals. Posttribulationism, as far as the church as a whole is concerned, is the majority view” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 131). However, careful Scripture study reveals that the Rapture of the church is most likely *not* posttribulational. “...another mistake is made when the translation is placed after the ending of the Jewish tribulation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:335). We will discuss twenty evidential facts contrary to posttribulationism in this section.

Evidential facts contrary to posttribulationism include:

1. *The hermeneutics of posttribulationism are highly questionable.* “It is generally characteristic of posttribulationism that it takes a less literal interpretation of tribulation passages than the pretribulational view” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 39). (See our discussion of the fact that *posttribulationism usually ignores the distinction between the church and Israel below.*)

2. *Posttribulationism is not an “older” teaching than pretribulationism.* “What posttribulationists do not seem to realize is that the detailed arguments for posttribulationism as they are now advanced are even more recent than Darby; and if recency is an argument against pretribulationism, it is also an argument against posttribulationism. The fact is that the development of most important doctrines took centuries, and it is not surprising that even in the twentieth century new light should be cast on our understanding of Scripture” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 50). (See also the evidence for the antiquity of premillennialism (and pretribulationism) in our discussions of chiliasm in the primitive and early church as well as in the dark ages in our chapter *The Kingdom in Church History.*)

3. *Posttribulationists disagree amongst themselves on major details.* “...the wide diversity of arguments among the posttribulationists themselves and their disagreement on major factors in posttribulational teaching” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 56). “There is obvious confusion among posttribulationists on the interpretation of some of the major aspects of their point of view, quite in contrast to pretribulationists who generally differ only on minor details” (*ibid.*, p. 139). “The fact that posttribulationism divides into at least four schools of interpretation that are inherently contradictory on important arguments for their view is a major problem of posttribulational interpretation” (*ibid.*, p. 144).

4. *Posttribulationists often ignore details that are unfavorable to their position.* “posttribulationists... their common practice of avoiding details in any passage that contradict their explanation of it” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 195).

5. *Posttribulationists cannot explain why the church must endure the Tribulation.* “It is strange that posttribulationists never assign a reason why believers must experience the Tribulation” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 302).

6. *Posttribulationists are often historicists, rather than futurists.* “Very popular among posttribulationists is the historical interpretation of Revelation in which its prophecies of the Tribulation are relegated to the past trials of the saints” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 57).

7. *Posttribulationism is not explicitly taught in Scripture.* “Ladd... conceded that a posttribulational Rapture is an inference rather than an explicit revelation of Scripture in the following statement: ‘Nor does the Word explicitly place the Rapture at the end of the Tribulation’” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 164). “There is not a single Scripture in either the Old or New Testament that relates the translation of the church to a posttribulational coming of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 171). “The reason that posttribulationists attempt to throw the burden of proof for a pretribulational Rapture on their opponents is that they themselves have no proof to the contrary” (*ibid.*). “Even posttribulationists like Ladd agree that there is no explicit statement of a posttribulational Rapture” (*ibid.*, p. 177).

8. *Paul specifically refutes posttribulationism in Second Thessalonians chapter two.* “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may **not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.** Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God” (2 Thes. 2:1–4). “The situation described in 2 Thessalonians 2 indicates that the teaching that the church would go through the Tribulation was already being advanced by certain teachers whom Paul opposed in this passage” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 238). “It is sometimes assumed that in the early apostolic period only pure and accurate doctrine was taught. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Paul had to write his Epistle to the Galatians to correct the error of legalism. He wrote most of 1 Corinthians to correct doctrinal and moral errors in the Corinthian church. It seems quite clear that most of the heresies that later emerged in the second and third centuries had their small beginnings in the apostolic church” (*ibid.*). “Here in 2 Thessalonians 2... Paul here was refuting this early form of posttribulationism” (*ibid.*). “At the outset, posttribulationists have a real problem here. If the Thessalonians had been

taught posttribulationism, the beginning of the day of the Lord would have been to them evidence that the Rapture was drawing near and should have caused rejoicing. Instead of this, the beginning of the day of the Lord apparently created a panic in their midst, with the implication that before the false teachers had come they had understood that they would not enter this period” (*ibid.*). “It seems... that their alarm was that the new teaching they had heard contradicted what Paul had taught them before, that is, that they would not enter this period” (*ibid.*, p. 240). “Obviously their error was that they thought they were in the day of the Lord and the Tribulation, and because this had been contradicted by Paul’s earlier teaching, they were confused and filled with fear” (*ibid.*, p. 241). “The truths revealed in 2 Thessalonians 2 are a devastating blow to posttribulationism, labeling it as an early error in the church that later mushroomed and became more evident in the second century of the Christian era” (*ibid.*, p. 245).

9. *Posttribulationism usually mistakenly places all “elect” and “saints” in the church.* “It is characteristic of posttribulationism to assume, usually without any proof whatever, that the word *church* is an all-inclusive term that is synonymous with the terms *elect* and *saints*. In brief, they hold that saints of all past, present, and future ages are included in the church. This definition makes impossible any other view than the posttribulational concept. All parties agree that there are saints in the Tribulation and that even during this time of unprecedented trouble many will turn to Christ for salvation. If these believers in the Tribulation are properly described as members of the church, it leads inevitably to the conclusion that the church will go through the Tribulation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 19). “Posttribulationists tend to include the saints of all ages in the church” (*ibid.*, p. 161).

10. *Posttribulationism usually ignores the distinction between the church and Israel.* “A proper distinction between the church and Israel naturally leads to pretribulationism, as practically all posttribulationists admit” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 20). “Posttribulationists usually ignore the distinction between Israel and the church much in the fashion of the amilenarian school” (*ibid.*, p. 55). “The proof that the church is in the Tribulation requires a theological system that spiritualizes many of its terms, and posttribulationists brush off a more literal interpretation as too trivial to answer” (*ibid.*). “Usually those who sharply distinguish Israel and the church are both premillennial and pretribulational, while those who consider Israel and the church more or less the same concept, even if premillennial, tend to be posttribulational” (*ibid.*, p. 63). “Agreement must be reached first on the pertinence of ecclesiology to eschatology before any

significant debate can be held on the relative merits of posttribulationism versus pretribulationism” (*ibid.*, p. 165).

11. *Posttribulationism has trouble identifying the 144,000.* “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard **the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed**” (Rev. 7:1-8). “And I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing **on Mount Zion**, and with Him **one hundred and forty-four thousand**, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless” (Rev. 14:1-5). “Taken as a whole, the question of the identity and significance of the 144,000 is a lost cause for posttribulationism. They either have to spiritualize their identity and avoid the point of the revelation, or they have to face the fact that those who are saved in Israel are designated as saved Israelites, not designated as the church in the time of the Great Tribulation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 264). (See our identification of the 144,000 in the *Events of*

the First Half of the Tribulation section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

12. *The church is not found on earth in any of the Tribulation passages.* “While an argument from silence is never final in itself, the whole point of posttribulationism would be conclusively won by just one reference placing the church in the Tribulation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 162). (See our discussion of the fact that the church is not found on earth in any of the Tribulation passages in our section *Pre-Tribulation* below.)

13. *Revelation does not describe a triumphant church going through the Tribulation relatively untouched.* “The prospect of a church’s going triumphantly through the Great Tribulation relatively untouched is not supported in the prophecies of the Book of Revelation, as indicated by the martyrs in chapters 6 and 7” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 230). (See our discussion of the fifth-seal martyrs in the *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

14. *Many if not most Tribulation saints will be martyred and resurrected; not translated.* “If the posttribulationists are right, the hope of the Lord’s return is reduced to the hope of resurrection, as few of the saints who would enter the Tribulation would escape martyrdom” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 167). (See our discussion of the fifth-seal martyrs in the *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*, and our discussion of the resurrection of the Tribulation saints in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

15. *The Rapture is not mentioned in any of the Second Coming passages.* “And **the armies which are in heaven**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, **were following Him** on white horses” (Rev. 19:14). “a rapture... the omission of any specific reference to it in detailed passages dealing with the Second Advent constitute an impressive argument that posttribulationists have not answered” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 141). “The precise teaching of the translation of the church is never found in passages dealing with the return of Christ to establish His kingdom on earth” (*ibid.*, p. 179). “In view of the many detailed prophecies that relate events leading up to and climaxing in the second coming of Christ to the earth, it is most strange that there should be no mention whatever of a Rapture or translation of living saints if, as a matter of fact, this is a major feature of end-time events. Accordingly, the problem of posttribulationists is much more serious than that of pretribulationists” (*ibid.*, p. 182). “The facts are that there seems to be no translation of any living saints at the time of the second coming of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 207). “All posttribulationists seek to avoid the main point, that is, that the resurrection and translation of the church is

declared to be a mystery and, as such, is not included in any passage in the Old Testament dealing with the second coming of Christ. What posttribulationists also want to avoid is the fact that the translation of the church is not mentioned anywhere in the New Testament in a passage that clearly speaks of the coming of Christ after the Great Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 248). “One of the major weaknesses of posttribulationists is their handling of the doctrine of the Rapture in relationship to the Book of Revelation. Their problem is that the Rapture is not mentioned in relation to the Second Coming. If the Rapture occurs at the second coming of Christ, it would be a major feature of end-time events; and the fact that it is not related to the Second Coming is most strange if posttribulationism is correct. In the description of the second coming of Christ in Revelation 19, neither translation or resurrection as related to the process of Christ’s coming from heaven to the earth is indicated” (*ibid.*, p. 254). “Posttribulationists, if they follow 1 Thessalonians 4, must place the rapture of the church in the sequence of events as Christ is coming from heaven to the earth. Instead, the only mention of resurrection is found in Revelation 20:4, long after the Second Coming is an accomplished fact, and the specification of the passage limits the resurrection to those who died in the Great Tribulation. There is absolutely nothing in Revelation 19-20 to support the idea that there is a rapture of the church involved in the second-coming process” (*ibid.*). “Posttribulationists attempt to turn the argument against the pretribulationists by saying that if there were a pretribulation Rapture, it ought to be stated in the Book of Revelation. The opposite, rather, is the truth. If, as a matter of fact, the Rapture has taken place earlier before the Great Tribulation ever comes upon the earth, then there would be no need to discuss the Rapture in the sequence of later events. If, on the other hand, the Rapture is part of the events of the Second Coming, the strange absence of any mention of it certainly is a devastating blow to posttribulationists” (*ibid.*). “Premillenarians find in the revelation of the second coming of Christ, beginning in Revelation 19:11, an ordered sequence of events describing the major aspects of the second coming of Christ and its results. First, the descent from heaven of Christ accompanied by the saints and angels is pictured in Revelation 19:11-16. It is noteworthy that there is not a word about translation or resurrection in connection with this event” (*ibid.*, p. 267). “The posttribulation Rapture, which should have been a prominent feature of the Book of Revelation if it were indeed a part of the great climax of the second coming of Christ, is totally missing in the narrative. If details like the casting of the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire are mentioned and the specific resurrection of the tribulation saints is described, how much more the

Rapture and translation of the church as a whole should have been included if, as a matter of fact, it is a part of this great event. Revelation 19-20 constitutes the major problem of posttribulationists. They have no scriptural proof for a posttribulational Rapture in the very passages that ought to include it" (*ibid.*, p. 268). "Actually, there is not a single verse in the entire Book of Revelation that teaches a posttribulational Rapture. If the book designed to describe the Second Coming in detail offers no supporting evidence, it should be clear that posttribulationism is without scriptural support" (*ibid.*). "When Christ returns in Revelation 19, there is no reference to the Rapture" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:618). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Rapture and the Second Coming are spoken of separately in Scripture; never together, in our section *Identity of the Rapture* above.)

16. *The Rapture does not fit the analogy with those "taken" in Noah's Flood.* "And **as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man.** For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until **the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Then shall two man be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left**" (Matt. 24:37-41). "In the illustration from 'the days of Noah,' those who are taken away by the flood are the ones who are drowned, and the ones who are left are ones who are left in safety in the ark. It would be strange to have a clear illustration like this be completely reversed in the application of [Matthew] verses 40-41" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 188).

17. *Tribulation survivors are needed to participate in the post-tribulation judgments on earth.* "In the judgment of the Gentiles and the judgment of Israel, the mass of detail points to the fact that separation of saved from unsaved is accomplished by a series of judgments occurring chronologically after the Second Advent. These judgments deal only with those living on the earth at the time of the Second Advent. None of those involved are translated or resurrected. Their reward is entrance into the millennial kingdom. At every point of comparison the evidence points to the translation of the church as a prior event utterly different in character and one that requires an interval of some years between it and the judgments of Israel and the Gentiles. It may be therefore concluded that the interval between the translation and the Second Coming is absolutely necessary for the creation of a new generation of believers in Christ, composed of both Jews and Gentiles who retain their national identification and who will await the second advent of Christ and the millennial kingdom to follow" (Walvoord,

TRQ, p. 90). Regarding the *Jewish* judgment, “As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I **enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you,** saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into **the land of Israel:** and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me; but my holy name shall ye no more profane with your gifts, and with your idols. For in my holy mountain, **in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them,** and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. And ye **shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I swear to give unto your fathers.** And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name’s sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 20:33-44). “If the translation of the church took place simultaneously with the Second Advent to establish the kingdom, the Ezekiel [20:34-38] judgment would be both impossible and unnecessary as the separation of believers from unbelievers would have already taken place. It may therefore be concluded from the nature of the judgment of Israel that an interval is required between the translation of the church and the judgment of Israel during which a new generation of Israelites who believe in Christ as Savior and Messiah comes into being and is waiting for His second advent to the earth to establish the millennial king-

dom” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 89). (See also our discussion of the Jewish judgment in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.) Regarding the *Gentile* judgment, “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.** For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?” And the King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.” **Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.”** Then they themselves also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?” Then He will answer them, saying, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.” **And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life”** (Matt. 25:31-46). “Matthew 25:31-46... In the Matthew passage, like that of Ezekiel 20, no mention is made of either resurrection or translation, although both are often read into the passage by posttribulationists desiring to combine all the passages” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 89). “A study of this judgment of Gentiles again confirms the fact that this is an entirely different event from the translation of the church. This is, first of all, demonstrated by the time of the judgment. It occurs *after* the Second Advent and after a throne is set up in the earth. The translation of the church, according to pretribulationists, takes place *before* Christ actually arrives on earth. The judgment of the Gentiles results in the purging of unbelievers out from among believers and leaves believers untouched. This

judgment also distinguishes the individuals involved on a racial basis. The 'brethren' refers to Israel. The 'nations' refers to non-Israelites. At the translation of the church, by contrast, there are no racial distinctions whatever. The judgment of the Gentiles deals primarily with unbelievers who are cast into everlasting fire. The reward given to believers at the judgment of the Gentiles is entrance into the millennial kingdom. Christians in this present age enter a spiritual kingdom when born again and are never brought into judgment relative to entrance into the Millennium. Believers at the judgment of the Gentiles enter a millennial kingdom at the time of their judgment, following the Second Advent" (*ibid.*). "If a rapture takes place in the sequence of the second coming of Christ, it would be the first event and would automatically separate all the saved from the unsaved before Christ's feet ever touched the Mount of Olives and before His kingdom was instituted. In Matthew 25:31-46, however, the sheep and the goats representing the saved and the lost are intermingled and require separation by a special judgment that follows the second coming of Christ. Such a judgment would be unnecessary if a posttribulational Rapture had occurred, although it can be easily harmonized with a pretribulational rapture" (*ibid.*, p. 192). "The judgment of the nations in Matthew 25 refers to those who have survived the Tribulation and are still in their natural bodies. It is noteworthy that there is no mention of either Rapture or resurrection" (*ibid.*, p. 193) "This judgment contradicts a posttribulational Rapture and almost makes it an impossibility" (*ibid.*). (See also our discussion of the Gentile judgment in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom.*)

18. *Tribulation survivors are needed to populate the earth after the Tribulation.* "If the translation takes place *after* the tribulation, the question facing the posttribulationists is a very obvious one: Who is going to populate the earth during the millennium?" [quoting Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*, p. 93] (Feinberg, *M*, p. 170)? "Pretribulationists have often pointed out that if every living saint is raptured at the time of the second coming this would, in itself, separate all the saints from unsaved people and would leave none to populate the millennial earth" [quoting Walvoord, *The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation*, pp. 25, 52-53] (*ibid.*, p. 306). "It is absolutely necessary for the saints who are on the earth at the time of the Second Advent to enter the millennial kingdom in the flesh, in order to fulfill the many promises that picture their normal life on the earth" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 20). "It is obviously impossible to incorporate a translation of all saints at the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the millennium as it would result in all saints receiving a spiritual body, leaving none to populate the earth in the millennium" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 243). "Premillennial-

ism demands an interval between the translation and the Second Coming to make possible a generation of believers who will enter the Millennium” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 87). “...if this posttribulation belief were correct, all the saved would enter the Millennium in a sinlessly perfect state with immortal resurrection type bodies that will not participate in marriage or die” (Showers, *M*, p. 188). “If all those who enter the Millennium are sinlessly perfect, and if there are no births during the Millennium, where would the wicked of the Millennium come from, and where would the large host of earthly unsaved rebels who follow Satan after the Millennium come from” (*ibid.*)?

19. *The posttribulational resurrection of the Old Testament saints does not include the church.* “Most of the Old Testament passages of which Daniel 12:1-2 is an example do indeed seem to set up a chronology of Tribulation first, then resurrection of the Old Testament saints. On the other hand, the passages dealing with the resurrection of the church in the New Testament seem to include only the church. The expression ‘the dead in Christ will rise first’ (1 Thess. 4:16) seems to include only the church” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 170). “The fact that Old Testament saints and tribulational saints are resurrected after the Tribulation according to explicit Scriptures (Dan. 12:1-2; Rev. 20:4) raises the question why neither the translation nor the resurrection of the church is mentioned in this event” (*ibid.*, p. 171). “In none of the accounts of resurrection related to the second coming of Christ is any translation of living saints mentioned” (*ibid.*, p. 206). (See also our discussion of the first resurrection in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom.*)

20. *Posttribulationism destroys imminency.* “A fair statement of the problem is that posttribulationism as presented by Gundry and Ladd involving clearly defined events covering a period of years makes real imminency impossible” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 169). “‘Therefore encourage each other with these words’ (1 Thess. 4:18)... Most important is the fact that this event, as described, is presented as an imminent event with no preceding order of events that had to be enacted... The implicit imminence of the Rapture is an important facet in the pretribulational interpretation and is a principal source of embarrassment to the posttribulational explanation. It is probably for this reason that most posttribulationists do not give a detailed explanation of this passage and tend to gloss over the details” (*ibid.*, p. 202). (See our discussion of the imminency of the Rapture in our section *Unknown and Imminent* below.)

Not Mid-Tribulation

Midtribulationism, which teaches that the Rapture occurs *at the midpoint* of the Tribulation period, while having considerably fewer adherents

than either posttribulationism or pretribulationism, still has its followers. Midtribulationists place the seventh trumpet of Revelation at the midpoint of the Tribulation, and identify this trumpet as the “last trumpet” for the Church Age, resulting in a midtribulation Rapture. However, “The seventh trumpet of Revelation is, after all, not the last trumpet of Scripture. According to Matthew 24:31, the elect will be gathered at the coming of Christ to establish His earthly kingdom ‘with a loud trumpet call.’ While posttribulationists hold that this is identical with the seventh trumpet, midtribulationists cannot do so. In fact, it is not too much to say that this one reference alone spells the doom of midtribulationism” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 125). “H. A. Ironside [in *Address on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 529]... ‘When a Roman camp was about to be broken up, whether in the middle of the night or in the day, a trumpet was sounded. The first blast meant, “Strike tents and prepare to depart.” The second meant, “Fall into line,” and when what was called “the last trump” sounded it meant, “March away”’” (*ibid.*). “Any child in school knows that the last bell for one hour may be followed by a first bell for the next hour” (*ibid.*, p. 126). “Another objection to the midtribulational interpretation is that it confuses Israel and the church and requires an overlap of their two programs” (*ibid.*). “One of the important reasons pretribulationists believe the refutation of midtribulationism is necessary is that it directly attacks the imminency of the Lord’s return for the church much in the same way as posttribulationism does... The events of the first three and one-half years of Daniel’s prophecy are specific. They begin with a covenant between a Gentile ruler and Israel... Such a covenant would, on the one hand, make the coming of Christ impossible for three and one-half years, according to the midtribulationist, and on the other hand, make an imminent coming impossible at any time prior to the covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 128). “Midtribulationism has a significant disadvantage: It loses the sense of imminence, for it has signs of the Rapture coming before it occurs” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:649) “The division of the Tribulation into two periods is not because the church’s rapture occurs there but because Antichrist is fully revealed there” (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of the imminency of the Rapture in our section *Unknown and Imminent* below.)

Continuing now our general discussion of the timing of the Rapture, the Rapture occurs at *the beginning of the Day of the Lord*. “Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night**. While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then **destruction will come upon them suddenly** like birth pangs upon a woman with child; **and they shall not escape. But you,**

brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. **But** since **we** are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, **the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:1–9) “There seems some evidence that the day of the Lord begins at once at the time of the translation of the church (cf. 1 Thess. 5:1-9). The same event that translates the church begins the day of the Lord” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 175). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Tribulation begins (at or) after the beginning of the Day of the Lord in the section *Timing of the Tribulation* in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

It occurs *before or at the confirming of Antichrist’s 7-year covenant with Israel*. This is because the confirming of the covenant marks the beginning of Daniel’s seventieth week (Dan. 9:27), which in turn marks the beginning of the Tribulation. By definition, a pretribulation Rapture occurs before the beginning of the Tribulation. “Since the Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven-year covenant, the very latest point at which the Rapture can occur would be at the time of the signing of the seven-year covenant. The Rapture will not occur beyond that point” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 155). “...the Rapture will occur some time between this very moment and the signing of the seven-year covenant” (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of Antichrist’s confirming the covenant with Israel in the *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

It occurs *before God reverts primary attention back to Israel*. (See our discussion of the fact that a major purpose of the Rapture is to revert God’s earthly program back to Israel in our section *Purposes of the Rapture* above.)

Pre-Tribulation

It is our conviction that the Rapture is *pretribulation*. “...the two stages, resulting in a translation previous to the tribulation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:317) “If the church does go through the Tribulation, the hope of the believer is bedimmed, the church age is confused with the law age, and the book of Revelation is lost in unrelieved confusion. Those points are pivotal and not peripheral” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 290). “The Scripture order of events is simple and demonstrable: (1) Christ raptures His Bride (not at the end of the Tribulation but before it, as already demonstrated in this volume more than once); (2) the Tribulation as the wrath of God is poured out on earth’s

unbelievers; (3) Christ returns to earth with His already resurrected and translated saints” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “Regardless of the chronological arrangements which may be made of these judgments, whether some recapitulation or overlapping scheme be adopted, the opening action of [Revelation] chapters 4 and 5 simply cannot be pushed into the picture which follows in 6 to 19. There is a definite sequence here: No judgment falls until the first seal is broken; the first seal is not broken until the Lamb receives the sealed book; the Lamb does not take the book until the twenty-four elders are in heaven, enthroned and crowned. If the action in heaven described in chapters 4 and 5 does not precede the judgments of chapters 6 to 19, then no one can make any sense whatever out of the order of the events set forth in the last book of the Bible; and we may as well complain with Luther, ‘Even if it were a blessed thing to believe what is in it, no man knows what that is.’ But the very intensity of the labors of Christian scholars down through the centuries is the strongest witness to their rejection of such a verdict” (McClain, *GK*, p. 472). “Until the nature of the Tribulation is established, it is impossible to discuss intelligently the question of whether the church will endure it” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 15). “Generally speaking, the pretribulation view is followed by those who consider premillenarianism a system of Bible interpretation, while the posttribulation and midtribulation positions characterize those who limit the area of premillennialism to eschatology” (*ibid.*, p. 19). “Generally speaking, pretribulationism is an outgrowth of premillennial interpretation of the Scriptures and is properly considered a teaching within this point of view. Very rarely is it encountered outside premillennialism” (*ibid.*, p. 131). “If major doctrines like the Trinity and the procession of the Spirit took centuries to find acceptable statement, it is hardly to be expected that the problems of eschatology would be all settled in the early centuries. The inroads of the spiritualizing principles of Origen, which caused the downfall of premillennialism in the third and fourth centuries and the departure from the Scriptures and which characterized the organized church until the Protestant Reformation, were hardly a climate in which an intricate problem such as pretribulationism versus posttribulationism could be solved” (*ibid.*, p. 156). “Many arguments have been advanced in support of the pretribulation rapture viewpoint and as many as fifty can be itemized [See our next paragraph for Walvoord’s fifty itemized arguments.—*ed.*]” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 251). “Church saints will have no relationship with the broad Day of the Lord wrath. Christ will remove them from the earth by rapture before the broad Day of the Lord begins” (Showers, *M*, p. 218). “The Rapture is before the Tribulation period” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:623).

Beginning on page 269 his book *The Rapture Question*, Dr. Walvoord lists *Fifty Arguments for Pretribulationism*. Because his list so concisely categorizes and articulates the main arguments for pretribulationism, we're reproducing his exact list here: "*Historical Argument*: 1. While posttribulationism appeared as early as 2 Thessalonians 2, many in the early church believed in the imminency of the Lord's return, which is an essential doctrine of pretribulationism. 2. The detailed development of the pretribulationist truth during the past few centuries does not prove that the doctrine is new or novel. Its development is similar to that of other major doctrines in the history of the church. *Hermeneutics*: 3. Pretribulationism is the only view that allows literal interpretation of all Old and New Testament passages on the Great Tribulation. 4. Pretribulationism distinguishes clearly between Israel and the church and their respective programs. *Nature of the Tribulation*: 5. Pretribulationism maintains the scriptural distinction between the Great Tribulation and tribulation in general that precedes it. 6. The Great Tribulation is properly interpreted by pretribulationists as a time of preparation for Israel's restoration (Deu. 4:29-30; Jer. 30:4-11). It is not the purpose of the Tribulation to prepare the church for glory. 7. None of the Old Testament passages on the Tribulation mention the church (Deu. 4:29-30; Jer. 30:4-11; Dan. 8:24-27; 12:1-2). 8. None of the New Testament passages on the Tribulation mention the church (Matt. 13:30; 39-42, 48-50; 24:15-31; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 5:4-9; 2 Thess. 2:1-11; Rev. 4-18). 9. In contrast to midtribulationism, the pretribulationist view provides an adequate explanation for the beginning of the Great Tribulation in Revelation 6. Midtribulationism is refuted by the plain teaching of Scripture that the Great Tribulation begins long before the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11. 10. The proper distinction is maintained between the prophetic trumpets of Scripture by pretribulationism. There is no proper ground for the pivotal argument of midtribulationism that the seventh trumpet of Revelation is the last trumpet in that there is no established connection between the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11, the last trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52, and the trumpet of Matthew 24:31. They are three distinct events. 11. The unity of Daniel's seventieth week is maintained by pretribulationists. By contrast, posttribulationism and midtribulationists destroy the unity of Daniel's seventieth week and confuse Israel's program with that of the church. *Nature of the Church*: 12. The translation of the church is never mentioned in any passage dealing with the second coming of Christ after the Tribulation. 13. The church is not appointed to wrath (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 5:9). The church therefore cannot enter 'the great day of their wrath' (Rev. 6:17). 14. The church will not be overtaken by the day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:1-9,

which includes the Tribulation. 15. The possibility of a believer escaping the Tribulation is mentioned in Luke 21:36. 16. The church of Philadelphia was promised deliverance from 'the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth' (Rev. 3:10). 17. It is characteristic of divine dealing to deliver believers before a divine judgment is inflicted on the world as illustrated in the deliverance of Noah, Lot, Rahab, etc. (2 Peter 2:5-9). 18. At the time of the translation of the church, all believers go to the Father's house in heaven (John 14:3) and do not immediately return to the earth after meeting Christ in the air as posttribulationists teach. 19. Pretribulationism does not divide the body of Christ at the Rapture on a works principle. The teaching of a partial rapture is based on the false doctrine that the translation of the church is a reward for good works. It is rather a climactic aspect of salvation by grace. 20. The Scriptures clearly teach that all, not part, of the church will be raptured at the coming of Christ for the church (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:17). 21. As opposed to a view of a partial rapture, pretribulationism is founded on the definite teaching of Scripture that the death of Christ frees from all condemnation. 22. The godly remnant of the Tribulation are pictured as Israelites, not members of the church as maintained by the posttribulationists. 23. The pretribulational view, as opposed to posttribulationism, does not confuse general terms like elect and saints, which apply to the saved of all ages, with specific terms like church and those in Christ, which refer to believers of this age only. *Doctrine of Imminency:* 24. The pretribulational interpretation teaches that the coming of Christ is actually imminent. 25. The exhortation to be comforted by the coming of the Lord (1 Thess. 4:18) is very significant in the pretribulational view and is especially contradicted by most posttribulationists. 26. The exhortation to look for 'the glorious appearing' of Christ to His own (Titus 2:13) loses its significance if the Tribulation must intervene first. Believers in that case should look for signs. 27. The exhortation to purify ourselves in view of the Lord's return has most significance if His coming is imminent (1 John 3:2-3). 28. The church is uniformly exhorted to look for the coming of the Lord, while believers in the Tribulation are directed to look for signs. *The Work of the Holy Spirit:* 29. The Holy Spirit as the restrainer of evil cannot be taken out of the world unless the church, which the Spirit indwells, is translated at the same time. The Tribulation cannot begin until this restraint is lifted. 30. The Holy Spirit as the restrainer must be taken out of the world before 'the lawless one,' who dominates the tribulation period, can be revealed (2 Thess. 2:6-8). 31. If the expression 'except there come a falling away first' (KJV) is translated literally, 'except the "departure" come first,' it would plainly show the necessity

of the Rapture taking place before the beginning of the Tribulation. *Necessity of an Interval Between the Rapture and the Second Coming*: 32. According to 2 Corinthians 5:10, all believers of this age must appear before the judgment seat of Christ in heaven, an event never mentioned in the detailed accounts connected with the second coming of Christ to the earth. 33. If the twenty-four elders of Revelation 4:1-5:14 are representative of the church as many expositors believe, it would necessitate the rapture and reward of the church before the Tribulation. 34. The coming of Christ for His bride must take place before the Second Coming to the earth for the wedding feast (Rev. 19:7-10). 35. Tribulation saints are not translated at the second coming of Christ but carry on ordinary occupations such as farming and building houses, and they will bear children (Isa. 65:20-25). This would be impossible if the translation had taken place at the Second Coming to the earth, as posttribulationists teach. 36. The judgment of the Gentiles following the Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-46) indicates that both saved and unsaved are still in their natural bodies. This would be impossible if the translation had taken place at the Second Coming. 37. If the translation took place in connection with the Second Coming to the earth, there would be no need of separating the sheep from the goats at a subsequent judgment, but the separation would have taken place in the very act of the translation of the believers before Christ actually sets up His throne on earth (Matt. 25:31). 38. The judgment of Israel (Ezek. 20:34-38), which occurs subsequent to the Second Coming, indicates the necessity of regathering Israel. The separation of the saved from the unsaved in this judgment obviously takes place sometime after the Second Coming and would be unnecessary if the saved had previously been separated from the unsaved by translation. *Contrast Between the Rapture and the Second Coming*: 39. At the time of the Rapture the saints meet Christ in the air, while at the Second Coming Christ returns to the Mount of Olives to meet the saints on earth. 40. At the time of the Rapture the Mount of Olives is unchanged, while at the Second Coming it divides and a valley is formed to the east of Jerusalem (Zech. 14:4-5). 41. At the Rapture living saints are translated, while no saints are translated in connection with the second coming of Christ to the earth. 42. At the Rapture the saints go to heaven, while at the Second Coming to the earth the saints remain in the earth without translation. 43. At the time of the Rapture the world is unjudged and continues in sin, while at the Second Coming the world is judged and righteousness is established on the earth. 44. The translation of the church is pictured as a deliverance before the day of wrath, while the Second Coming is followed by the deliverance of those who have believed in Christ during the Tribulation. 45. The

Rapture is described as imminent, while the Second Coming is preceded by definite signs. 46. The translation of living believers is a truth revealed only in the New Testament, while the Second Coming with its attendant events is a prominent doctrine of both Testaments. 47. The Rapture concerns only the saved, while the Second Coming deals with both saved and unsaved. 48. At the Rapture Satan is not bound, while at the Second Coming Satan is bound and cast into the abyss. 49. No unfulfilled prophecy stands between the church and the Rapture, while many signs must be fulfilled before the Second Coming. 50. No passage dealing with the resurrection of saints at the Second Coming ever mentions translation of living saints at the same time.”

Expanding on Dr. Walvoord’s list, we suggest another thirty evidential facts in favor of pretribulationism. Some of these facts were mentioned in Walvoord’s list and will be expanded here; others are new to our discussion.

1. *Pretribulationism is based on a literal hermeneutic.* “Pretribulation rapturism rests essentially on one major premise—the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 193). “The literal method of interpretation, consistently employed, can lead to no other conclusion than that the church will be raptured before the seventieth week” (*ibid.*, p. 194).

2. *Pretribulationism is held to by the most careful premillennial scholars.* “It is rather significant that premillennarians who are specialists in the field of prophecy and who characteristically have labored over a period of years in this field are predominately pretribulationists... The logical alternatives which face a reverent scholar seem to be on the one hand the pretribulational and premillennial position resulting from a literal interpretation of prophecy or the amillennial and posttribulational position built upon a spiritualization or figurative interpretation of prophecy on the other hand. Those who attempt to establish a mediate position by borrowing arguments from both conflicting millennial positions are to that extent in an untenable compromise between two opposing principles of interpretation” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 254).

3. *Pretribulationism allows a harmony of the Scriptures relating to the Rapture and the Second Advent.* “Pretribulationism is based on the fact that it allows a harmony of the Scriptures relating to the Second Advent. The separation of the translation from the return of Christ to earth permits each of the two events, so different in character, to have its own place” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 164). (See our discussion of the differences between the Rapture and the Second Coming in our section *Identity of the Rapture* above.)

4. *Pretribulationism allows for the possibility of a good number of years before the Tribulation.* “There is not a word in Scripture that says that Jesus cannot come and take away His Church, until Babylon is rebuilt. The Church may be taken out of the world 25 or even 50 years before that” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 143). “The Rapture... may very well precede the Tribulation by a good number of years” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 155). “The Rapture will come some time before the Tribulation starts. It may come just before or it may come ten, twenty, thirty years or more before the Tribulation starts” (*ibid.*, p. 196). “...it may not necessarily occur just before the Tribulation. It might easily occur ten or twenty years before that time. As to the question of when the Rapture will occur, the answer is simple: no one knows” (*ibid.*, p. 641).

5. *The removal of the church is needed to unrestrain the Antichrist.* “And Jehovah said, **My spirit shall not strive with man for ever**, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years” (Gen. 6:3). “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you **another Helper, that He may be with you forever**” (John 14:16) “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, **the Helper** shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, **will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment**” (John 16:7-8) “If any man destroys **the temple of God**, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and **that is what you are**” (1 Cor. 3:17). “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy** comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And **you know what restrains him now**, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only **he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way**” (2 Thes. 2:3-7). “...the relation of the Holy Spirit to the mystery of lawlessness. In 2 Thessalonians 2, it is stated that one of the ministries of the Spirit of God is to restrain evil. He will do so until He leaves the earth in the Body of Christ. The man of sin, who is a most important factor in the Tribulation period, is not revealed until the Holy Spirit is ‘taken out of the way’ in the church (2 Thess. 2:1-12). Therefore, it follows that the Tribulation begins after the rapture of the church” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 160). “Another indication that the Rapture occurs before the Tribulation is that it best explains the sudden apostasy by the removal of the restrainer (2 Thess. 2:3-7). The ultimate law-

lessness of Antichrist (empowered by Satan himself) cannot be restrained by anyone short of God Himself. Thus, the restrainer of all sin is the Holy Spirit of God (Gen. 6:3; John 16:7-8). It cannot be even Michael the archangel, for he could not in his power restrain the devil (Jude 9 [‘But **Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil** and argued about the body of Moses, **did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment**, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you.’”]). Nor can the restrainer be the Roman emperor (cf. Rom. 13:4), for Antichrist will himself be the world’s political leader. The only restraint for Antichrist is the Spirit of Christ, ultimate holiness overpowering the ultimately unholy” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:616). “Accordingly, it again makes sense to posit the Rapture at the beginning of the Tribulation. The Spirit is the indweller of all believers (John 14:16) and of the church (1 Cor. 3:17); when He and all believers are taken away, evil will naturally run rampant. The removal of salt and light will leave this world a very unsavory and dark place, one the lawless one will utilize to work against God” (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of the fact that a major purpose of the Rapture of the church is to unrestrain the Antichrist in our section *The Purposes of the Rapture (for those left behind)* above.)

6. *The removal of the church results in the Tribulation.* “A few tremble in the face of the social and industrial problems of the day; while the vast majority are confident that the sagacity of man is not only controlling iniquity, but is gradually developing an improved social order. Thus, man, in his vanity, assigns to himself that which is of God alone, for all the elements of corruption and tribulation are latent in the world to-day, and the mighty effort of God is required to stay its bursting into flame until the appointed time. Tribulation will, therefore, instantly begin when the hand of God is removed from the unregenerate and Satan-ruled humanity” (Chafer, *S*, C4:6/31).

7. *The Tribulation concerns the Gentile nations and Israel, not the church.* “There is a twofold purpose in the time of Great Tribulation: (1) to bring to conclusion ‘the times of the Gentiles’ (Luke 21:24); (2) to prepare for the restoration and the regathering of Israel in the millennial reign of Christ following the Second Advent. The purpose of the Tribulation, therefore, is not to purge the church; nor is it primarily a discipline of believers. Rather, it deals in broad terms with both Gentiles and Israel in anticipation of the collapse of Gentile power and the restoration of Israel as the nation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 41). “The purpose of the Tribulation is to purge and judge Israel and to punish and destroy Gentile power” (*ibid.*, p. 68).

8. *The Tribulation is the time of Jacob’s (Israel’s) trouble, not the time of the church’s trouble.* “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it

is even **the time of Jacob's trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. 30:7). "For the day is near, even **the day of Jehovah** is near; **it shall be** a day of clouds, **a time of the nations**" (Ezek. 30:3). "Give no offense either to **Jews** or to **Greeks** or to **the church of God**" (1 Cor. 10:32) "The nature of the seventieth week of Daniel (9:24-27) would cause one to believe that the church will not be found in it. The Body of Christ was not found in the sixty-nine weeks, and it is highly improbable on that account that she will be found in the seventieth week. God does not have two mutually exclusive governing principles as law and grace operative in one period" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 160). "The nature and purpose of the Tribulation militate against the church's being found in it. That period is a time of judgment and chastisement for the ungodly world. God never punishes His own children with the world. The Tribulation period is expressly spoken of as the 'time of Jacob's trouble' and the 'time of the heathen (lit. Gentiles),' but it is never spoken of as the 'time of the church' (Jer. 30:7; Ezek. 30:3). Why have the two other divisions of the human race been designated in that connection and not the church, if there is not meant to be left the impression that the church is to be delivered from the time of trial" (*ibid.*)? "Once an interpreter keeps clear the distinctive terminology in the Scripture for Israel and the church, he is well on the way to a valid solution of the problems connected with the Tribulation period" (*ibid.*, p. 169). "The church will be raptured before Daniel's last week, the Tribulation period, begins" (*ibid.*, p. 288). "The church is not in Matthew 24 because the church is not in the Tribulation period described there (Matt. 24:21)" (*ibid.*, p. 289). "Matthew 24... deals with Daniel's seventieth week, where the church is not found. One cannot treat the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel 9 literally and the last week spiritually" (*ibid.*, p. 292). "Since it had no part in the first sixty-nine weeks, which are related only to God's program for Israel, it can have no part in the seventieth week, which is again related to God's program for Israel after the mystery program for the church has been concluded" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 196). "It must be concluded... since every passage dealing with the tribulation relates it to God's program for Israel, that the scope of the tribulation prevents the church from participating in it" (*ibid.*).

9. *The church is not destined for wrath, but for deliverance from the wrath to come.* "Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me**, has eternal life, and **does not come into judgment**, but has passed out of death into life" (John 5:24). "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, **we shall be saved from the wrath of God** through Him" (Rom. 5:9) "and to **wait for His Son from heaven**, whom He raised from the dead, that is **Jesus, who deliv-**

ers us from the wrath to come" (1 Thes. 1:10). "Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For **God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that **whether we are awake or asleep**, we may live together with Him" (1 Thes. 5:1–10). "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, **I also will keep you from the hour of testing**, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). "and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the presence of **Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come**; and who is able to stand'" (Rev. 6:16–17)? "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath**, knowing that he has only a short time" (Rev. 12:12). "And **it was given to him [the beast, vs. 4] to make war with the saints and to overcome them**; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him" (Rev. 13:7). "And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels **seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God**, who lives forever and ever" (Rev. 15:7). "The promise of Revelation 3:10 is supported by other promises to the Church: 'We shall be saved from wrath through him' (Rom. 5:9). 'And to wait from his Son from heaven,... which delivered us from the wrath to come' (1 Thess. 1:10). 'For God hath not appointed us to wrath' (1 Thess 5:9). There is also the great promise of our Lord Himself, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life' (John 5:24, ASV); a passage which, according to Alford, expressly negatives the notion that the Church can be made subject to the judgments associated with the Millennial Kingdom" (McClain, *GK*, p. 465). "According to 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Christians are promised: 'God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus

Christ.”... Revelation 6:17... ‘the great day of their wrath has come’... The only way one could be kept from that day of wrath would be to be delivered beforehand” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 65). “...the question as to why saints of the present age who are perfectly justified by faith, given a perfect position of sanctification, and declared to be in Christ, should have to suffer the ‘great day of his wrath’ in the Tribulation. While Christians can be disciplined and chastened, they cannot justly be exposed to the wrath of God” (*ibid.*, p. 159). “First Thessalonians 1:9-10... ‘Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath’” (*ibid.*, p. 66). “The Great Tribulation is a time of both divine wrath and satanic wrath” (*ibid.*, p. 225). “It should be clear to any reader that saints in the Great Tribulation suffer severely as the objects of satanic wrath and that the world as a whole suffers severely because of divine wrath” (*ibid.*, p. 226). “That the Great Tribulation is a time of divine wrath, however, is expressly stated in Scripture, and Gundry is wrong when he denies it. The sixth seal introduces, according to Revelation 6:16, ‘the wrath of the Lamb’ but the preceding seals record devastating divine judgments” (*ibid.*, p. 227). “If pretribulationists are right that the Great Tribulation is a time of divine wrath, and 1 Thessalonians 5 promises that Christians will not enter the time of divine wrath, it is an express refutation of posttribulationism” (*ibid.*, p. 231). “How any expositor taking the Book of Revelation with any seriousness can read from chapter 6 through chapter 16 and declare that this is not the wrath of God on a world that has rebelled against Him is hard to believe” (*ibid.*, p. 264). “According to Revelation 15:7, all seven bowls are ‘filled with the wrath of God.’ How, then can the wrath of God begin in the sixth bowl” (*ibid.*, p. 265)? “Jesus is not returning for the purpose of delivering the Church from Hell or the Lake of Fire, for this has already been done at the cross. Thus, the wrath that the Church is being delivered from is the wrath of the Great Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 151). “1 Thessalonians 5:1–10... In verse nine, Paul tells the Church in Thessalonica that they have not been appointed to wrath. The antecedent to the word *wrath* is to be found in verse two, which is *the Day of the Lord*, a term that always refers to the Tribulation. Thus, concerning the wrath of God, or the Day of the Lord, or the Tribulation, to *that day* the Church was not appointed” (*ibid.*, p. 152). “Just after speaking of the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16-17), Paul encourages the Thessalonians with these words: ‘God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (5:9), and ‘to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath’ (1:10)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:615). “Salvation (deliverance) from God’s wrath in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 means deliverance from the whole Tribulation period” (*ibid.*, p. 616). (See also our dis-

cussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Rapture of the church is to deliver the church from God's wrath in our section *The Purposes of the Rapture* above.)

10. *The church is counseled to pray that she might escape "these things" that will come upon all the earth-dwellers.* "Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap; for **it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man**" (Luke 21:34–37). "Luke 21:34-37... The means of escaping is to stand before the Son of Man, a standing that must happen at a place off the earth, for there is no escape on the earth" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 150).

11. *The faithful church is to be kept from the global hour of testing, not through it.* "As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the **seven churches**, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches" (Rev. 1:20). "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, **I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**" (Rev. 3:10–13). "And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and **cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed**" (Rev. 13:15). "and he said with a loud voice, 'Fear God, and give Him glory, because **the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters**" (Rev. 14:7). "Strange to say, interpreters who in one breath explain Revelation 3:10 as teaching that the Church will pass unscathed through the Tribulation, in the next breath explain the persecutions and martyrdoms in the Revelation as suffered by the Church! Consistency would demand that they seek some other solution of the problem" [quoting "Dr. Henry C. Thiessen's article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*"] (Chafer, *ST*, 4:370). "The first fact of importance in a consideration of the Tribulation period is that the church

will not be in that period. Several factors support that position. First, all believers have the promise of God through John that they will be kept from the hour of the trial (the definite article is in the original), pointing to a definite and specific time of trial that will come upon the world to try those that dwell (lit., are fully settled down, as the church is not because of its pilgrim nature) upon the earth (Rev. 3:10)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 159). “The saints of the church will not be kept through the Tribulation, but removed from it. Only the 144,000 of Israel are sealed to be protected from the ultimate horrors of that time; even the two witnesses of Revelation 11 will be martyred once their ministry is accomplished” (*ibid.*, p. 307). “These two purposes, the testing of earth dwellers, and the preparation of Israel for the King, have no relation to the church whatsoever. This is supporting evidence that the church will not be in the seventieth week” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 198). “...the specific promise of Revelation 3:10— ‘Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world [lit., “inhabited earth”], to try them that dwell upon the earth’ (ASV). While this promise was addressed initially to the ekklesia at Philadelphia (vs. 7), it is also intended for the whole Church as symbolized by ‘the seven churches’ (1:20), for the letter closes with a general call to ‘hear what the Spirit saith to the churches’ (3:13)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 464). “...the ‘hour of his [God’s] judgment,’ as the period of Revelation 6-19 is designated in 14:7... Of all the temporal judgments of the period, the worst will be the suffering involved in the test of decision between Christ and the antichrist; and this will fall exclusively upon the saved, not upon the unsaved (13:15)” (*ibid.*, p. 465). “Rev. 3:10... As the translators have made clear, the thought of the Greek is to ‘keep from,’ not to ‘keep in.’ The promise was to be kept from ‘the hour’ of trial, not just the trials in the hour... Historically, it meant just that. The church at Philadelphia was not to enter the tribulation period” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 66). “The purpose of the promise is deliverance from ‘the hour of trial,’ a period of time, not simply preservation through the trials in that period” (*ibid.*, p. 257). “The implication may be that they held tenaciously to this belief and expectancy in spite of all the ridicule, opposition, and persecution heaped on them by the unsaved world because of that belief (cp. 3:8)... One thing in favor of this view is Christ’s exclamation in 3:11, ‘Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast’” (Showers, *M*, p. 210). “I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because **you** have a little power, and **have kept My word**, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews, and are not, but lie — behold, I will make them to come and

bow down at your feet, and to know that I have loved you. **Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world,** to test those who dwell upon the earth. **I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have,** in order that no one take your crown” (Rev. 3:8-11). “He promised to keep the Philadelphia church saints from the hour of testing that would determine, demonstrate, or expose the kind of people being tested” (Showers, *M*, p. 211). “If the Lord had meant that He would keep them from just the testing itself, He could have made that very clear by omitting the words ‘the hour’ and simply saying, ‘I will keep you from the testing’” (*ibid.*). “In the Greek text the next part of Christ’s statement, ‘which shall come upon all the world,’ modifies the word translated ‘hour’ rather than the word meaning ‘testing.’ This indicates that in His promise Christ emphasized the ‘hour’ or time period instead of the testing” (*ibid.*). “Christ based His promise on the fact that the church saints had already passed their test... Robert Cook [in W. Robert Cook, *The Theology of John*, p. 168] wrote, ‘Thus the period of testing for church saints is fulfilled (Rom. 5:1-5; James 1:2-4, 12; 1 Pet. 1:3-9; 4:12-13) and the hour of testing for the world is about to come’” (*ibid.*, p. 212). “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in **our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us**” (Rom. 5:1-5). “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter **various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing**” (James 1:2-4). “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though **now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in**

praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls” (1 Pet. 1:3–9). “Beloved, **do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation**” (1 Pet. 4:12–13). “Christ immediately followed His Revelation 3:10 promise with the exclamation, ‘Behold, I come quickly’ (v. 11)” (Showers, *M*, p. 212). “**I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown**” (Rev. 3:11). “in the future there is laid up for me **the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing**” (2 Tim. 4:8). “...it will be through His any-moment coming that He will keep or separate the church saints from the entire period of testing” (Showers, *M*, p. 212). “Since, according to James 1:13, God does not tempt people to sin, we must conclude that the purpose of infinitive in Revelation 3:10 refers to God’s *testing* people, not to His tempting them to sin... to demonstrate or expose the kind of people they are” (*ibid.*, p. 215). “The purpose of the future period of testing will be for God to test those dwelling on the earth to expose them as the kind of people who are so adamantly opposed to Him that they will never repent, no matter what is done to them. Through that exposure, God will demonstrate that these people deserve His eternal judgment” (*ibid.*, p. 216). “Because the Philadelphia church saints had already passed their test, Christ promised to keep or separate them from the future period of testing that God had purposed for the testing of an altogether different kind of people—those who are so irreversibly ungodly that they will never repent, no matter what is done to them” (*ibid.*, p. 217). “This verse does not say that the Church will be merely kept safe *during* the trial, but it will be kept *from the very hour* of the trial, that is, from the very *time* of it. This requires a removal before the Tribulation ever occurs” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 153). “Throughout the Tribulation, saints are being killed on a massive scale (Rev. 6:9-11; 11:7; 12:11; 13:7, 15; 14:13; 17:6; 18:24). If these saints are Church saints, they are not being kept safe and Revelation 3:10 is meaningless. Only if Church saints and tribulation saints are kept distinct does the promise of Revelation 3:10 make any sense” (*ibid.*). “John wrote to the faithful church of Philadelphia: ‘Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will

also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth' (3:10)... God did not say He would keep the church *through* [Gk: dia] the Tribulation, as posttribulationists argue (see [George Eldon] Ladd, *The Blessed Hope*, p. 85-86), but *from* [Gk: ek] it. Also, notice the word keep [Gk: terein]—one can hardly be kept from something he is enduring... In addition, the word *hour* supports pretribulationism, since the only way to be kept from a section of time, such as an *hour*, is not to go through any of it" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:615).

12. *The church is frequently and consistently told to look forward to Christ's coming for her, not to tribulation.* "The many exhortations to constant expectation of the Lord's coming are inexplicable if a period of trial is next on God's program for the church. How can the church be looking for the blessed hope when she is looking for the Tribulation period? The conclusion is, therefore, that the church will not be found on earth during the Great Tribulation" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 161). "There is not a single rapture passage that warns of an impending Tribulation for the church" (*ibid.*, p. 306). "It is a matter of fact, and it is a desolating argument, that the church is never used in any passage on the Tribulation" (*ibid.*, p. 307). (See our discussion of the proper, Scriptural attitude of the Christian toward the Rapture in our section *Attitudes Toward the Rapture* below.)

13. *The church belongs to the day, not to the night.* "Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But **you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep** as others do, but **let us be alert and sober.** For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since **we are of the day**, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, **the hope of salvation.** For **God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another,** and build up one another, just as you also are doing" (1 Thes. 5:1–11). "Paul stated that the day of the Lord will not overtake the Thessalonians as a thief. Why does an event coming as a thief come unexpectedly upon the world but with proper expectation for believers? Paul explained this in verses 4 and 5: 'But you, brothers,

are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.’ Here is a crucial point in Paul’s explanation: the thief is going to come in the night, but the believers are declared not to belong to the night or the darkness. The implication is quite clear that believers are in a different time reference; that is, they belong to the day that precedes the darkness” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 220). “The period of wrath will not overtake the church as a thief because the church will not be there” (*ibid.*, p. 221).

14. *Paul comforted the Thessalonians with the Rapture hope, a hollow hope if the Tribulation and martyrdom must come first.* “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then **we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.** Therefore **comfort one another with these words**” (1 Thes. 4:13-18). “In 1 Thessalonians 4, the Thessalonians are told to be comforted and encouraged by the fact that the Rapture could take place at any time and that if so, they could be reunited with their loved ones who had died. To offer this as a comfort to them, if as a matter of fact, they had to survive the Tribulation in order to enjoy the Rapture and in the process face rather certain martyrdom, makes the exhortation of 1 Thessalonians 4:18 a hollow one indeed, if the posttribulationists are right” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 208). “...the Tribulation... a period of great suffering and trial, in which probably most Christians will die... Instead of exhorting Christians to comfort, posttribulationists should be preparing Christians for martyrdom” (*ibid.*, p. 209). “the Tribulation... it will be a time of unparalleled suffering for the world as a whole and for Christians, in particular... it would seem that posttribulationists have a major problem: how they can explain Paul’s comforting the Thessalonian church with the hope of the Rapture when, as a matter of fact, if they were to be plunged into Great Tribulation, most of them would be martyred” (*ibid.*).

15. *Paul did not comfort the Thessalonians with the idea that their deceased loved ones had escaped the church’s coming Tribulation.* “But **we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who**

are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first**. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore **comfort one another with these words**" (1 Thes. 4:13-18). "...the Thessalonian Christians. If they were actually facing the Great Tribulation, they should have rejoiced that those who died in Christ had escaped its rigors. In Revelation 14:13, those who die are declared blessed because they escape persecution. Hiebert [in D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Thessalonian Epistles*, p. 205] has summarized this point well in stating, 'But if they had been taught that the church must go through the great tribulation, the logical reaction for them would have been to rejoice that these loved ones had escaped that great period of suffering, which they felt was about to occur'" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 210). "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, 'Write, "**Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!**" 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that **they may rest from their labors**, for their deeds follow with them'" (Rev. 14:13). "If these church saints had been taught that the church must go through all or any part of the broad Day of the Lord or Tribulation, with its intense outpouring of God's wrath, 'the logical reaction for them would have been to rejoice that these loved ones had escaped that great period of suffering' through death (cp. Job 3:11-26; Eccl. 4:1-2; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:12)" [quoting D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Thessalonian Epistles*, p. 205] (Showers, *M*, p. 198). "The only means Paul used to relieve their distress over the deaths of their fellow saints was the truth of the future Rapture of the church. If these distressed saints had been taught that the church must go through all or any part of the Tribulation, why didn't Paul comfort them further with the additional fact that through their deaths, their fellow saints had escaped that future time of God's wrath" (*ibid.*)?

16. *The Thessalonians feared that there might be a delay between their Rapture and the resurrection of their loved ones.* "But **we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve**, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by

the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep.** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first.** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13-18). “Why did the Thessalonians fear a delay in the resurrection of their fellow believers? Pretribulationists have a simple explanation for this problem. The Thessalonians had been taught concerning the coming Tribulation and had understood that they would be raptured before this time of wrath overtook the world. What they feared was that at the translation of the church, they might not immediately see their loved ones who had died and that their resurrection would be delayed until after the Tribulation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 203).

17. *Paul comforted the Thessalonians with the thought that no, they had not missed the Rapture, nor had the day of the Lord yet come.* “Now **we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come**” (2 Thes. 2:1–2). “Critical writers in investigating 2 Thess. 2:2 have shown that the word translated ‘is at hand’ (in the phrase ‘the day of Christ (or Lord) is at hand’) means, correctly rendered, ‘is come,’ or ‘has come,’ i.e. is something already present, and not something still future. This correctly explains the trouble and alarm of the Thessalonian brethren, who were certainly not afraid of ‘the blessed hope,’ which Paul says they waited for (1 Thess. 1:10), and for which they were prepared (1 Thess. 2:19 and 3:13, and 5:4, 5), but apprehending that ‘the day of Christ’ had already come, and they not having experienced the promised translation, and their pious dead being still with them without an experienced resurrection, they were troubled and distressed at the thought. Those brethren with hearts full of love for the Saviour were not so fearful that they would desire and pray (as multitudes now) that the blessed Lord should delay His Coming, but, in some way misapprehending the real state of affairs, they believed that the initiatory proceedings belonging to the day of Christ had already commenced, and that they and their pious dead were left without realizing the exceeding precious promises given to them” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:316). “With the present popular conceptions of the sudden grandeur, conspicuity, and universal publicity of the Coming of Christ, it

would be utterly impossible to obtain currency for the idea that it was already present or accomplished. People now are looking for the world to come to an end—for an utter break-up of the whole system of nature—for a complete wreck of the universe. When we talk to them of the last day and the return of Christ, they begin to think of the burning up of all sublunary things, and of the complete extinction of human life, and even of the whole dwelling-plane of man and all created things. But if the early Christians had thought of this subject after this style, how is it possible that they could have believed the last day had come, when the world still stood and the stars remained in their places, and the whole course of nature was still going on as before” [quoting *Proph. Times*, vol. 5, p. 43] (*ibid.*, p. 317)?

18. *The Corinthians were encouraged to conduct themselves in view of the Rapture; they were not counseled to prepare for the Tribulation.* “Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.** But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but **thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord**” (1 Cor. 15:51-58). “Posttribulationists almost universally gloss over the most obvious fact of this exhortation, that is, that the Corinthians were in no wise warned that this event can occur only after the Great Tribulation. The implication of the passage is that the Rapture is an impending event and that there is nothing intervening. If the pretribulation Rapture is correct, it would be natural to present the doctrine of the Rapture in this way, without going into detail about what will happen to people who are not raptured. If, on the other hand, the prospect for the church is to go through the Great Tribulation and other events of the end-time, it would seem incumbent on Paul to state clearly that the hope of the Rapture necessarily must be deferred until preceding events are fulfilled” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 252). “It is a singular fact that in all the rapture passages clearly identified as such, there is no such warning. All the warnings about impending end-time events relate to the coming of Christ, which is clearly posttribulational” (*ibid.*).

19. *The Rapture of the church is not found in any of the Tribulation passages.* “The main problem with the Book of Revelation is that there is no clear mention of the rapture of the church from Revelation 4 through Revelation 18. Here again, the massive fact that a book presenting great detail concerning the events leading up to the second coming of Christ should omit completely any hope of the rapture of the church for the tribulation saints must be faced” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 260).

20. *The church is not found on earth in any of the Tribulation passages.* See Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21 and Revelation 6:1-19:21. “In recognizing the point in time when this seven-year period—so momentous in itself—will become history, it is necessary to observe again the unrelated character of the Church age, which as an intercalation is thrust between the death of Christ and the departure of the Church from the earth” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:339). “If the Church was in the 483 years, she may be expected to appear in the last 7; but inasmuch as she was not in the 483 years she could not be in the 7, and no Scripture ever relates the Church to the 7 years of tribulation. Only as students ignore the distinctive, unrelated character of the Church age and fail to comprehend the essential perfection of the Church in Christ, will they presume to assert that the Church even enters upon any moment of the great tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 340). “No New Testament Scripture necessitates the placing of the Church in that period, nor does any New Testament Scripture warn the church regarding the tribulation as though she were in danger of it” (*ibid.*, p. 364). “...the church is not in view in the Revelation (except as seated in heaven viewing the events upon the earth, as has been shown above) from chapter 4 through 19” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 162). “... ‘church’ occurs nineteen times in chapters 1-3, and it must be added never again in the book... only as the wife of the Lamb (19:7; 21:9) and the bride (22:17)” (*ibid.*, p. 301). “[The 24 elders of Revelation chapters 4 and 5]... ‘in all that follows, to the twentieth chapter, the church is never once referred to as on earth’” [quoting C.I. Scofield, *Will the Church Pass Through the Great Tribulation?* pp. 23-24] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 208). “It is a striking fact that *ekklesia* is never used in the main body of the book where the great eschatological events of the end are described (4:1-22:5). Furthermore, the Book of Revelation always employs *ekklesia* in connection with the churches on earth; never with any body of the saved in heaven” (McClain, *GK*, p. 446). “The term *ekklesia* occurs frequently in the first three chapters of Revelation but not at all thereafter, except once in the epilogue, where the divine Author turns from the area of prediction to speak a final word of comfort and admonition to the ‘churches’ to which the entire prophecy was addressed. From this usage it appears that in the Book

of Revelation *ekklesia* is reserved always to designate churches existing on earth. And it therefore becomes significant that during the judgments of chapters 4-19 the term is never once applied to any body of saved persons on earth, although several such bodies appear (cf. 7:1-8; 7:14, ASV; 12:11, 17; 13:7; 14:1-5; 18:4). This omission would be strange if, during the period described, there were any *ekklesiai* remaining on the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 463). “Of particular importance is the fact that *ecclesia* is never used of an assembly or body of *saints* except in reference to saints of the present age” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 23). “It is of utmost significance that every Scripture describing the participants in this future tribulation period refers to Israelites as Israelites, Gentiles as Gentiles, and the saints as saints without ever once using any of the distinctive terms that apply to believers in this present age” (*ibid.*, p. 41). “In the Old Testament the tribulation passages refer to both Israel and the Gentiles and to the saved among either group but never to a corporate body of Jews and Gentiles combined as they are in the church” (*ibid.*, p. 59). “How strange it would be in such a tremendous movement of events as will take place in the tribulation time if no mention of the church as such would appear if, as a matter of fact, the church is actually in the period and enduring its trials” (*ibid.*, p. 62)! “The word *ecclesia* (church) is never used in a tribulation passage” (*ibid.*, p. 161). “...the significant fact that, while local churches are mentioned in chapters 2 and 3, there is no mention of any local church anywhere in Revelation 4-18” (*ibid.*, p. 261). “The description of the saved as saints of both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds is quite in contrast to the reference to them as combined in one body, the church, in most of the New Testament” (*ibid.*). “Twenty-four verses in the Book of the Revelation refer to the church... there are no references to the church on the earth in chapters 4 through 18, the chapters relating specifically to the 70th week of Daniel 9, including the seals, trumpets, and bowls” (Showers, *M*, p. 245). “Twenty-two verses in the Book of the Revelation refer to Israel” (*ibid.*). “More than 72% of the references to Israel in the Book of the Revelation refer to it on the earth during the 70th week. By contrast, none of the references to the church in Revelation refer to it on the earth during the 70th week” (*ibid.*, p. 246). “One of the problems that Posttribulationists face is that the term ‘church’ is not actually found in any Tribulation context, including the Book of Revelation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 296). “Ladd... he has no Scripture which puts the Church in the Tribulation, nor does he have an example where a Tribulation prophecy addressed to Israel is applied to the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “No passage on the Tribulation ever mentions the Church, though it does mention Israel and the Gentile nations” (*ibid.*). “In no biblical passage

which discusses the Tribulation is the Church mentioned” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 149). “Revelation... in chapters 6-18, which deal with the Tribulation period itself, the Church is not even mentioned once. This is most unusual in light of the prominence of the Church in the chapters dealing with events prior to and after the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 150). “The word *church(es)* is used nineteen times in the first three chapters [of Revelation], and then not once during the entire Tribulation (6-18). That it reoccurs after the Second Coming (19) and during the new heaven and new earth (22:16) is striking; similar exhortations earlier that had the phrase ‘unto the churches’ (e.g. 2:7, 11 KJV) do not have them during the Tribulation, when, instead, John warns, ‘If anyone has an ear, let him hear’ (13:9)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:612). “**If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone** is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of **the saints**” (Rev. 13:9–10). “Nowhere during the entire Tribulation period is there a word about the church being on earth” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:612).

21. *The church does not appear within any of Daniel’s seventy weeks.* “**Seventy weeks** are decreed **upon thy people and upon thy holy city**, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy” (Dan. 9:24). “The church did not exist during any part of the first 69 weeks or 483 years of the 70 weeks... the church did not begin historically until nearly two months *after* the end of the first 69 weeks of the 70-weeks prophecy” (Showers, *M*, p. 241). “God does not intend the church to be present on the earth for any part of the 70 weeks or 490 years He has determined specifically for Israel and Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 243). “If God intended to mix any part of His 70-weeks program for Israel and Jerusalem with His program for the church, why didn’t He start the church during the first 69 weeks of the 70-weeks program” (*ibid.*)? “God will remove the church from the earth before the 70th week begins with the resumption of His 70-weeks program for Israel and Jerusalem” (*ibid.*). “All other views of the Rapture have the church going through at least part of the 70th week, meaning that all other views mix God’s 70-weeks program for Israel and Jerusalem together with His program for the church” (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of Daniel’s seventy weeks in the section *The Times of the Gentiles* of our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*.)

22. *The church does not appear in Matthew chapters twenty-four or twenty-five.* “Therefore when you see **the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, stand-

ing in **the holy place (let the reader understand)**, then let **those who are in Judea flee to the mountains**; let him who is on the house-top not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that **your flight** may not be in the winter, or **on a Sabbath**; for then there will be a **great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:14–21). “A careful study of Matthew 24-25 will reveal that the subject matter is the end of the age, and the age in view is the same as that of Matthew 13, namely, the whole period between the first and second advents of Christ” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 184). “The questions the disciples raised did not relate to the Rapture but rather to the specific signs leading up to the second coming of Christ. At this point in their spiritual education the disciples would not have understood the subject of the Rapture any more than they understood the subject of the death and resurrection of Christ” (ibid., p. 186).

23. *The church is not part of the “Day of the Lord.”* “For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night**” (1 Thes. 5:2). “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, **that you may not be quickly shaken** from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, **to the effect that the day of the Lord has come**. Let no one in any way deceive you, for **it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And **you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed**. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only **he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way**” (2 Thes. 2:1–7). “The day of the Lord’ and similar terms, as used of end-time events, refer to the Tribulation period (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2) and on through the Millennium (2 Peter 3:10-13). Never once is the Rapture part of this day” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:622). “Day of the Lord’ occurs about twenty times in the Old Testament, often of end-time events. A parallel term, ‘the last days,’ has fourteen occurrences, always of the end times. ‘In that day’ is used over a hundred times, generally of the same events. *Isaiah uses all three of the same event* (Isa. 1:2, 11-12), *but never once does the Old Testament refer to the Rapture*: ‘This omission from over one hundred passages seems hard to

understand if the rapture is the first event of the Day of the Lord” [quoting Charles C. Ryrie, *What You Should Know About the Rapture*, p. 103] (*ibid.*).

24. *The descriptions of the Tribulation saints are not descriptions of the church.* “It is essential to realize that ‘never are tribulation saints referred to as a church, or as the body of Christ, or as indwelt by Christ, or as subject to translation, or as the bride’” [quoting J. F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*, p. 8] (Feinberg, *M*, p. 169). “...where is a... Scripture that places the Jewish remnant of the Tribulation period in the church” (*ibid.*, p. 174)?

25. *The twenty-four elders are seen in heaven just prior to and during the Tribulation.* “And around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw **twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads**” (Rev. 4:4). “**the twenty-four elders** will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and **will cast their crowns before the throne**, saying” (Rev. 4:10) “Those who contend that the Church passes into or through the great tribulation have difficulty identifying the twenty-four elders” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:395). “The position and constituency of the twenty-four elders favor our position. Many commentators hold that those elders represent the whole body of the redeemed in heaven, the church of Christ. There is proof for that view. (1) The white raiment is the righteousness of the saints only (Rev. 19:7-8). (2) Crowns are nowhere promised in Scripture as rewards for any but those who are in the church (1 Cor. 9:25; Phil. 4:1; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10). (3) Their song is one of redemption for they have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb from every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. (4) When the multitude that has been saved out of the Tribulation gives thanks to God, the elders and the angels are seen about the throne and give separate thanks and praise. (5) When the 144,000 stand on Mount Zion (Rev. 14:1-5), they are apart from the elders and sing their song before the four living ones and the elders. (6) When the elders give thanks in chapter 11 at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, they do not mention their personal participation in the future rewards of those saints and prophets, probably because they have already received theirs. (7) The word ‘church’ does not occur after the third chapter, and the Bride of Christ is not seen on earth until the reign in chapter 20, when she coreigns with her Lord. Throughout the time of earth’s judgments the group representing the church is seen in heaven as spectators, who are consciously worshipping their Creator and Redeemer” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 160). “What is said of the twenty-four elders

could not be true of angelic beings, for angels are not crowned with victors crowns (*stephanos*) received as rewards, nor are they seated on thrones (*thronos*), which throne speaks of royal dignity and prerogative, nor are angels robed in white as a result of judgment” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 208). “Twenty-four is the number of the choruses into which the Levitical priesthood was divided (1 Chron. 24:1-19), and of all the groups of the redeemed only the church is a priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6)” [quoting C.I. Scofield, *Will the Church Pass Through the Great Tribulation?* pp. 23-24] (*ibid.*). “Eldership is a representative office (Acts 15:2; 20:17)” [quoting C.I. Scofield, *Will the Church Pass Through the Great Tribulation?* pp. 23-24] (*ibid.*). “The number of these elders is not without its significance. Scott [in Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation*, p. 122] comments: ‘But why “twenty-four”? The significance of the numeral must be sought for in the first book of Chronicles 24, 25. David divided the priesthood into twenty-four orders or courses, each course serving in turn (Luke 1:5, 8, 9). The respective elders or chiefs of these courses would represent the whole of the Levitical priesthood. There would thus be twenty-four chief priests and one high priest” (*ibid.*, p. 252). “The ‘four and twenty elders’ in Rev. 4 and 5... ‘four and twenty elders,’ sitting in a circle immediately surrounding the central throne, and who display at least four marks of identification... First, they sit upon ‘*thrones*’ (4:4, ASV)... they cannot represent angels, for the latter appear in Scripture always as servants, and never as *judges*. Second, the ‘four and twenty elders’ are clothed in ‘white raiment’ (vs. 4). Such raiment doubtless speaks of both regal splendor and moral character, a fitting symbol of the unimaginable glory for which the redeemed are even now being prepared. Third, these elders wear on their heads ‘*crowns of gold*’ (vs. 4). Both the crown and its costly substance represent the regal or reigning function at its highest level. While the ideas suggested by ‘*thrones*’ and ‘*crowns*’ respectively are not ordinarily wholly separable, yet in Scripture the ‘*crown*’ seems to have the meaning of executive function, whereas the ‘*throne*’ is reserved as a symbol of that aspect of rulership which appears in its judicial activity. Of the latter there is an excellent example in the promise of our Lord that His disciples are to ‘sit on *thrones judging*’ (Luke 22:30, italics added). Fourth, the twenty-four elders sing a ‘new song’ (5:9-10)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 469). “In summarizing the four marks of identification outlined above—the thrones, the white raiment, the golden crowns, and the redemption song—it may be said that among all the saved there is only one body in the universe of which *all* these things are true. Others may be redeemed, walk in white, even reign with Christ, but only the Church which is the body and bride of Christ will enjoy these special privi-

leges and also sit with Him in judgment of the world (1 Cor. 6:1-3; Rev. 3:21)” (*ibid.*, p. 470). “The number 24 is never used as a symbol in the Apocalypse apart from these ‘elders,’ suggesting the absolute uniqueness of the Church for which they stand” (*ibid.*, p. 471). “It is an impressive fact that, in the long and bewildering history of attempts to interpret the symbols of the Apocalypse, there is hardly any instance of greater unanimity than with reference to that of the twenty-four elders” (*ibid.*). “...the twenty-four elders... represent the true Church... This interpretation, if adopted by premillennialists who believe the Book of Revelation presents an *intelligible* program, shuts out of court any eschatological scheme which would leave the Church on earth during any part of the terrible judgments of the end-time described in chapters 6-19” (*ibid.*). “If the twenty-four elders of Revelation 4:4 are interpreted as referring to the church—a disputed point—it would tend to confirm that judgment of the church has already taken place, as they are already crowned” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 84). “One of the reasons the twenty-four elders are considered to be men redeemed and rewarded is that they are pictured as having golden crowns and clothed in white clothing (Rev. 4:4). This would imply that they have already been judged and rewarded, as would be the case if there had been a pretribulational Rapture and a judgment seat of Christ following in heaven” (*ibid.*, p. 259). “...these 24 elders... *First*, these elders are clothed with white garments, which throughout the Revelation are symbols of salvation... The *second* clue is the fact that they are wearing crowns. These crowns are not *diadem* crowns worn by those who are royal by nature, which would have been the case had these been celestial beings. These crowns are the *stephanos* crowns, the crowns of an overcomer, the type of crown given as rewards to the members of the Church at the Judgment Seat of Messiah. A *third* clue lies in their very title of *elders*. Nowhere else in Scripture is the term used to describe celestial or angelic beings. This term is used of humans in positions of authority either in the synagogue or church” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 164). “The figure 24 is probably taken from 1 Chronicles 24, where David divided the Tribe of Levi into 24 courses to represent the whole. Since the Church is a kingdom of priests, these 24 elders represent the Church as a whole. This actually provides a fourth clue to the fact that the 24 elders represent the Church and not angels” (*ibid.*). “Hence, from these four clues, the 24 elders must represent the Church saints. If this is true, then they provide further evidence for a pretribulational Rapture. The Church is already in Heaven in chapters four and five before the Tribulation begins in chapter six” (*ibid.*).

26. *The “tabernacle” of God is seen in heaven during the Tribulation.* “Do you not know that **you are a temple of God**, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are” (1 Cor. 3:16–17). “Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For **we are the temple of the living God**; just as God said, ‘I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE’” (2 Cor. 6:16). “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into **a holy temple** in the Lord” (Eph. 2:19–21) “**He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God**, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name” (Rev. 3:12). “And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against **God**, to blaspheme His name and **His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven**” (Rev. 13:6). “The ‘tabernacle’ of God in Rev. 13:6... a body of personal beings who will be dwelling in heaven at this time during the career of the beast... ‘his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven’” (McClain, *GK*, p. 467) “Herein is one of the unique glories of the Church: to be the corporate dwelling-place of God through the Spirit, beginning with the day of Pentecost and extending out into future ages without end. In the visions of the Apocalypse, then, the Church of the present age appears in its corporate capacity as the habitation (*skene*) of God already in heaven at the very time the antichrist reaches the height of his power on earth. And this point in time, the reader should recall, will arrive at exactly the middle of the entire period of seven years covered by the judgments of chapters 6-19, i.e., at the beginning of the beast’s total power extending forty-two months (13:5). This body of the saved in heaven, referred to as the ‘tabernacle’ of God, must not be confused with ‘the great multitude’ of Rev. 7:9-17; for, according to the divine identification, the latter are those who are seen coming (Grk. present tense) up out of ‘the great tribulation’ of those terrible days (vs. 14, ASV), whereas the Church is to be kept out of that ‘hour of trial’ (Rev. 3:10, ASV). Moreover, though both groups are redeemed through grace by the same Lord, the descriptions of their respective destinies are clearly different, as may be seen by comparing the account in Rev. 7:14-17 with New Testament predictions of the Church’s regal future” (*ibid.*).

27. *Time is needed for the judgment seat of Christ and the giving of rewards, the Marriage and the Marriage supper.* “Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for **the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.** And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for **the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.** And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to **the marriage supper of the Lamb.** And he saith unto me, These are true words of God” (Rev. 19:7-9). “Those who teach that the Church goes through the tribulation agree that the Church must be translated thus; but to save a theory they declare that the Church is raptured to meet the Lord and then returns immediately with Him to the earth. But before she returns, as will yet be indicated, she must pass through the judgment of her rewards, be married to the Lamb, and participate in the marriage supper (Rev 19:1-10). The post-tribulation rapture theory is forced to omit these great events or to contend that they are accomplished instantaneously” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:373). “Distinction is called for at this point between the marriage supper which is in heaven and celebrated *before* Christ returns, and the marriage feast (Matt. 25:10, R.V.; Luke 12:37) which is on the earth *after* his return” (*ibid.*, p. 396). “And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to **the wedding feast; and the door was shut**” (Matt. 25:10). “Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and **have them recline at the table,** and will come up and wait on them” (Luke 12:37). “If the church is not taken up into heaven before the Tribulation, there is no time before the visible coming of the Lord in glory for inserting the rewarding of the faithful service of the saints and the marriage supper of the Lamb. Surely those events require just such an interval as the period between the rapture and the revelation, and they take place in heaven” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 161). “The Scripture is very specific that it is first in [Rev.] 19:7-10 (the marriage supper of the Lamb), then 19:11-19 (the coming of the Lord Jesus in glory)” (*ibid.*, p. 301).

28. *The Lamb's bride is seen in heaven with Christ before He returns.* “After these things I heard, as it were, a loud voice of a great multitude **in heaven,** saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her.’ And a second time they said, ‘Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever.’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits

on the throne saying, 'Amen. Hallelujah!' And a voice came from the throne, saying, 'Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.' And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**' And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, 'Write, "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."' And he said to me, 'These are true words of God.' And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, 'Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.' And I saw heaven opened; and behold, **a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.** And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And **the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.** And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.' And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, 'Come, assemble for **the great supper of God;** in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.' And I saw **the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army.** And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh" (Rev. 19:1-21). "The 'wife' of the Lamb in Rev. 19:1-9... In

the order of events, therefore, John puts the Church in heaven before the glorious coming of Christ (19:11-16), and before the final and most terrible of the entire series of judgments preparatory to His establishment of the Kingdom on earth (19:17-21)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 466).

29. *At His return, Jesus is seen as the bridegroom (already married).* "And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king, who gave **a wedding feast for his son**. And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. Again he sent out other slaves saying, "Tell those who have been invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast'" But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast." And those slaves went out into the streets, and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:1-14). "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to **ten virgins**, who took their lamps, and **went out to meet the bridegroom**. And five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while **the bridegroom** was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, "**Behold, the bridegroom!** Come out to meet him." Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the prudent answered, saying, "No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves." And while they were going away to make the purchase, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast**; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, "Lord, lord, open up for us." But he answered and said, "Truly

I say to you, I do not know you.” Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Matt. 25:1-13). “Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps alight. And **be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast**, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. And be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect” (Luke 12:35-41). “It is significant that Jesus does not take the bridegroom and his friends as they proceed to the wedding, but in coming from the wedding, which is fully enforced by Luke 12:35-38, ‘Let your loins be girded about and your light burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He shall return from the wedding...’ This then, while the main idea of watchfulness is of general application (as the context and analogy of Scripture show), is specially designed for a class of persons who await the Lord’s return from the wedding” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:301). “Lange’s Com. loci says: ‘It was the custom among the Jews and Greeks that the bridegroom accompanied by his friends, went to the house of the bride to lead her to his own house, and was joined by the virgins, the friends of the bride, not on his going to fetch the bride, but on his returning with her to his own house.’ (Comp. De Wette, Meyer, Lightfoot, Wetstein, etc.)” (*ibid.*). “In many passages, such as Matthew 25:1-13; 22:1-14; and Luke 12:35-41, the King is seen in the role of Bridegroom at His coming, indicating that the marriage has taken place” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 206).

30. *Historically, God has delivered His people from tribulation.* “...the deliverance of Lot from Sodom... Noah and his family, delivered from the Flood by the ark... Rahab at Jericho was also delivered from the doomed city. While illustrations cannot properly be taken as proof, they confirm the idea that God characteristically delivers believers from wrath designed for judgment upon the unbelievers. If God delivers the church before the time of tribulation, it will be in keeping with the general principle” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 67).

Unknown and Imminent

The timing of the Rapture is *unknown and imminent*. “And **what I say to you I say to all, “Be on the alert”**” (Mark 13:37)! “But **when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your**

heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28). **“But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man”** (Luke 21:36). “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again**, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:2-3, NASB). “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I come again**, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:2-3, ASV). “The present tense “I come” is used rather than the future, for the Return is regarded not as a distant event, but as one ever imminent and at hand” [quoting Henry Barclay Swete, *The Last Discourse and Prayer of Our Lord*, p. 8] (Showers, *M*, p. 156). “Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His breast at the supper, and said, ‘Lord, who is the one who betrays You?’ Peter therefore seeing him said to Jesus, ‘Lord, and what about this man?’ Jesus said to him, ‘**If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?** You follow Me!’ This saying therefore went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, ‘If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you’” (John 21:20–23)? “And this do, knowing the time, that **it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep**; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and **the day is at hand. Let us therefore** lay aside the deeds of darkness and **put on the armor of light**” (Rom. 13:11–12). “so that you are not lacking in any gift, **awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Cor. 1:7) “Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we** shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we** shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51–52). “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we** who **are** alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then **we** who **are** alive and remain shall be caught

up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thes. 4:13–17). **“looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus”** (Titus 2:13) **“Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.** Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for **the coming of the Lord is at hand.** Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; **behold, the Judge is standing right at the door”** (James 5:7–9). **“Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you”** (Rev. 3:3). **“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus”** (Rev. 22:20). **“We have assurances given to us not to interpose any event whatever between us and such an Advent, but to regard it as an event that may occur at any moment without any notification of its approach (excepting only such as are given by approximative signs)”** (Peters, *TTK*, 2:319) **“If any one asks, why is it not then more prominently set forth also in connection with such chronological dates, the answer is plain—such a method would defeat the posture of constant watching enjoined, and would, in a great measure, relieve it of a characteristic purposely designed, viz. that it shall come as ‘a snare.’ A sufficiency is given to instruct us, if we will only compare Scripture: if the exact time of this first secret Coming were given, it would invalidate the express declarations that no one shall be cognizant of it. Hence it is, that this Coming—this Advent embracing from its first stage to the last a distinctive interval of time—is represented as one that may happen at any time; one that we are to watch for constantly; one that we are to look for without placing anything intervening (to be yet fulfilled) between it and the present, seeing that the stage or manifestation (to saints) at its beginning is never included in dates, but always enshrouded in mystery; always represented as coming unknown to all men and to the angels. From this it follows, not knowing the length of this interval, and not having definite events (for those are embraced in this interval) to guide us into a recognition of the time when the Advent really begins, that such a Coming and its resultant (the Kingdom) may be near, so near that we dare not positively assert that it shall be delayed a single day, week, year, etc.”** (*ibid.*, 3:97) **“the termination of the present dispensation... if we but reflect, that the first stage of the Advent precedes this termination by an interval of time unknown to us, it may therefore occur at any day for aught we know”** (*ibid.*, p. 133). **“The student of prophecy is not to be a ‘date-**

setter,' but he is to watch. 'Signs' are for the Jew. There is nothing to prevent Christ coming for His Church at any time" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 10). "Uncertainty then as to the 'time' of the Lord's return is necessary to promote the 'watchful' spirit" (*ibid.*, p. 15). "...7 years, the Rapture might occur 5, 10 or even 25 years before that, so as to give time for the rebuilding of Babylon and other events that are to occur before the Tribulation Period can begin, otherwise the Rapture would not be a surprise. It is not for the Christian to look for 'Times' and 'Seasons' and 'Signs.' To do so will put him in the class of those who say: 'My Lord delayeth His Coming' (Luke 12:42-48), and he will become preoccupied with other things and neglect to be watchful. Let us live as if we expected the Return of our Lord at any moment" (*ibid.*, p. 17). "In the two passages quoted above [1 Cor. 15:51-52 and 1 Thess. 4:13-17] Paul, by the use of the pronoun 'we,' has five times included himself as possibly to be among the living ones at the time of the Lord's call for His bride. This precludes a doubt as to the belief of the great Apostle in the imminent, personal, premillennial return of Christ. This hope was evidently his greatest motive for true character and service. So it has been to the great missionaries and soul-winners since his day" (Chafer, *KHP*, 77%). "Very much must yet be fulfilled, according to Scripture, before the events connected with the visible return of Christ to the earth are to occur (2 Thess. 2:1-10). In contradistinction, however, no prophecy remains unfulfilled which in its order precedes the coming into the air to call for His own (1 Thess. 4:13-18), other than that the outgathered bride shall have made herself ready; and, therefore, that coming to call His own is the next event in the prophetic program" (*ibid.*, 76%). "The coming of Christ to receive His Bride has never been made to await some total world-wide evangelization" (Chafer, *ST*, 5:123). "...the keystone of pretribulationism—the doctrine of imminence" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 169) "There will be no warning before the rapture, differing with posttribulationists who postulate a preparation signal of seven years" (*ibid.*, p. 305). "The central feature of pretribulationism, the doctrine of imminency, is, however, a prominent feature of the doctrine of the early church. Without facing all the problems that the doctrine of imminency raises, such as its relation to the Tribulation, the early church lived in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord for His church" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 51). "Generally speaking, the early church fathers, as well as the Protestant Reformers, tended to identify contemporary events with the events of the Great Tribulation and because of this could look for the imminent return of Christ" (*ibid.*). "The Didache (A.D. 120) contains the exhortation, 'Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ye ready, for ye know not the hour in which our Lord

cometh.’ It would seem from this quotation that the coming of the Lord is considered as possible in any hour, indicating belief in the imminency of the Lord’s return” (*ibid.*, p. 52). “The general impression one receives from reading the early church fathers is that they followed a posttribulational interpretation similar to the false teachers whom Paul rebuked in 2 Thessalonians 2, who had taught the Thessalonians that they were already in the day of the Lord” (*ibid.*). “It is rather the case that the viewpoint of the early church was not detailed and mature” (*ibid.*). “The charge that the doctrine of imminency is a new and novel doctrine is false, but the charge that pretribulationism has been developed and defined to a large extent in recent centuries is true” (*ibid.*, p. 53). “The history of the doctrine of the church has always to this hour revealed progress in other areas, and it is to be expected that this will continue also in eschatology” (*ibid.*, p. 54). “The facts are that both Calvin and Luther, as well as other prominent Reformers, tended to identify the events of the Great Tribulation with their own contemporary history; and accordingly the concept of imminency became more prominent, even though the Reformers were amillennial and posttribulational” (*ibid.*). “Through much of the history of the church, the apparent conflict between the concept of imminency and the necessity of intermediate events before the Second Advent continue to be a problem, with no complete solution until pretribulationism—placing the Rapture before end-time events—was advanced” (*ibid.*). “...the Protestant Reformers, such as John Calvin and Martin Luther, who found in contemporary events of their day the fulfillment of the Great Tribulation and could, therefore, hold to an imminent return of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 69). “For the most part, scriptural evidence for imminency today is equivalent to proof of the pretribulation viewpoint” (*ibid.*, p. 73). “In 1 Corinthians 1:7, Paul exhorted the Corinthians to ‘eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed,’ which is another mention of the coming of the Lord when He will be revealed in His glory to the church. In Titus 2:13 our future hope is described: ‘While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.’ While the appearing of the glory of Christ to the world and to Israel will not be fulfilled until the Second Coming to establish the kingdom on earth, the church will see the glory of Christ when she meets Him in the air. This is the express teaching of 1 John 3:2: ‘But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is’” (*ibid.*, p. 74). “The teaching of the coming of the Lord for the church is always presented as an imminent event that should occupy the Christian’s thought and life to a large extent” (*ibid.*, p. 75). “Especially those committed to amillenarianism reject the prophetic outlook of the early church, which was

both premillennial and anticipating the imminent return of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 137). “The early church fathers were posttribulational largely because they held to the doctrine of imminency” (*ibid.*) “How the coming of the Lord could be a daily expectation as is indicated by the early Fathers and at the same time have a lengthy series of events preceding the Second Advent was apparently not resolved in the early church” (*ibid.*, p. 156). “In light of what has been seen, it is the conviction of this author that the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ is truly biblical and should be believed by all Christians” (Showers, *M*, p. 147). “All the other Rapture views teach that at least part of the 70th week must transpire before Christ can come to rapture the church. Those views therefore destroy the New Testament teaching of the imminent coming of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 255). “The Rapture of the Church has no preconditions and can come at any moment” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 781). “John 21:20-23... Romans 13:11-12... James 5:7-9... Revelation 22:20... these last four passages teach that the Rapture is imminent; He could come at any moment. Only if the Rapture comes before the Tribulation can this be true. In Midtribulationism, the Rapture is always at least 3 1/2 years away. In posttribulationism it is at least seven years away. It is never imminent” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 153). “...the Rapture is a signless and imminent event. It may happen at any moment, and nothing needs to be fulfilled before it occurs, as numerous passages attest” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:616). “The concepts of eagerly awaiting, coming quickly, and being near all encourage belief in Christ’s imminent return. As imminent, it will be signless, and as signless, it will have to be pretribulational, since once the Tribulation begins the end of the seven years could be predicted accurately” (*ibid.*).

Duration of the Rapture

The *duration* of the Rapture, i.e., just how much time will elapse during the rapture process, including the Lord’s descending from heaven, the dead in Christ rising first, then the living being caught up together with them in the clouds and meeting the Lord in the air, Scripture does not specify. However, Scripture does specify that the bodily “change” from perishable to imperishable, from mortal to immortal, will be instantaneous, “in the twinkling of an eye.” “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye**, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and

this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory’” (1 Cor. 15:51–54). “For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**, and thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thes. 4:16–17). “the first resurrection takes only ‘the twinkling of an eye’ (1 Cor. 15:52)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:273).

Attitudes Toward the Rapture

As we have just seen, the Rapture of the church is an imminent event; one that could actually occur at any moment. However, as prophesied, the twenty-first century professing church is largely profoundly asleep concerning her imminent “catching up.” It is therefore a major purpose of this book to encourage those apparently few believers in the church “with ears to hear” to wakefulness and expectancy concerning our Lord’s promised return for us.

The Proper Attitude of the Christian Toward the Rapture

Scripture, as exemplified in the forty passages quoted in this paragraph, is exceptionally plain and clear regarding *the proper attitude of the Christian toward the Rapture* of the church. “And **what I say to you I say to all, “Be on the alert”**” (Mark 13:37)! “**Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap**; for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But **keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man**” (Luke 21:34-36). “There is the supplication to *watch* (Luke 21:34-36) for the purpose of escaping the Tribulation. Throughout the Olivet Discourse, to *watch* means ‘to be ready.’ Watching is the equivalent of readiness, and readiness is equivalent to salvation. So the means of escaping the Tribulation is by means of salvation. Only those who accept the Messiah before the Rapture of the Church can be ready and watching. Luke gives two reasons for watching. *First*: that believers may *escape all these things that shall come to pass* during the Tribulation. What Luke states should not be missed. He points out that the Tribulation will *come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth* (v. 35). In other words, no one living on the earth can escape

the effects of the Tribulation. It will fall upon *all* earth-dwellers. Luke also states there is a possibility to *prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass* (v. 36). This is not possible if one is *on* the earth. Hence, to escape *all these things*, one must be *off* the earth. Second: that the believer might *stand before the Son of man* in Heaven. This will be the result of the Rapture: we *stand before the Son of man* and by standing before Him, we escape *all these things*. Both of these things can only be accomplished by the Rapture, and that is why to *watch* is to be saved” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 642). “You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not **analyze this present time**” (Luke 12:56)? “And not only this, but also **we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body**” (Rom. 8:23). “so that you are not lacking in any gift, **awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who shall also confirm you to the end, **blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Cor. 1:7-8). “Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but **thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord**” (1 Cor. 15:51-58). “just as you also partially did understand us, that **we are your reason to be proud as you also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus**” (2 Cor. 1:14). “For **I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus**” (Phil. 1:6). “so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to **be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ**” (Phil. 1:10) “**Do all things without grumbling or disputing; that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach** in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, **holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory** because I did not run

in vain nor toil in vain” (Phil. 2:14-16). **“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself”** (Phil. 3:20-21). **“If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them”** (Col. 3:1-7). **“and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come”** (1 Thes. 1:10). **“For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy”** (1 Thes. 2:19-20). **“so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints”** (1 Thes. 3:13). **“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words”** (1 Thes. 4:13-18). **“Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you**

like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But **since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing**” (1 Thes. 5:1-11). **“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass”** (1 Thes. 5:23-24). **“that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (1 Tim. 6:14) **“in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing”** (2 Tim. 4:8). **“instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”** (Titus 2:12-13) **“Faussett (Com. Tit. 2:13) incidentally remarks, ‘there is but one Greek article to both ‘hope’ and ‘appearing,’ which marks their close connection”** (Peters, *TTK*, 3:313) **“so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him”** (Heb. 9:28). **“Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains”** (James 5:7). **“who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ”** (1 Pet. 1:5-7) **“Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”** (1 Pet. 1:13). **“but to the degree**

that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation” (1Pet 4:13). **“And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen”** (1 Pet. 5:10-11). **“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells”** (2 Pet. 3:10-13). **“Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen”** (2 Pet. 3:14-18). **“And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming”** (1 John. 2:28). **“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure”** (1 John. 3:2-3). **“keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life”** (Jude 1:21). **“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen”** (Jude 1:24-25). **“Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come”** (Rev. 2:25). **“Remember therefore**

what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you” (Rev. 3:3). **“Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”** (Rev. 3:10-13). **“And he said to me, “These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place. And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book”** (Rev. 22:6-7). **“And he said to me, ‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.’ ‘Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.’ Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying”** (Rev. 22:10-15) **“And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost”** (Rev. 22:17). **“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen”** (Rev. 22:20-21). **“The term *quickly* applies to the return of the Messiah at the Rapture from God’s perspective. God is not bound to time as we know it, and the past and future are as vivid to Him as the present. For the believer, the term emphasizes imminency, meaning He could come at any moment. Although almost two thousand years have passed since this affirmation, nevertheless, the saints are always to be ready and looking for the appearing of the Son of God”** (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 540). **“...believers to fix their**

fond expectations of the Kingdom upon the Sec. Coming, and not on the First” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:445). “The two Syriac words Maran-atha (the Lord is about to come) became the watchword of the Christians among themselves” (*ibid.*, p. 472) “...the Chiliastic posture of ‘every hour expecting the Kingdom of God’” (*ibid.*, p. 495). “...the church as a struggling, tried body awaiting deliverance and triumph alone through the personal Advent of the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 514) “The church occupies the position of waiting (e.g. 1 Pet. 1:7, 13) for this Revelation of Jesus as King” (*ibid.*, p. 597). “Oosterzee (*Ch. Dog.*, vol. 2, sec. 146, etc.)... remarks... ‘the personal return of the Lord... the life of watchfulness, patience, and heavenly mindedness, it is the soul and power... history makes abundantly manifest, that when this prospect has temporarily receded from the Christian consciousness, the spiritual life also has declined,’ etc.” (*ibid.*, 2:167) “A caution is requisite: the doctrine of the Sec. Advent to be fully and practically beneficial is not simply to be confined to a belief in its mode (i.e. personal) or time of occurrence (i.e. Pre-Millennial), but must be extended to a just apprehension of its greatness, importance, and glory as a Theocratic ordering. The heart must not rest satisfied with a mere knowledge of the manner and time, but must receive both the grand fact as a realization of Covenant promise with its blessed redemptive results, and the application of the same to ourselves personally, i.e. our interest in it, etc. It is to be feared that this doctrine, like all others, may be held purely speculatively, theoretically, without exerting a practical influence upon the life. Unless it be, as James expresses it, an ‘engrafted word’ exerting a sanctifying influence, urging to duty, etc., it will be of little benefit” (*ibid.*, p. 196). “The ‘morning star’ comes before ‘the day’ dawns; the ‘sun’ shines during ‘the day;’ Jesus is both. As the morning star, He is seen by few: as the sun, He is seen by all. Those who watch not merely for the sun, but for the morning star, properly heed the cautions and injunctions relating to the posture of watching” (*ibid.*, p. 317). “...be, as Jesus advises, in the posture of watching servants” (*ibid.*, p. 460). “We should encourage our hearts, as Moses did, by contemplating this great change, thus increasing love, desire, hope, and joy. Let us endeavor to appreciate its excellency, its nearness, its nobility, its spirituality, its blissfulness, and it will enlarge our boldness, firmness, patience, cheerfulness, and submission” (*ibid.*, p. 617). “...the commanded posture of constant watching” (*ibid.*, p. 718) “The doctrine is one thing; the exact period of its realization is another, the former may be true, and the latter may be a mistake. Dr. Cumming in *The Great Tribulation* (p. 197)... adds: ‘And far better have the character of him who intently looks, and in his intense longing treats that as a sign which is not, than the sceptic and freezing apathy of the man whose heart is

dead and whose hopes are cold, and who cares for and looks for none of these things” (*ibid.*, 3:92). “...watch, etc., as the Spirit enjoins (for our personal good)” (*ibid.*, p. 100) “Lange’s declaration (Matt. p. 430): ‘Therefore be ye also ready’—Because it is the fundamental law of watchfulness to be always watching; and because the Son of Man will be generally unexpected when He comes—therein like a thief in the night, that is, at a time when the world will be buried in profound sleep” (*ibid.*, p. 108). “Three extremes are to be avoided: (1) to fix definite, positive time; (2) to ignore the signs; (3) and to encourage any interpretation or application that forbids or hinders a daily posture of watching” (*ibid.*, p. 114). “It is, therefore, doing injustice to believers in the past to say, that they were credulous and foolish, to look for the Advent, seeing that they were mistaken, etc.; on the contrary, it evinces their faith in God’s Word and their conscientiousness in occupying the commanded position when beholding them they believed, thus showing love and desire for the blessed hope, etc. Let them indeed be mistaken in their apprehension of its nearness, yet the observance of such faith, the practical results attained by it, the honoring of Christ evinced by it, the hope and prayer elicited by it, etc., will not—as little as the cup of water—fail in its reward at the Revelation of Jesus. The shortness of time in the Spirit’s comprehension, is indeed brief; these preparatory dispensations, when compared with the eternal ages that follow, are but of short duration; and since these utterances were given, and these worthies thus believed, the length of this dispensation has been so materially shortened that prudence alone dictates, aside from other considerations pressed, the faith, hopes and longings inspired by these signs—thus constantly augmenting, accumulating, and becoming more and more distinctive—as ever presented by godly men who ‘love the appearing.’ Better, a thousand times better, be mistaken as to time, than to ignore those signs and be caught faithless, unobservant, and worthy of rebuke” (*ibid.*, p. 166). “While Millenarianism is something very different from Millerism, it has often occurred to the writer that it would even be far preferable to occupy Miller’s position, mistaken as it was in reference to time, to the Millennial age, etc., than to be indifferent as multitudes of professing Christians are, both to the signs and the Advent. Mr. Miller at least honored Christ’s Word, and however mistaken in particulars (which his followers, we are told, pressed beyond his more prudent opinions) yet the principle involved of watching for Christ’s Advent is a just one, eminently scriptural, and will redound, if not now, in the age to come, to his honor. The same is true of others; for while unable to accept of their particularizing, or of their prophetic schemes in the order laid down by them, yet the evident love and desire for ‘the appearing’ which prompted

their labors, the urgency of entreaty and warning to occupy the biblical position of watching servants, has so commended them to us, with all their faults, that we must highly esteem them as brethren beloved. If there is any force in the scriptural cautions and injunctions upon this point, we must believe, provided true Christian character is maintained therewith, such will stand immensely higher and nearer to the King than many, now leaders in the Church, who take a pleasure to show off their wit and sarcasm at others' expense. The reviling, scorning, deriding, sneering, etc., will in either case meet with its due reward. God is the Judge, and not man; whoever honored His Word—feebly, brokenly it may be—will be honored by Him” (*ibid.*, p. 167). “It is to us, whatever it may prove to others, cheering evidence of the inspiration of the Word that it is so formed, that, instead of giving positive certainty as to time, it points us to signs which are calculated, eminently so by reason of a continuous fulfillment, to impress and lead us, if only considered, to watch. This indefinite and yet sign impressing imminency is to us decided proof of the Divine wisdom; man could not—as man’s failures and man’s precipitancy evidence—have so presented the matter as to cause every succeeding age to respond more or less to the practically intended result, viz. to preserve, in view of a constantly recurring contingency indicated by constantly recurring witnessed signs, a constant state of vigilance. In conclusion: let the frequency with which the Spirit presents the Sec. Advent, and the signs preceding and connected with it, be regarded; let the mighty issues related with the same bearing heavily upon the individual believer (in cautions respecting personal responsibility in watching), the Church (multitudes in it, being taken unprepared and unobservant of Divine direction) and the world (scoffing at the whole subject) be contemplated; let the happiness and reward of the watching servant, and the rebuke and loss of the unvigilant be pondered; and surely we are not wrong in thus urging all to occupy this believing position. If the Word makes it so prominent and important; if so much that is desirable is identified with it; if the neglect of it is both an act of disobedience and dangerous; if a completeness of Christian attitude and character requires it; surely we cannot make it less prominent and desirable. Here then is our apology, if in the estimation of any one an excuse is needed, for holding forth upon these scriptural topics, and urging the warnings given by Christ and the apostles” (*ibid.*). “Again we urge professors of religion, believers in the Bible, to consider that, if their affections are really fixed on Christ—if He is all in all—this subject instead of being unwelcome ought, in virtue of their profession and love, to be intensely interesting and desirable. This looking for the Advent, expressive of faith, hope, love, and obedience, is described as the

crowning excellence of God's gifts in 1 Cor. 1:7 'so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' (thus confirming 'the testimony of Jesus' Rev. 1:3). On this passage Olshausen appropriately remarks: 'The expectation of Christ's Coming is a testimony of inward spiritual life, and one of the fruits of faith; for this "waiting" (Rom. 8:9) is not a dry historical assertion of the fact that the Lord will return again one day, but the expression of an earnest desire for it, which is not to be conceived without love, faith, and hope, 1 Cor. 13:13.' Barnes *loci*, says: 'An earnest wish to see Him, and a confident expectation and firm belief that He will return, is an evidence of a high state of piety. It demands strong faith, and it will do much to elevate the feelings above the world, and to keep the mind in a state of peace.' Dr. Seiss (*the Apoc.*, p. 85) alluding to the 'efficacy and power in the doctrine of Christ's speedy return,' adds: 'It is the most animating and most sanctifying subject in the Bible. It is the soul's serenest light amid the darkness and trials of earth,' etc." (*ibid.*) "the Westminster Confession: 'So will He have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, Amen'" (*ibid.*, p. 168). "A believer in the Kingdom, as covenanted, predicted, preached, postponed, connected with the Sec. Advent, etc., in the very nature of the case occupies the position of the Primitive Church, and looks, longs, and prays for the Coming One" (*ibid.*, p. 217). "...the last communication of Jesus: 'Behold, I come as a thief,' 'Surely I come quickly'" (*ibid.*, p. 239) "the duty of looking for the Coming of the Saviour... Both the thief-like stage and the open Parousia demand this attitude and qualification. The special favor and blessing of the Son of Man, the glorious Theocratic King, can only be secured by the acceptance of His instructions, and a manifested obedience to the same" (*ibid.*, p. 308). "as Seiss (*Par. Ten Virgins*, p. 150) says: 'As Christians, set to be and to do all that we can for ourselves and that Redeemer who has bought us with His blood, His return was never meant to be a terror to us, but a joy and the essence of our gladdest hope. That day is to be our happiest day—the day when all present woes and disabilities shall cease—the day of release from servitude and toil, the day of return from exile and privation, the day of triumph and everlasting jubilee, the day when our Saviour will take us to Himself, to be with Him and like Him forever'" (*ibid.*, p. 309). "Alas! How many hopes are substituted for the Sec. Advent and its related blessings. One has death, another the First Advent; one has Christianity, another development; one has the law, another the Gospel; one has education, another humanity; one has science, another philosophy; one has Spiritualism, an-

other has the Church with its sacraments; one has some special dogma, another the progression of the Spirit, etc., so that numerous hopes are substituted for the Biblical one. It also is not observed that the Old and New Testaments are identical in, and united in, the same Hope... The realization of Hope, as presented in the covenants and promises of salvation, is invariably linked in the Scriptures with the still future Sec. Advent of the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 310). “If so prominent in the Scriptures, how can professed Christians censure us for holding it forth prominently, and urging special attention to it?... It is thus impressively presented in order that every believer may ‘love His appearing,’ and when such love is not entertained, it is strong evidence that the heart and life is not right; that the professor is unprepared for such an appearing; that he entertains a false hope. Every consideration urges us (1 Pet. 1:13) to ‘gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us of at the revelation of Jesus Christ’” (*ibid.*, p. 313). “Hope is the root of a Christian’s happiness... Brown (*Christ’s Sec. Coming*, p. 18), referring to this absence of the Bridegroom and His promised return, says that it would be ‘incongruous not to cherish the feeling of desolation in His absence. And never do we please Christ so much as when we “refuse to be comforted,” even with His own consolations, save in the prospect of His personal return’ (comp. John 16:19-22)” (*ibid.*, p. 314). “Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, ‘Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, “A little while, and you will not behold Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me’? Truly, truly, I say to you, that **you will weep and lament**, but the world will rejoice; **you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned to joy**. Whenever a woman is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she remembers the anguish no more, for joy that a child has been born into the world. Therefore **you too now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice**, and no one takes your joy away from you’” (John 16:19–22). “Dr. Willis Lord concludes his little volume, *The Blessed Hope*, as follows: “The New Testament saints look forward to the Second Coming of Christ. This is their Polar Star” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 319). “Ignorance of the nature and results of ‘the Blessed Hope’... an ignorance... utterly unjustifiable in any believer of the Scriptures” (*ibid.*, p. 320). “We live a life of faith, and faith honors God and His Christ” (*ibid.*). “Lisco (*On the Parables*, p. 183) remarks: ‘The believers of the old covenant looked for the Coming of Messiah, Isa. 60:1 ss. and 64:1; Luke 2:25. The believers who live under the new covenant look for His Second Coming, Phil. 3:21; Heb. 9:28; Tit. 2:13... this expectancy toward Christ’s Coming and preparation for it, is the leading

purpose and main concern of all true Christians, Col. 3:1” (*ibid.*, p. 326) “Is not the coming glory nearer and more certain when depending upon His promised return in resistless power and splendor, than when depending upon any human progress the world has ever known? One is the majestic movement of the Divine program in fulfillment of every covenant: while the other is the vain dream of the world in its ignorance and disregard of the testimony of God” (Chafer, *S*, C3:14/29). “The program of Satan, which the world calls ‘optimistic’ rests on the Satanic purpose of a reformed society: the program of God, which is called ‘pessimistic’ in that it discredits this age, rests upon the infinite wisdom, love and power of God; and is so certain and near that the believer is taught to watch, wait, and be ready for the first Divine movement toward this glorious end” (*ibid.*, C6:18/19). “It is a direct contradiction to claim supreme affection for Him, and yet be careless of His promised return, or wholly contented while separated from Him” (*ibid.*, C10:2/36). “We did not turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for death; but rather to ‘wait for his Son from heaven’ (1 Thess. 1:9, 10)” (Chafer, *KHP*, 78%). “In those Scriptures which warn Israel of the future coming of her Messiah, that nation is told that they should watch for His coming since that coming will be unexpected (Matt 24:36-51; 25:13). Over against this and for the same reason, the Christian is told to wait for his Lord from heaven (1 Thes 1:9-10)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:23). “An instructed believer is not looking for a long life; he is waiting for his Lord from heaven” (*ibid.*, 5:104). “Those appointed to ‘wait for his Son [their Lord] from heaven’ are not to be looking for a long life in this sphere. Citizens of heaven hold no rights to earth in the sight of God” (*ibid.*, p. 321). “Besides making Christ known to all who do not know Him by saving faith, the believer is to ‘live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ’ (Tit. 2:11-14)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 155). “It is the Person who is emphasized in all the passages dealing with the glorious expectation of the church rather than the place which they are taken” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 562). “Since throughout the New Testament the saved of the present age are urged to an attitude of constant expectancy, it is only logical to find that the very first act in the Lord’s *parousia* will concern *them*” (McClain, *GK*, p. 375). “Is it an unworthy motive to desire to escape the Great Tribulation? Actually it is no more so than the desire to escape hell. The point in either case is not our desire or wishes but the question as to what the Scriptures promise” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 225). “Another element in the revelation in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 is the exhortation that is attached to the doctrine of the Rapture. In verse 58 Paul stated, ‘Therefore,

my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.’ The doctrine of the Rapture, whenever mentioned in the Bible, is always related to practical application. In John 14:2 it is to the point that we should not be troubled in view of the coming of the Lord. In 1 Thessalonians 4 it is a comforting or encouraging hope. In 1 John 3:2-3 it is a purifying hope. Here the Rapture is used as an exhortation to us to be faithful, standing firm in our faith, letting nothing move us, and giving ourselves at all times fully to the work of the Lord” (*ibid.*, p. 251). “The assurance of that appearing is a source of great joy to Christians because that appearing will bring incredibly happy changes for them, such as the loss of their sin nature and the reception of an immortal body” (Showers, *M*, p. 135). “Christians should continuously be ready for His coming by constantly having their lives in order” (*ibid.*, p. 139). “Charles H. Spurgeon: ... ‘I dare not go where I should be ashamed to be found should my Lord come on a sudden’” [quoting Charles H. Spurgeon, *12 Sermons on the Second Coming of Christ*, p. 134] (*ibid.*). “Let me be ever asking myself, at every moment, If he were to appear now, would I have confidence?... Let us then be always abiding in him; every day, every hour, every instant; even as we would wish to be found abiding in him, were he to appear this very day, this very hour, this very instant. He is about to appear; to appear suddenly; to come quickly” [quoting Robert S. Candlish, *The First Epistle of John*, p. 213] (*ibid.*, p. 140). “Church saints are to be concerned about ultimate reality, God’s plan and purpose for history, and the implications of these things for them... ‘be on the alert, be watchful’... sobriety... Paul used the word translated ‘sober’ in a figurative sense, thus meaning to ‘be free fr. every form of mental and spiritual “drunkenness”, fr. excess. passion, rashness, confusion, etc., be well-balanced, self-controlled.’ [quoting Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 540]... church saints are to be continuously free from all fuzzy thinking or wrong concepts concerning ultimate reality. They are to continuously acknowledge the reality revealed by God and to live and minister in the well-balanced, self-controlled manner required by that reality” (*ibid.*, p. 203). “...when Paul stated that church saints should put on the helmet of the hope of salvation, he was indicating that they should protect their minds with the certainty of being delivered from the wrathful first phase of the broad Day of the Lord. Their minds should not be tormented by uncertainty as to whether they will or will not be overtaken by that phase” (*ibid.*, p. 204). “...present-day church saints have their ‘conversation’ (lit., ‘commonwealth, state’) in heaven. Therefore, they should be waiting eagerly for Christ to come from heaven and take

them there (Phil. 3:19-20), and should be setting their minds on things ‘above,’ not on things ‘on the earth’ (Col. 3:2)” (*ibid.*, p. 216). “The imminent coming of Christ should have an incredible practical effect on the lives of individual Christians and the church as a whole. The fact that the glorified, holy Son of God could step through the door of heaven at any moment is intended by God to be the most pressing, incessant motivation for holy living and aggressive ministry (including missions, evangelism, and Bible teaching) and the greatest cure for lethargy and apathy. It should make a major difference in every Christian’s values, actions, priorities, and goals” (*ibid.*, p. 255). “Since the imminent coming of Christ is intended to have such a tremendous practical effect on the lives of individual Christians and the church as a whole, and since all views of the Rapture except the pretribulation view destroy the New Testament teaching of the imminent coming of Christ, we can conclude that the issue of when the Rapture of the church will take place really does matter. **MARANATHA—Our Lord, Come**” (*ibid.*, p. 256)! “Believing that time is limited, that Christ may come at any moment, and that the eternal status of human souls is in the balance heightens the realization that any hour might be our last to reach someone for Jesus” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:567). “...a pretribulation Rapture... containing strong motivation for holiness in the here-and-now, knowing we may meet our Maker at any moment (1 John 3:2-3)” (*ibid.*, p. 635). “Ignatius of Antioch [*Epistle to Polycarp*, 1,3] (d. c. 110)... ‘Be watchful, possessing a sleepless spirit’” (*ibid.*, p. 656)

The *effects on the Christian of the proper attitude toward the Rapture* (as connected with the broader Second Coming) are deep and wide. They include sanctification, love for the brethren, encouragement for ministry and zeal for evangelism. “**And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book**” (Rev. 22:7). “Nearly every Millenarian work has something to say on the practical nature of the doctrine, and has a chapter or more devoted to the subject... the hope of the nearness of the Sec. Advent... it is a chief characteristic of the true Christian” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:320). “Alford (*Com. loci*) justly makes this posture of ‘waiting’ to be ‘the greatest proof of maturity and richness of the spiritual life; implying the co-existence and co-operation of faith, whereby they believed the promise of Christ—hope, whereby they looked on to its fulfillment—and love, whereby that anticipation was lit up with earnest desire.’... Barnes... He says on 1 Cor. 1:7, the waiting: ‘...it will do much to elevate the feelings above the world, and to keep the mind in a state of peace.’... Dr. M’Caul (*The Blessed Hope*) well remarks: ‘The practice of waiting for the Sec. Advent is an essential feature in the character of a

true Christian.’ Calvin (quoted, Lange’s *Com.* 1 Pet. 4:7) took the same view when he said: ‘It ought to be the chief concern of believers to fix their minds fully on His Sec. Advent.’ Luther, in his ‘Sermon of Consolation’ (p. 23; quoted *Proph. Times*, vol. 12, p. 151) pointedly remarks: ‘If thou be not filled with a desire after the Coming of this day, thou canst never pray the Lord’s prayer, nor canst thou repeat from thy heart the creed of faith. For with what conscience canst thou say, “I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting,” if thou dost not in thy heart desire the same? If thou didst believe it, thou must, of necessity, desire it from thy heart, and long for that day to come; which, if thou dost not desire, thou art not yet a Christian, nor canst thou boast of thy faith.’ (It has been well remarked: ‘The application of such a rule as this to the churches of Christendom would unchristianize many in our day.’)... Olshausen on 1 Thess 1:10, affirms that ‘to wait for the Son of God is the most appropriate mark of a true Christian,’ and Auberlen (*Langels Com. loci*) says: ‘The Apostle defines the life aim of the converts into two particulars, the service of God and the waiting for the return of His Son from heaven,’ and (*Hom. and Prac.*), ‘The Christian is a man who serves God and waits for Jesus.’... Van Oosterzee (Lange’s *Com.* 2 *Tim.*, p. 114) declares ‘The affectionate longing for the appearing of the Lord in glory, presupposes a high degree of spiritual life; and, on the other side, is admirably fitted to nourish, to perfect, to purify that life’ (*ibid.*, p. 322). “It is only requisite to point out how the New Test. uses the doctrine of the Second Advent, in order to show how essential it is to Christian doctrine, duty, and character. This we will do in the briefest manner. It is given: 1, to interest us in a blessed coming, Matt. 23:39; Luke 13:35 and 21:27; 2 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13; Rev. 22:7, 20, 2, to encourage faithfulness by a reward, Matt. 16:27 and 24:47; 2 Thess. 1:7-11; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:12, 3, to bring out the hope of reward in a ‘regeneration,’ Matt. 19:28, 29; Acts 3:19-21, 4, to avoid deception, Matt. 24:23-27; Luke 17:23, 24; 2 Tim. 4:1-5, 5, to hold forth the culmination of the age, Matt. 24:30, etc., 6, to show the condition of the world, Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-30; 1 Thess. 5:1-4, 7, to teach a translation, Matt. 24:39-41; Luke 17:34-36; 1 Thess. 4:17, 8, to urge to watchfulness, Matt. 24:42 and 25:13; Mark 13:33, 37; Luke 12:35-37 and 21:34-36; 1 Thess. 5:4-6; Rev. 16:15, 9, to influence to constant readiness, Matt. 24:44 and 25:1-13 and 22:11; Luke 12:35-40, 10, to incite ministerial fidelity, Matt. 24:45-47; Luke 12:42-44; 1 Thess. 2:19, 20; 2 Tim. 4:1-5; 1 Pet. 5:1-4, 11, to rebuke ministerial unfaithfulness, Matt. 24:48-51; Luke 12:45-48, 12, to teach the condition of the Church, Matt. 25:1-12; Luke 18:8; 2 Thess. 2:1-12, 13, to hold forth coming judgment, Matt. 25:19, 27, 31-46; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Jude 14-16; Rev. 1:7 and 19:11-16, 14,

to show us His majesty and glory, Matt. 26:64 and 25:31 and 24:30; Mark 13:26 and 14:61, 15, to a confession of Christ, Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26, 16, to incite prayer, Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36; 1 Pet. 4:7; Rev. 22:20, 17, to waiting, 2 Thess. 3:5; 1 Cor. 1:7; 1 Thess. 1:10; Luke 12:36, 18, to expectation and looking, Tit. 2:13; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 9:28; 2 Pet. 3:12, 14; Rev. 1:7, 19, to love and desire, 2 Tim. 4:8; Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:2; Rev. 22:20; Tit. 2:13, 20, to promised honor, Luke 12:37, 39; Matt. 24:46, 47; 1 Pet. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 5:4, 21, to occupation during postponement of Kingdom, Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 25: 14-30, 22, to encourage joy and peace in approaching redemption, Luke 21:28; John 16:16-33; 1 Thess. 1:10, 23, to impart comfort, John 14:1-3, 28; 2 Thess. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:12, 24, to bestow assurance, Acts 1:11 and 3:19-21; Rom. 11:26; Luke 21:34, 36, 25, to test character, 1 Thess. 1:9, 10 and 5:4-9; 1 Cor. 1:7, 8, 26, to avoid misjudging, 1 Cor. 4:5, 27, to remembrance and celebration of His Coming, 1 Cor. 11:26, 28, to inspire hope in the resurrection, 1 Cor. 15:23; Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18, 29, to inculcate moderation, Phil. 4:5, 30, to excite heavenly mindedness, Col. 3:1-4, 31, to arouse brotherly love, 1 Thess. 3:12, 13, 32, to future rejoicing in successful labor, 1 Thess. 2:19, 20, 33, to sanctification, 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 3:2, 3, 34, to comfort in bereavement, 1 Thess. 4:19, 35, to urge steadfastness, 2 Thess. 2:1, 2; 1 Tim. 6:14; 1 Pet. 5:4, 36, to consideration of Antichrist and his doom, 2 Thess. 2:8, 37, to infuse diligence and activity, 2 Tim. 4:1-8; 2 Pet. 3:14, 38, to mortification of the flesh, Col. 3:4, 5; Tit. 2:12, 13; Luke 21:34; 2 Pet. 3:12, 39, to soberness, 1 Pet. 1:13; 1 Thess. 5:6; Phil. 4:5, 40, to regard it as the great hope, Tit. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:13; Col. 3:4, 41, to induce perseverance, Rev. 2:25 and 3:3, 11, 42, to an abiding with Christ, 1 John 2:28 and 3:2, 43, to patience under trial, James 5:7, 8; 2 Thess. 3:5 and 1:4-10; 1 Pet. 4:12, 13, 44, to patience, Heb. 10:36, 37; James 5:7, 45, to a proclamation, Tit. 2:11-15; 1 Cor. 1:4-10; 2 Tim. 4:1-8, 46, to suitable preparation, Rev. 16:15, 47, to urge men to turn to God, Acts 3:19-21; Rev. 3:3, 48, to enforce obedience, 1 Tim. 4:13, 14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 49, to bring salvation, Heb. 9:28, and 50, to coming gladness and exceeding joy, 1 Pet. 4:13” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:323) “This can be greatly enlarged, as e.g. pertaining: 1, to induce sincerity, Phil. 1:9-10, 2, to holy conversation and godliness, 2 Pet. 3:11-13, 3, to brotherly love, 1 Thess. 3:2, 13, 4, to confidence, Phil. 1:6, 5, to a hope of a crown, Rev. 3:11, 6, to manifestation of saints, 2 Cor. 5:16; Col. 3:4, 7, to retribution, 2 Thess. 2:7, 8, 8, to promised dominion and authority, Matt. 16:27; 1 Cor. 4:5, etc., 9, to future kingship and priesthood, Rev. 1:6, 10, to reigning on the earth, Rev. 5:10, and 20:4, 11, to Jewish restoration, conversion, and supremacy, Rom. 11:15, etc., 12, to the binding of Satan, Rev. 20:1-6, 13, to the deliverance of creation, Rom. 8:19-23, and 14, to

the new heavens and new earth, 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1; 15, to the New Jerusalem, Rev. 21:10, etc. Any reader of the present work will see the multiplicity of subjects with which our doctrine stands related and interwoven. Hence the extreme significance of the adjuration of the Apostle, 2 Tim. 4:1-8 [**I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.** For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, **I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.**'] (comp. Lange, Conybeare and Howson, Alford, etc.)” (*ibid.*, p. 324) “Indeed, there is scarcely a subject in the Bible with which it is not linked, and upon which, either directly or indirectly, it does not impart information” (*ibid.*, p. 324). “Thus it defines and vindicates the Judgeship of Jesus, the inheriting of the earth, the perpetuation of the race, the intermediate state, the ‘world to come,’ the perpetuity of the earth, the ending of the age, a future revelation of the divine will, the unity of Scripture, the work of Christ for redemptive purposes, the entailment of the curse and its ultimate removal, the credibility and inspiration of the Scriptures, the Church and the Kingdom of God with the relation that the one sustains to the other, the divine Sovereignty and the Kingship of Jesus, the exaltation of the Christ, etc. It serves largely to explain Scripture, by furnishing the means which indicate the relationship of one part to the other. It enables us to discriminate what pertains to this, or to the future, dispensation. It enlightens us in reference to Providence and the history of the world, by showing the Theocratic Purpose and Plan, and the methods instituted in order to secure their final and complete accomplishment. It brings forth a perfect vindication of the preaching of the disciples, Apostles, and Primitive Church. It holds forth prominently and logically the postponement of the Kingdom to the Sec. Advent, assigning the reasons for the same. It enforces the mutual connection existing between the Old and New Test. It develops,

as no other can, the doctrine of election, the process of engrafting, and the continuation of the election. It gives to portions of the Word, as e.g. the transfiguration, temptation, etc., new force and beauty. It brings out with vividness and power the covenanted inheritance of the Son of David, and that of His co-heirs. It enables one to readily detect and avoid the erroneous interpretations placed on the covenants and the promises of God. It upholds and confirms the necessity of the Supernatural, the supremacy of Scripture, the study of prophecy, the faith of the pious Jews, and the watching posture of martyrs and confessors. It gives to us, what no other system presents so grandly, a perfect Redeemer and a perfect Redemption. Surely a doctrine which permeates and gives new life and vigor to so many other related doctrines; which lays its beautifying hand on so many subjects pertaining to our highest personal interests, must, in the nature of the case, be pre-eminently practical" (*ibid.*). "Dr. Dorner (*Person of Christ*, vol. 1, p. 409-15)... 'Chiliasm, therefore, was the form in which Christianity first gave conscious expression to the conviction of its destiny to rule the world. Chiliasm was the assertion of the fact, that Christianity is related, positively as well as negatively, to the world. Chiliasm declared that Christianity, by renouncing, was called to glorify the world'... Grosse (pastor at Bridford, England, 1647; quoted by *Lond. Quart. Journal of Proph.*, 1855, p. 194) declares: 'No man rightly desires Christ's Coming, but he that hath assurance of the good and benefit of His Coming. To them the day of Christ is as the day of harvest to the husbandman, as the day of deliverance to the prisoner, as the day of coronation to the king, as the day of wedlock to the bride—a day of triumph and exaltation, a day of freedom and consolation, a day of feat and satisfaction; to them the Lord Jesus is all sweetness, as wine to the palate and ointment to the nostril, saith Solomon; honey in the mouth, saith Bernard; music in the ear, and a jubilee in the heart. Get assurance of Christ's Coming, as a ransomer to redeem you, as a conqueror to subdue all your enemies under you, as a friend to comfort you, as a king to honor you, as a physician to heal you, as a bridegroom to marry you, and then shall you with confidence and boldness, with joy and gladness, with vehement and holy longings, say, "Come Lord Jesus.'" Col. Rawlandson (*Ch. Herald*, Oct. 30th, 1879) remarks: 'The Christian who puts away from him the doctrine of the Sec. Coming of the Lord puts away his strength, and is like a wounded lark, unable to soar to elevated heights. He who looks for reunion with his Lord only at the hour of death, is like the maimed bird, and cannot sing anything but Lenten dirges. It is a sad thing thus to shut out the comfort and joy of this precious hope.'... Lange's *Com. 1 Thess.* (p. 50) quotes Chrysostom as saying: 'To keep the Coming of the Lord at all times before

our eyes, that is to be likeminded with the Apostles” (*ibid.*, p. 326) “Philpot (*The Priest upon His Throne*, p. 285): ‘... “the day of the Lord will not overtake us as a thief in the night;” yea, rather, it will accomplish our “perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in His eternal and everlasting glory”’” (*ibid.*, p. 328). “...experience... like that of the gifted and saintly Hewitson, of whom his biographer says: “The blessed hope took its place thenceforth, not only in his understanding, but in his heart He not only believed in the speedy appearing—he loved it—waited for it—watched for it. “Faith,” we find him saying, “looks back to the cross, and is at peace; it looks forward to the crown, and pants for glory. Oh, to have more of the life and power of such a faith!” So mighty a motive power did it become, that he used to speak of it ever afterward as bringing with it a kind of second conversion. It is interwoven with the texture of his whole future life” (*ibid.*, p. 329). “Lange (*Com.*, Matt. 24) remarks: ‘Readiness for Christ’s Advent diffuses somewhat of the brightness of His future glorification over life”’ (*ibid.*, p. 330). “Watching for the Advent tends, necessarily, to wean men from the world, to make them solicitous to save others, to make them liberal in their contributions, to cause them to consume less in self-gratification, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 333) “As illustrative of the teachings of others on this point, we present, out of many, the following. Dr. Seiss (*Apoc.*, p. 31), after having referred to the prominence given to the Sec. Advent, etc., adds: “There is also a peculiar efficacy and power in the doctrine of Christ’s speedy return. Like a magnet, it lifts the heart of the believer out of the world and out of his low self, and enables him to stand with Moses on the mount, and transfigures him with the rays of blessed hope and promise which stream upon him in those sublime heights. It is the most animating and most sanctifying subject in the Bible. It is the soul’s serenest light amid the darkness and trials of earth. And the great aim and end of this book (*Apoc.*) is to set forth this doctrine. The things of which it treats are things touching the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ, and which it describes as “things which must shortly come to pass.” The impending Advent is the theme which pervades it from its commencement to its close. And just in proportion as he who is awake to the great truth of the Saviour’s speedy Coming, and is engaged in waiting and preparing himself accordingly, is a better man, and in a safer condition, and really more happy than the half-Christian and the lukewarm; in that same proportion is he who reads, hears and keeps the words of this prophecy blessed beyond other people. This book, at least its subject matter, thus becomes to him an instrument of security and attainment to save him from surprise when his Lord Cometh, and from the tribulations which shall try the indifferent, as well as a passport to admit him to the marriage supper of

the Lamb, and to the highest awards of eternity. Precious book! and happy they who study it.' Again (p. 54-55), 'John was present when that blessed One left the earth. He had heard the angels say, "Ye men of Galilee, this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). He had seen how "a cloud received Him out of sight," and thenceforward carried in his memory what the words of the angels authorized him to regard as a picture of something in the future to which he ever looked with the profoundest interest. And all the stupendous visions of the Apoc. did not for one moment disturb that picture, or divert his mind from it. However variously he may have been moved, as scene followed scene in the great exhibition of the Divine Purpose, the key-note, to which he ever returned, was the Coming and Kingdom of that ascended Lord. Even in all the long course of unending ages, that upon which his thoughts most firmly fastened was the Coming again of the Lord Jesus. With this he begins, with this he continues, and with this he ends. "He Cometh." Here is the great fact unequivocally stated. Christ has not gone to heaven to stay there. He has gone for His Church's benefit; and for His Church's benefit He will return again; not in spirit only, not in providence only, not in the mere removal of men by death, but in His own proper person as "the Son of Man." Few believe this, and still fewer lay it to heart. Many sneer at the very idea and would fain laugh down the people who are so simple as to entertain it. But it is nevertheless the immutable truth of God, predicted by all His prophets, promised by Christ Himself, confirmed by the testimony of angels, proclaimed by all the Apostles, believed by all the early Christians, acknowledged in all the Church creeds, sung of in all the Church hymnbooks, prayed about in all the Church liturgies, and entering so essentially into the very life and substance of Christianity that without it there is no Christianity, except a few maimed and mutilated relics too powerless to be worth the trouble or expense of preservation. That religion which does not look for a returning Saviour, or locate its highest hopes and triumphs in the judgment scenes for which the Son of Man must reappear, is not the religion of this book, and is without authority to promise salvation to its devotees. And those addresses to the churches which have no "Behold He Cometh" pervading or underlying them, have not been indited by "the Seven Spirits of God," nor sent by Him whose Apocalypse is the crown of the inspired Canon. Murmur at it, dispute it, despise it, mock at it, put it aside, hate it, and hide from it, as men may, it is a great fundamental article of the Gospel that that same blessed Lord, who ascended from Mount Olivet, and is now at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, shall come from thence to judge the quick and the dead, and

to stand again upon that very summit from which He went up. This is true, as Christ Himself is true; and “he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.” Amen.’ On the words ‘Even so, Amen,’ ch. 1:7, he (p. 59) says: ‘I find in them John’s acquiescence in all that the great day is to bring, and his prayer, as repeated at the end of the book, that the Lord would hasten its coming. Terrible as it will be to the wicked, and the unprepared, and those who refuse the warnings which we give them, it is a precious day to the saints, a day to be coveted, and to be prayed for with all earnestness of desire. The poor faint-hearted Christianity of our times can hardly contemplate it without trembling and annoyance. Many who profess and call themselves Christians would rather not hear about it, and would prefer, if they had their choice, that Christ might never come. It was not so in the days of Christianity’s pristine vigor. Then the anxious inquiry of disciples was, “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of the Coming, and of the end of the world?” “Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?” Then Christians wrote to each other in joyous congratulation, that their citizenship was in heaven, whence they looked for the Coming of the Saviour; and comforted one another in the assurance that the Lord Himself is to descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and, as directed by their Lord, lifted up their heads and looked up with joyful hope at every turn in human affairs which they could by any means construe into a probable herald of His nearing Epiphany. Then the prayer, “Thy Kingdom come,” had a depth of meaning and lively anticipation which now has well-nigh been lost. Then “the appearing of Jesus Christ” had a power over the soul which made it “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;” and the most earnest and constant call of Apostles and their followers was “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Even so. Amen.” Nor can the Church ever be her true self, or enter into the true spirit of her faith, or rise to the sublimity of her hope, where this is not the highest object of her deepest desire. For how, indeed, can we regard ourselves as rightly planted upon the apostolic foundation if we cannot join with heart and soul in this apostolic prayer” (*ibid.*, p. 385)? “Just in proportion as we love and appreciate the Appearing of Jesus, as we earnestly desire the deliverance, blessings and glory that are dependent on and related to the Second Advent, in that proportion will this book [Revelation], which tells us the grandest and most sublime things of the King and Kingdom, be dear to us” (*ibid.*, p. 386). “A blessing is to be bestowed upon those who keep the words of the prophecy, [Rev. 22] v. 7; which keeping requires, of course, preceding study” (*ibid.*). “(Smith’s *Key to Rev.*, p. 23)... ‘This neglect is to set our own wisdom above the Word of God, and against

it” (*ibid.*) “This Book [Revelation] was specially designed to sustain the Christian and the Church under sore trial; its magnificent portrayals of ultimate deliverance, reward, and glory at the Coming of Jesus being most admirably adapted for such a purpose. It has done this in the past, comforting and strengthening the persecuted in his flight or in his dungeon, sustaining the martyr at the stake or in the presence of the wild beasts. It has, from the days of John down to the present, consoled, cheered, and confirmed in faith and hope many a depressed, discouraged, tried believer. It will again do this work during the interval between the two stages of the Advent, when the Church [Tribulation saints—*ed.*], enduring her most bitter and unrelenting persecution, needs special aid and strength to endure unto the end. Then this Book, so full of the events then experienced, so full of Antichrist and his doom, so full of ultimate glorious deliverance, will be studied with an interest and intensity never before realized. Then, too, it will impart the needed consolation and hope, so that a multitude, fortified by its precious promises, will come out of the great tribulation, and receive their reward for faithfulness and endurance” (*ibid.*, p. 387). “In short, ‘The Blessed Hope’ helps us to cling lightly to this world... the doctrine... those who believe it are the most consecrated, unselfish, and strenuous workers in the Master’s service” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 18).

The Rapture hope effects *sanctification*. “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And **everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself**, just as He is pure” (1 John. 3:2–3).

It promotes *love for the brethren*. “and **may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another**, and for all men, just as we also do for you; **so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**” (1 Thes. 3:12–13). “Such is the preciousness of this Hope, that we are grateful to any who have expressed it, and urged others to accept of its comforting influences. There is (alas!) a tendency among some to disparage, and even unchurch others, because in some things their system of faith is defective, or contradictory, or erroneous; but making due allowance for human weakness and imperfection (which for the sake of the truth we may specify, without unchristianizing, etc.), the simple fact that this ‘blessed Hope’ is entertained and presented, causes our hearts to warm toward them. It is a bond of union, or, at least, of interested regard, for in it we see them honoring ‘the Christ,’ and in such honoring we rejoice, hoping that some day, when hope is realized, to see

eye to eye in all things. For, if any one ‘loves His appearing,’ he certainly loves the Lord Jesus, and we love Him” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:313). “Hence we so much admire the expressed Hope of the Reformers and others, many of whom we have quoted in this work. Such adherence to the Hope is indicative of fellowship with Jesus, and of a ‘conscience void of offence.’ When e.g. Stockton, in the *Book Above All*, expresses his faith in the exceeding preciousness of the Sec. Advent, in the fulfillment of the signs, in his waiting for the Lord, in a wish that it may be soon, in the declaration that the only hope of the world is in Jesus, then—whatever differences of view may exist on other points—our heart warms toward the brother as one who is a friend and brother of Jesus. No one can express such heartfelt desires and longings, who is not warmly and truly attached to the Saviour” (*ibid.*).

It provides *encouragement in ministry*. “...that if Jesus should come He might find them engaged at their respective posts” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:325).

And, it stirs up *zeal for evangelism*. “It is asserted that our doctrine tends to injure missions and destroy their spirit... Because we do not allow ourselves to be enthused with a false hope (viz., that of the conversion of the world in the present dispensation), this charge is made, when the whole tendency of our doctrine—if heartily embraced—is to make us solicitous of the salvation of others, so that they with us may reign with Christ, inheriting His Kingdom and glory” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:330). “The great and overwhelming fact that a majority of the missionaries in the foreign field today are Pre-Millenarians... two thirds of those now engaged in this work in India are Millenarians” (*ibid.*, p. 331) “Rev. Dr. Mackay, at the Mildmay Conference (1879) refers to the extent that our views are held by missionaries, and states that a Pre-Millenarian missionary being asked, ‘Are you going to the heathen holding these pessimist views? What good will you do?’ He replied: ‘I hold neither pessimist nor optimist views, or any such thing—I am a truthist’” (*ibid.*, p. 332) “Dr. Andrew Bonar (*Lond. Quart. Jour., Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 317) declared: ‘He has heard missionaries “regret deeply that the Church at home should be dazzled by the vain hope of conversions on a grand scale.” If the missionary would “see that the gathering out of the elect is his sole hope,” he would be “far less disheartened by opposition than when he vainly expected every day to see symptoms of national and universal conversion’” (*ibid.*). “Auriol (*Lects. during Lent*, p. 34): ‘What a motive for fervor and zeal in the missionary cause has he who can look at every soul converted to God as a fresh earnest of the near approach of the day of redemption’” (*ibid.*, p. 333)! “The writer himself, not being trammelled by the scruples that influence others, wishes lay evangelism abundant success, indeed, every method to bring sinners to Jesus, provided

proper prudence and wisdom is exercised to avoid self-deception and mere animal excitement” (*ibid.*, p. 334).

Who today has the proper attitude toward the Rapture? This writer suggests that pretribulational premillennialists’ biblical, wakeful and expectant attitude toward Christ’s imminent coming for the church identifies them as being among Christ’s genuine sheep, and also provides strong circumstantial evidence that their eschatology is correct.

Not All Christians Have the Proper Attitude

But alas, *not all Christians have the proper attitude.* “For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they **did not understand** until the flood came and took them all away; **so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt. 24:38-39). “But if **that slave says in his heart, ‘My master will be a long time in coming,**” and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk” (Luke 12:45) “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. However, **when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth**” (Luke 18:8)? “Know this first of all, that **in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.’** For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men” (2 Pet. 3:3-7). “It is comparatively easy to endure the reproaches of unbelievers, but not so readily those of excellent men, believers, who, by their sweeping statements, are justly chargeable with moulding the minds of multitudes to a rejection of a true, consistent interpretation of Scripture, preparing the masses of the church to have no faith when the Saviour comes” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:167). “...the deeply impressive question (alas, so abundantly verified in this day), ‘Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth’” (*ibid.*, 2:43)? “But few, wholly dependent on faith and not on the Kingdom itself presenting preliminary external signs for observation, will accept of the prophecies pertaining to this matter and be looking for, watching for, and awaiting with hope the Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 46). “...unbelief is so sadly predicted” (*ibid.*, p. 52). “Considering the prominence and

preciousness of this doctrine of a Pre-Mill. Advent, it is strange that men should so persistently reject and condemn it, notwithstanding the cautions and warnings given. The reason for its unpopularity and bitter opposition must be found in its condemnatory nature. It sets aside all human systems, all worldly schemes of regeneration, all man-devised plans to realize the Messiah's Kingdom on earth, all confidence in the resources of nature, reason, etc., declaring that the personal intervention of Jesus, the Christ, is requisite to bring about the world's restoration to Millennial blessedness. This is humbling to man's pride, to his worldliness, to his schemes of reformation, all of which this Advent dooms to destruction. This exalting of the Christ and His work is condemnatory of man and his work, and hence man hates it, for it is a constant and jarring protest to his vain ideas of progress and reform, to his estimate of the Church's and world's actual mission and condition" (*ibid.*, p. 196). "It is reasonable to expect that this doctrine of a translation will be ridiculed both before and after the occurrence of it. Indeed, the parallel existing in the days of Noah, just before the deluge, and that just before the Advent would fail in an important particular if ridicule and scorn were not added to the objections urged against belief in a speedy Advent and its inevitable results. Among these results that of the special honoring of some living saints by a translation without seeing death is already made the subject of derision and sport. The abuse of the doctrine by some evidently sincere but misguided persons (who confidently, against most express Scripture, fix the day and hour of its occurrence, and who, against the testimony of the Spirit, that it is not to be anticipated by a gathering of saints and most foolish provision of ascension robes, meet at the designated time to experience it) greatly tends to such levity; just as if the vagaries and foolishness of men in perverting a doctrine necessarily led to its entire rejection—a principle so palpably erroneous that if applied to truth in general would leave but little for us to accept. Scoffers are to arise in the last days, who will express their contempt of God's promises, and pronounce those, who Noah-like trust in them, to be, if not 'mad' or possessed of a 'devil,' at least 'exceedingly soft and foolish.' This naturally is to be expected of the world, but unfortunately some of the scoffers are professed believers in that Word of God, which expressly teaches a still future translation to come suddenly, as a snare, upon the Church and the world, which gives us typical, real illustrations of such translations in two noted cases, and which urges us constantly to look and watch for that which is to effect it. It is saddening that men cannot at least treat such subjects with soberness, and discuss them without sneers. This is before the translation; the same will be true of multitudes immediately after it. Acts 13:41 [“**BE-**

HOLD, YOU SCOFFERS, AND MARVEL, AND PERISH; FOR I AM ACCOMPLISHING A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YOU WILL NEVER BELIEVE, THOUGH SOMEONE SHOULD DESCRIBE IT TO YOU.”] will be repeated; and those who are arrested by its occurrence and take it to heart will be unsparingly ridiculed. Human nature will be true to itself, and the doctrine will be particularly detestable to it, since it evinces a species of favoritism—a contrast—condemnatory to its own Naturalistic and Humanitarian position. The Spirit predicts—and His Word is truth—that ridicule, sneers, etc., shall give finally place to so positive a dislike and hatred to all pertaining to it that those who are left and are believing shall experience, not merely a wordy reviling persecution, but the stroke of the descending, beheading sword and axe” (*ibid.*, p. 335). “But the most saddening sign is that this questioning and unbelief respecting the reality and nearness of the Coming of Jesus is not confined to the world but is to be found in the Church, among professing believers... as Mather aptly expressed it, ‘the sleeping medicine’ is profusely administered and gladly received. The Advent is placed so remotely in the distance, or is so indefinitely regarded, that its practical influence is lost” (*ibid.*, 3:116). “Conceding due respect for our opponents, and without questioning their honesty or sincerity, we may be allowed to say as a resultant of our position and views, that they as a body compose a sad sign, illustrative of Christ’s warning respecting unbelief. In our estimation it is a very serious thing to issue works, expressly designed to destroy faith in the Second Advent concerning its nearness, the duty of constant watching for it, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 135) “The Methodists as a body are far removed from the faith of the Wesleys, Fletcher, and others on this point. The Lutherans as a body but little regard the warnings of a Luther, Melancthon, and others” (*ibid.*). “No matter that Jesus Himself (Mark 13:23; Matt. 24:25)... in direct reference to His Sec. Advent and the events connected therewith, says: ‘But take ye heed. Behold, I have told you before’—men refuse to take ‘heed,’ and multitudes, even of professed followers, totally ignore the caution, and rail upon those who may remind them of the words of Jesus... Noah was ridiculed, and so will the true believer be likewise by the thoughtless... the Gospel hammer ‘which knocks away the injunction of Jesus to observe the signs of the times’” (*ibid.*). “The spirit of Luke 12:45 [‘But if **that slave says in his heart, “My master will be a long time in coming,”** and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;’] is exhibited on all sides, and many a believer feels in his person, influence, preferment, reputation, church relationship, etc., the inflictions of professed ‘fellow-servants’ who say in their heart, and boldly proclaim it also

‘my Lord delayeth His Coming’... The writer’s heart has been saddened and pained by bitter experience in this direction, but likewise encouraged and strengthened because divinely forewarned in the Word that such trial is to be expected” (*ibid.*, p. 153). “Esteemed men of ability and usefulness, are certainly assuming grave responsibility in this matter, when in books, etc., they teach that Christ’s Advent is not to be watched for as He commanded, but that it is still postponed for many, many long centuries, and that, instead of incoming wrath and tribulation, the Church is to anticipate triumph and continued progress” (*ibid.*, p. 166). “Jesus significantly (Luke 18:8) asks: ‘When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith (the faith) on the earth?’ i.e. will the Church be in such a condition of trial, of testing, that it will fail to exercise faith in the very provision made for deliverance? Faith in a variety of things may indeed be found, but will it believe in and pray for that ‘blessed hope’ which alone can bring in glorious salvation” (*ibid.*, p. 217)? “...the sleeping, unbelieving, lamentable state which is predicted” (*ibid.*, p. 219) “A writer (*Prop. Times*, vol. 3, p. 160), referring to the Primitive Church loving the appearing, remarks ‘And Massillon may speak for them all, when he affirms of the first Christians, they deem it one step in apostasy, not to sigh after this return’” (*ibid.*, p. 317). “Brookes (*Maranatha*, p. 365-66) says: ‘It was a leading characteristic of the early Christians that they loved His appearing; and if any who now profess to be Christians do not love it, they ought to be made to understand that there is no promise of a crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8) for them at that day. What would you think of an exile if he were to exhibit the deepest distress and grief at the summons to return home after years of lonely wandering in distant lands? What would you think of a citizen, if he were to turn pale on hearing that the court will soon convene, and the judge will ascend the tribunal? What would you think of a wife, if she shuddered and trembled at the announcement that she might expect her absent husband any hour? There is a conscious guilt there that makes them cowards; and when those who claim to be Christians cry out that they cannot bear the doctrine of our Lord’s Sec. Advent, they give melancholy evidence of not knowing that there is an unsettled controversy between them and God. They cannot think without terror of Christ’s Coming, because they are not prepared for it,’ etc. The least that can be said is that they exhibit gross ignorance of the object of Christ’s Advent in relation to believers... Seiss (*Last Times*, p. 308) says:... ‘If it has anything distressing in it, you yourself must put it there by your hard-heartedness, your prayerlessness, and unforsaken sin’... Dr. Hodge (*Com. 1 Cor 1:7*) says that the Sec. Advent... ‘the Spirit awakens desire for that event,’... But alas! Let a believer to-day occupy this position of

the early Christians, making the See. Advent the object of desire, longing, prayer, conversation, preaching, etc.—let him assume the spirit and motive which even our opponents in their commentaries, etc., profess to admire, admit to be eminently scriptural and practical, and inform us is positively enjoined by the Saviour as characteristic of a true believer, and what is the sad result? Why this: that his brethren in the Church regard him as ‘fanatical,’ given to ‘an unwholesome enthusiasm,’ evidencing ‘a disordered mind,’ presenting ‘an unhealthy eccentricity,’ etc... If ‘from the very first period of the Church’s history, this doctrine was associated with the most deplorable fanaticism,’ and if, according to Post-Millenarian writers—who tell us that the first three centuries constituted the purest age of the Church—Chiliasm for all that time was the orthodox faith, then beyond question the purest age of the Church was the age of the most deplorable fanaticism? And for this great defection, who were responsible but the fanatical Apostles” (*ibid.*, p. 318)? “That watching and hoping are so unfamiliar to us, is a defect” (*ibid.*, p. 320). “...the teachers and preachers of today who make light of the prophetic statements of God’s word. The Second Coming of Jesus will find them just as much unprepared to receive Him, as the Jews were to receive Him at His First Coming” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 84). “Satan... He has tried to rob the Church of her ‘Blessed Hope’ of the Lord’s return, by mixing with it a lot of false teaching and ‘time setting’ as seen in ‘Millerism,’ ‘Seventh Day Adventism’ and ‘Millennial Dawnism’” (*ibid.*, p. 113). “Let those who are free to condemn the pious Jew for not recognizing the fulfillment of prophecy in the first advent of Christ, beware lest they fail to rightly interpret the signs of these times, or look with positive unbelief upon the stupendous events that, according to prophecy, are imminent to-day” (Chafer, *S*, C3:2/29). “It was necessary for Satan to rob the Church, to a great extent, of her ‘blessed hope’ of Christ’s return, before he could attract attention to his own attempts at world improvement, and establish his own authority as ruler over this age. Expectation along the God-appointed lines must be abandoned, for the most part, before humanity can be federated, and religious institutions be made to co-operate in the Satanic program” (*ibid.*, C10:3/36). “John, who had been with Jesus on earth and in the glory, who had heard His promise to return again and who, in the Spirit, had witnessed those representations of the age-closing scenes as recorded in the Revelation, could say in answer to that final promise of Christ: ‘Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.’ John certainly had all the facts before him, and if any child of God does not find the same response in his heart to the last promise of Jesus would it not be well to discover the unhappy cause” (Chafer, *KHP*, 74%)? “A church with spiritual life will not be surprised when Jesus

returns for the Church. But a dead church will be caught unaware because they will not be expecting Him. And as unbelievers, they shall be left behind” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 62).

Chapter 22: The Great Tribulation

Soon after the Rapture of the church (see our previous chapter, *The Rapture of the Church*) will follow seven years of tribulation on earth, the last half of which Jesus described as “a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:21).

The Fact of the Tribulation

The *fact* of the Tribulation is stated in numerous Bible passages. **“When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice”** (Deut. 4:30) **“Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? **The kings of the earth** set themselves, And **the rulers** take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: **The Lord will have them in derision. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure:** Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion. I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee **the nations** for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. **Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.** Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth”** (Ps. 2:1-10). **“Behold, Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.** And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. **The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste;** for Jehovah hath spoken this word. **The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the lofty people of the earth do languish.** The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath **the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.** The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all **the merry-hearted do sigh.** The mirth of tabrets ceaseth,

the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. **There is a crying in the streets** because of the wine; **all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.** In the city is left **desolation**, and the gate is smitten with **destruction.** For **thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done.** These shall lift up their voice, they shall shout; for the majesty of Jehovah they cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye Jehovah in the east, even the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel, in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs: Glory to the righteous. But I said, I pine away, I pine away, woe is me! the treacherous have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous have dealt very treacherously. **Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.** And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows on high are opened, and **the foundations of the earth tremble. The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is shaken violently. The earth shall stagger like a drunken man, and shall sway to and fro like a hammock; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again.** And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that **Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.** And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for Jehovah of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem; and before his elders shall be glory” (Isa. 24:1-23). “And these are the words that Jehovah spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith Jehovah: We have heard a voice **of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.** Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for **that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble;** but he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:4-7). “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people; and **there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:** and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book” (Dan. 12:1).

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for **the day of Jehovah cometh**, for it is nigh at hand; **a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness**, as the dawn spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; **there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations**. A **fire** devoureth before them; and behind them a **flame** burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them **a desolate wilderness**; yea, and none hath escaped them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so do they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains do they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. At their presence **the peoples are in anguish**; all faces are waxed pale. They run like mighty men; they climb the wall like men of war; and they march every one on his ways, and they break not their ranks. Neither doth one thrust another; they march every one in his path; and they burst through the weapons, and break not off their course. They leap upon the city; they run upon the wall; they climb up into the houses; they enter in at the windows like a thief. **The earth quaketh before them; the heavens tremble; the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining**. And Jehovah uttereth his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for **the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible; and who can abide it**” (Joel 2:1–11)? “**Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!** for **the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining**. And **Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake**: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more” (Joel 3:14–17). “**Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it**” (Amos 5:18–20)? “Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord Jehovah; for **the day of Jehovah is at hand**: for Jehovah hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath consecrated his guests. And it shall come to pass in the day of Jehovah’s sacri-

face, that **I will punish the princes**, and the king's sons, and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel. And in that day **I will punish** all those that leap over the threshold, that fill their master's house with violence and deceit. And in that day, saith Jehovah, there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and a wailing from the second quarter, and a great crashing from the hills. **Wail**, ye inhabitants of Maktesh; for all the people of Canaan are undone; all they that were laden with silver are cut off. And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search **Jerusalem** with lamps; and **I will punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, Jehovah will not do good, neither will he do evil. And their wealth shall become a spoil, and their houses a desolation:** yea, they shall build houses, but shall not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but shall not drink the wine thereof" (Zeph. 1:7-13). "And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of **the end of the age?**' And Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you. For **many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will mislead many.** And you will be hearing of **wars and rumors of wars;** see that you are not frightened, for **those things must take place,** but that is not yet the end. For **nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,** and in various places there will be **famines and earthquakes.** But **all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.** Then **they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.** And at that time **many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another.** And **many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.** And because **lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.** But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come" (Matt. 24:3-14). "for **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.** And **unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved;** but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short" (Matt. 24:21-22). "But immediately after **the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL** from the sky, and **the powers of the heavens will be shaken,** and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will

mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:29–30). “For **those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, and never shall. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved;** but for the sake of the elect whom He chose, He shortened the days” (Mark 13:19-20). “For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.** But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief” (1 Thes. 5:2-4) “And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, **‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven’**” (Heb. 12:26). “Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from **the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth**” (Rev. 3:10). “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come of **the great tribulation**, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:13-14). See also Revelation 6:1-19:6. “The Jews universally held to a great time of trouble preceding the times of the Messiah... the Rabbins called ‘the birth pangs of the Messiah’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:734). “...even the most spiritualizing of commentators fully concede a terrible period to precede the Millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 751) “When the church age is brought to a close by the completion of the Body of Christ from Jews and Gentiles, the blindness will be taken away from Israel (Rom. 11:25), and the Jewish clock will again begin to tick. That period is known as the Great Tribulation, which, it is said, is to intervene between the coming of the Lord Jesus for His saints and His coming with His saints. It is the seventieth week of Daniel’s prophecy and is referred to in Daniel 9:27” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 159). “...many signs (Matt. 24:4-25) that would find their fulfillment in the seven years of the Tribulation... these signs will warn the nation Israel of the momentous event that they forecast, that is, the return of Messiah” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 237). “Christ’s announcement of judgment on Jerusalem undoubtedly was understood by the disciples in its prophetic context as a judgment preceding the second advent of Messiah to the earth. They asked when the judgment would come and what signs would be given to the nation Israel. Christ explained the signs in detail (Matt. 24:4-26),

outlining the events of the first half of the Tribulation (vv. 4-8), and also the events of the second half (vv. 9-14). He then described the climactic sign (vv. 15-26). Christ then moved on to the next eschatological event, His second advent to the earth (vv. 27-30), followed by the regathering of Israel (v. 31). In a parenthetical statement in unfolding the eschatological events, He gave exhortations concerning watchfulness, preparedness, and faithfulness (vv. 32-51). He then resumed the eschatological revelation, pointing out that following Israel's regathering, Israel will be judged to separate the saved from the unsaved. The saved will be received into the kingdom but the unsaved will be excluded (25:1-30). In conclusion, He spoke of the judgment of living Gentiles to separate the saved from the unsaved. Again, the saved will be received into the kingdom but the unsaved will be excluded (vv. 31-46). It is evident from this consideration of Christ's eschatological discourse that *He does not view Israel's covenants as having been cancelled*, nor her kingdom hopes abandoned, but only postponed until a future generation to whom the good news of the kingdom is proclaimed will be brought to faith and repentance. The Lord Jesus Himself will then assume David's scepter and mount David's throne and reign in the covenanted kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 261). "The Old Testament revelation of the tribulation as a whole is therefore amazingly complete" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 261) "In every passage of the Scriptures that the term *the Day of Jehovah* or *the Day of the Lord* is found, it is always and without exception a reference to the Tribulation period" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 173). "The term *the Day of Jehovah* is the most common term in the Old Testament for the Tribulation. It is a period of time that begins with the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant and ends with the Second Coming of Messiah exactly seven years later.... *Day of Jehovah* passages that deal with the world in general, or relate to a specific Gentile nation... There are seven such passages" (*ibid.*, p. 181). "For **there shall be a day of Jehovah of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty, and upon all that is lifted up; and it shall be brought low; and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every lofty tower, and upon every fortified wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant imagery. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; and Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols shall utterly pass away. And men shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth, from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth.** In that day

men shall cast away their idols of silver, and their idols of gold, which have been made for them to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the caverns of the rocks, and into the clefts of the ragged rocks, from before **the terror of Jehovah**, and from the glory of his majesty, **when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth**. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of" (Isa. 2:12–22)? "Wail ye; for **the day of Jehovah** is at hand; **as destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Therefore shall all hands be feeble, and every heart of man shall melt: and they shall be dismayed; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman in travail:** they shall look in amazement one at another; their faces shall be faces of flame. Behold, **the day of Jehovah cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity: and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more rare than fine gold, even a man than the pure gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.** And it shall come to pass, that as the chased roe, and as sheep that no man gathereth, they shall turn every man to his own people, and shall flee every man to his own land. **Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is taken shall fall by the sword. Their infants also shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be rifled, and their wives ravished**" (Isa. 13:6–16). "The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Wail ye, Alas for the day! For the day is near, even **the day of Jehovah** is near; **it shall be a day of clouds, a time of the nations.** And a sword shall come upon Egypt, and anguish shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt; and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down. Ethiopia, and Put, and Lud, and all the mingled people, and Cub, and the children of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword. Thus saith Jehovah: They also that uphold **Egypt** shall fall; and **the pride of her power shall come down:** from the tower of Seveneh shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord Jehovah. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the **countries** that are **desolate;** and

her cities shall be in the midst of the **cities that are wasted**. And they shall know at I am Jehovah, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and all her helpers are **destroyed**. In that day shall messengers go forth from before me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid; and there shall be anguish upon them, as in the day of Egypt; for, lo, it cometh" (Ezek. 30:1–9). "Alas for the day! for **the day of Jehovah** is at hand, and **as destruction from the Almighty shall it come**. Is not **the food cut off** before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seeds rot under their clods; the garners are laid desolate, **the barns are broken down; for the grain is withered**. How do **the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed**, because they have **no pasture**; yea, **the flocks of sheep are made desolate**. O Jehovah, to thee do I cry; for **the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field**. Yea, **the beasts of the field pant** unto thee; for **the water brooks are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness**" (Joel 1:15–20). "Shall I not in that day, saith Jehovah, **destroy the wise men out of Edom**, and understanding out of the mount of **Esau**? And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that **every one may be cut off from the mount of Esau by slaughter**. For the violence done to thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and **thou shalt be cut off for ever**. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. But look not thou on the day of thy brother in the day of his disaster, and rejoice not over the children of **Judah** in **the day of their destruction**; neither speak proudly in **the day of distress**. Enter not into the gate of **my people** in **the day of their calamity**; yea, look not thou on **their affliction in the day of their calamity**, neither lay ye hands on their substance in **the day of their calamity**. And stand thou not in the crossway, to cut off those of his that escape; and deliver not up those of his that remain in **the day of distress**. For **the day of Jehovah** is near **upon all the nations: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy dealing shall return upon thine own head**. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall **all the nations** drink continually; yea, they shall drink, and swallow down, and **shall be as though they had not been**. But in mount Zion there shall be those that escape, and it shall be holy; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and **the house of Esau for stubble**, and they shall burn among them, and devour them; and **there shall not be**

any remaining to the house of Esau; for Jehovah hath spoken it. And they of the South shall possess the mount of Esau, and they of the lowland the Philistines; and they shall possess the field of Ephraim, and the field of Samaria; and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And the captives of this host of the children of Israel, that are among the Canaanites, shall possess even unto Zarephath; and the captives of Jerusalem, that are in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the South” (Obadiah 1:8–20). “The Day of Jehovah will be particularly heavy on Edom because of their special mistreatment of Israel. Though other nations are equally guilty, Edom has a unique shame due to its blood relationship to Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 185). **“The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty man crieth there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land”** (Zeph. 1:14–18). **“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.** Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring **the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat”** (2 Pet. 3:10–12). “In summary, then, the Scriptures give some general descriptions of the Great Tribulation as a time of darkness, torment, anguish, turmoil, confusion, death, and massive destruction, especially by fire” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 185). “Premillennialist scholars generally agree that the actual Tribulation period is described in Revelation 6-18” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:603).

There are remarkably parallel and confirmatory accounts of the Tribulation period in Matthew chapter 24 and Revelation chapter 6. “For [seal 1, Antichrist] many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will mislead many. And you will be hearing of [seal 2, war]

wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be **[seal 3, famine] famines** and **[seal 6, earthquake] earthquakes**. But **[seal 4, death from sword, famine, pestilence, wild beasts] all these things** are merely the beginning of birth pangs. Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and **[seal 5, martyrs] will kill you**, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold" (Matt. 24:5-12). "And I saw when the Lamb broke **one of the seven seals**, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, 'Come.' And I looked, and behold, **[seal 1, Antichrist] a white horse, and he who sat on it** had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer. And when He broke **the second seal**, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come.' And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another; and **[seal 2, war] a great sword** was given to him. And when He broke **the third seal**, I heard the third living creature saying, 'Come.' And I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, **[seal 3, famine] A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius;** and do not harm the oil and the wine.' And when He broke **the fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come.' And I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name **[seal 4, death from sword, famine, pestilence, wild beasts] Death;** and Hades was following with him. And authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to **kill with sword** and with **famine** and with **pestilence** and by the **wild beasts** of the earth. And when He broke **the fifth seal**, I saw underneath the altar the souls of **[seal 5, martyrs] those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;** and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also. And I looked when He broke **the sixth**

seal, and there was a great [**seal 6, earthquake**] **earthquake**; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood” (Rev. 6:1-12) “The 24th chapter of Matthew should be compared with Rev. 6:1-17” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 134). “It should be noted here that in the great eschatological discourse of our Lord [in Matt. 24], there is an exact forecast of the judgments and their sequence under the first six seals of Revelation 6. First, He warned of false Christs (Matt. 24:5; Luke 21:8). Second, He predicted warfare on a world-wide scale (Luke 21:10). Third, He predicted famines and pestilences (Matt. 24:7). Fourth, He spoke of religious persecution and martyrdom (Matt. 24:9). Fifth, He spoke of great earthquakes and fearful sights from heaven (Luke 21:11). But terrible as these future events would be, Christ warned, they will be only the ‘beginning of sorrows’ (Matt. 24:8); thus leaving room for the other and greater sorrows to be more fully revealed by the visions of John beyond the six seals” (McClain, *GK*, p. 455). “A comparison of Christ’s description of the beginning of birth pangs in Matthew 24:5-7 with the first four seals of Revelation 6:1-8 indicates that the beginning of birth pangs and the first four seals are the same thing. In addition, immediately after His description of the beginning of birth pangs, Christ referred to the killing of those associated with Him (Mt. 24:9). Parallel to this, the fifth seal refers to people killed because of their testimony (Rev. 6:9-11)” (Showers, *M*, p. 25). “Beginning of birth pangs (Mt. 24)—First four seals (Rev. 6) 1. False messiahs who will mislead many (v. 5)—1. First seal: Rider on white horse, a false messiah (v. 2) 2. Wars, rumors of wars, nation rising against nation (vv. 6-7)—2. Second seal: Rider on red horse takes away peace from earth (vv. 3-4) 3. Famines (v. 7)—3. Third seal: Rider on black horse holds balances, represents famine (vv. 5-6) 4. Death through famines, pestilences, and earthquakes (v. 7)—4. Fourth seal: Rider on pale horse, represents death through famine, pestilence, and wild beasts (vv. 7-8) Since the beginning of birth pangs that will occur during the first half [the ‘middle of the week’ being demarcated by the ‘abomination of desolation’ as per Dan. 9:27 and Matt. 24:15—*ed.*] of the 70th week are the same as the first four seals, we can conclude that the first four seals of Revelation 6 will take place during the first half of Daniel’s 70th week” (*ibid.*, p. 26). “...the beginning of birth pangs and the first four seals are the same thing and, therefore, the first four seals will also be present during the first half of the seven years” (*ibid.*). “...the beginning of birth pangs of Matthew 24 and the first four seals of Revelation 6 are the same thing” (*ibid.*, p. 63) “... a series of consecutive tribulational events... First Event: False Messiahs ([Matt. 24] vv. 4-5)... Cf. the first seal (Rev. 6:1-2); Second Event: Wars ([Matt. 24] vv.

6-7)... Cf. the second seal (Rev. 6:3-4); Third Event: Famines ([Matt. 24] v. 7)... Cf. the third seal (Rev. 6:5-6); Fourth Event: Pestilences and Earthquakes ([Matt. 24] vv. 7-8)... Cf. the fourth seal (Rev. 6:7-8); Fifth Event: Martyrs ([Matt. 24] vv. 9-11)... Cf. the fifth seal (Rev. 6:9-11)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:601)

Some historicist²⁰ theologians believe that many of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen, events which futurists (such as this writer) place in the future, have already been fulfilled in the past, and therefore have no reference to the future. They come to this conclusion by equating the content of Luke chapter twenty-one with that of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen, then demonstrating that several of the events of Luke chapter twenty-one (i.e. the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.) have already been fulfilled. They conclude then that the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen must also have already been fulfilled in the past, as those of Luke chapter twenty-one have been. Futurists, on the other hand, point out that there are substantive differences between Matthew (and Mark) and Luke, making it possible therefore that while many of the events of Luke twenty-one have indeed already been fulfilled in the past, all of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen still may very well await future fulfillment. Personally, by examining three “parallel” passages in Matthew, Mark and Luke, this writer has found no substantive differences between Matthew and Mark, but has identified no less than sixteen substantive differences between Matthew (and Mark) and Luke. It is therefore this writer’s conclusion that while many of the events of Luke chapter twenty-one have indeed already had fulfillment in the first century, it is entirely possible that all of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen still await future fulfillment (during the Tribulation period). This conclusion was drawn from my careful examination and comparison of the following three “parallel” passages; passages specifically suggested to me by a good historicist friend for parallel comparison: (The numbered items are the sixteen identified differences between Matthew (and Mark) and Luke; the italicized items are common to all three books.) “Therefore when you see [1] **the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** which was spoken of through [2] **Daniel the prophet**, [3] **standing in the holy place** ([4] **let the reader understand**), then *let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains*; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the

²⁰ Historicists believe biblical prophecy, including the books of Daniel and Revelation, Matthew chapter 24, etc., has already largely, if not completely, had fulfillment in church and world history.

things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But ***woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days!*** But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for then there will be [5] **a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.** And [6] **unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but [7] for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short**” (Matt. 24:15–22). “But when you see [1] **the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** [3] **standing where it should not be** ([4] **let the reader understand**), then ***let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.*** And let him who is on the housetop not go down, or enter in, to get anything out of his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But ***woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days!*** But pray that it may not happen in the winter. For those days will be [5] **a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, and never shall.** And [6] **unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but [7] for the sake of the elect whom He chose, He shortened the days**” (Mark 13:14–20). “But when you see [8] **Jerusalem surrounded by armies**, then recognize that [9] **her desolation is at hand.** Then ***let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains***, and [10] **let those who are in the midst of the city depart**, and [11] **let not those who are in the country enter the city**; because [12] **these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. *Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days;*** for there will be great distress upon the land, and [13] **wrath to this people**, and [14] **they will fall by the edge of the sword**, and [15] **will be led captive into all the nations**; and [16] **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:20–24). This writer’s five conclusions on this are: *Conclusion #1:* There are 0 (zero) substantive difference between Matthew 24:15-22 and Mark 13:14-20. There is only 1 incidental difference between them (Matthew mentions Daniel by name, but Mark does not). Therefore, it is concluded that Matthew 24:15-22 and Mark 13:14-20 both speak of exactly the same events. *Conclusion #2:* There are 16 substantive differences between Matthew 24:15-22 (15 differences for Mark 13:14-20) and Luke 21:20-24. *Conclusion #3:* Luke 21 clearly describes events that pertain both to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and to the (future) Great Tribulation.

Matthew 24 and Mark 13, however, while clearly describing events pertaining to the (future) Great Tribulation, do not mention any events, as Luke does, that pertain specifically and exclusively to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Therefore, while some of the prophecies of Luke 21 were clearly fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., it may very well be that all of the events described in the prophecies of Matthew 24 (and Mark 13) are yet future. Conclusion #4 is in reference to the disciples' three questions: "And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out **the temple buildings** to Him. And He answered and said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, **not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down.**' And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, **[1] when will these things be, and [2] what will be the sign of Your coming, and of [3] the end of the age**'" (Matt. 24:1-3)? "And as He was going out of **the temple**, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!' And Jesus said to him, 'Do you see these great buildings? **Not one stone shall be left upon another which will not be torn down.**' And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, 'Tell us, **[1] when will these things be, and [2, 3] what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?**'" (Mark 13:1-4)? "And while some were talking about **the temple**, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, '**As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down.**' And they questioned Him, saying, 'Teacher, **[1] when therefore will these things be? And [2, 3] what will be the sign when these things are about to take place**'" (Luke 21:5-7)? *Conclusion #4:* The disciples' three questions are most clearly articulated by Matthew. Luke answers all three questions, including the first one, which pertains to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Matthew and Mark, on the other hand, apparently directly answer only the second and third questions, which pertain to Christ's coming and the end of the age. *Conclusion #5:* A reading of the entireties of Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 confirms that only Luke mentions the events that refer exclusively to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Purposes of the Tribulation

The *purposes* of the Tribulation regarding the church are different from the purposes regarding the nations of the world.

Purposes Regarding the Church

The purposes of the Tribulation *regarding the church* are *nonexistent*. “We must note that [in Matt. 24] *Jesus was revealing the prophetic program for Jerusalem, the nation Israel, and the people of Israel*. He made *no* reference to the church or the prophetic program for the church. Jesus did not speak here of events that will precede the consummation of the program for the church at the Rapture (John 14:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-17). Rather, He dealt with the future Tribulation, or seven-year period that will complete the prophetic program for Israel as revealed in Daniel 9:27. Because of its Jewish context, therefore, this portion of Scripture *must* be interpreted with reference to Israel and not to the church” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 248). (See our discussion of the probability that the Rapture is to occur before the Tribulation in the *The Timing of the Rapture: Pre-Tribulation* section of our previous chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Purposes Regarding Nations

The purposes of the Tribulation *regarding the nations of the world* are several. “The tribulation is primarily a divine dealing with Israel, but is also the consummation and final display of Gentile world domination” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 261).

Regarding *Israel*, “And these are the words that Jehovah spake **concerning Israel and concerning Judah**. For thus saith Jehovah: We have heard a voice of **trembling, of fear, and not of peace**. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for **that day is great, so that none is like it**: it is even **the time of Jacob’s trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:4-7). “Seventy **weeks** are **decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city**, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and **the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the**

sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. **And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week**: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:24-27). “Matthew 24-25, as has been shown above and innumerable times by pretribulationists, are answering questions on the end of the Jewish, not church, age (Matt. 24:1-3)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 177). “Though the whole world will be involved in the Great Tribulation, it will particularly affect Israel as is evident from the massive amount of Old Testament Scripture concerning this time period” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 770). “The Tribulation period is called ‘the time of Jacob’s trouble’ (Jer. 30:7 NKJV), and Daniel was told it is the week determined for his people Israel (9:24)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:617).

As God’s first-born, Israel is to receive “a double portion.” “And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith Jehovah, **Israel is my son, my first-born**” (Ex. 4:22) “But he shall acknowledge **the first-born**, the son of the unloved, by giving him **a double portion** of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs **the right of the first-born**” (Deut. 21:17). “Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith Jehovah, and they shall fish them up; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. For mine eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity concealed from mine eyes. And **first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double**, because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable things, and have filled mine inheritance with their abominations” (Jer. 16:16–18). “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to **Jerusalem**; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that **her iniquity is pardoned**, that **she hath received of Jehovah’s hand double for all her sins**” (Isa. 40:1–2). “The uniqueness of the Tribulation’s relationship to Israel is especially brought out in Jeremiah 30:4-7. While the Scriptures have many names for the Great Tribulation, in this passage a name is given that directly relates the Tribulation to the Jewish nation: *the time of Jacob’s trouble*. While it is true that all will suffer during that time, Israel will suffer more so. The basic reason for this lies in Israel’s relationship to God as God’s first born (Exod. 4:22) and, therefore, receives double both in blessing and cursing. The principle that Israel receives double for all her sins is stated in Isaiah 40: 1-2 and Jeremiah 16:16-18. This is

the reason the Tribulation is uniquely the Time of Jacob's Trouble" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 770).

The purposes of the Tribulation in regard to *Israel* are:

To scourge the nation. "When the law age is resumed—the Jewish age has been cut short as noted in Daniel's prophecy—judgment will follow upon Israel in that time known as the 'time of Jacob's trouble' (Jer. 30:7)" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 152). (See our discussion of Israel's persecution during the Great Tribulation in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* below.)

To purge the nation of evildoers. "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and **I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel:** and ye shall know that I am Jehovah" (Ezek. 20:33-38). "For then will I turn to the peoples of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for **then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting ones, and thou shalt no more be haughty in my holy mountain. But I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people,** and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah. **The remnant of Israel** shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid" (Zeph. 3:9-13). "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, **two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried.** They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God" (Zech. 13:8-9). "Behold, I send my messenger, and he

shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts. But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for **he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver;** and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts. For *I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed*" (Mal. 3:1-6). (See our discussion of Israel's purging during the Great Tribulation in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* below.)

To end the nation's rebellion. "Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, **to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins,** and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy... the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary... And he shall make a firm covenant with many for **one week:** and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate" (Dan. 9:24-27). "...the Great Tribulation will be finished when God has completely shattered the obstinate rebellion of the nation of Israel against Him" (Showers, *M*, p. 46). "In light of Israel's persistent rebellion, God revealed to Daniel an extended future program that He has determined specifically for Israel and its holy city, Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24-27). God indicated that this program would involve 70 'weeks' (lit., 70 'sevens') of time (vs. 24)" (*ibid.*, p. 47). "...'to finish the transgression' (vs. 24)... God was revealing that Israel will not stop its rebellion against His rule until all 70 weeks of His extended program for Israel have run their course. Thus, Israel's rebellion will be shattered or ended when the 70th week of Daniel ends" (*ibid.*). (See our discussion of Israel's repentance at the end the Great Tribulation in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* below.)

And, *to bring about Israel's national salvation.* “For **then will I turn to the peoples of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent.** From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting ones, and thou shalt no more be haughty in my holy mountain. But **I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid**” (Zeph. 3:9-13). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus **all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UN-GODLINESS FROM JACOB.’ ‘AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS’**” (Rom. 11:25-27). “A major purpose for the Great Tribulation is to bring about Israel's national salvation. ‘God's purpose for Israel in the Tribulation is to bring about the conversion of a multitude of Jews,’ and these will be the ones to enter the Messianic Kingdom ‘and experience the fulfillment of all Israel's covenants’” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 237] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 531). “McClain [in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 461-463] views the period of the Great Tribulation as the final preparation before the Messianic Kingdom, and this seventieth week of Daniel ‘is perfectly consistent with the purposes of God for the nation of Israel.’ This is natural, for to Israel belongs ‘in a peculiar covenantal sense the future Messianic Kingdom’” (*ibid.*). (See our discussions of Israel's survival of and forgiveness and regeneration as a result of the Great Tribulation in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* below.)

The purposes of the Tribulation in regard to *the Gentile nations* are:

To allow evil to have its highest-ever manifestation among them. (See our discussion of the evil nature of the Tribulation in our section *Characteristics of the Tribulation* below, and our discussion of the satanic power of the Antichrist in our section *Characters of the Tribulation* below.)

To test them. “Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from **the hour of testing, that hour which is about**

to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10).

To teach them righteousness. “With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee earnestly: for **when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness**” (Isa. 26:9).

To bring them to repentance. “Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that hath no shame; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah’s anger come upon you. **Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah’s anger**” (Zeph. 2:1-3). “And men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not **repent**, so as to give Him glory” (Rev. 16:9-10). “The outpouring of the wrath of God is seen to be for the purpose of bringing men to repentance (Rev. 16:9-10). While the majority will not repent, some may be turned to Jehovah by these signs” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 295).

And, to purge them of their evil rulers and people. “Behold, **Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof**” (Isa. 24:1). “**The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste;** for Jehovah hath spoken this word” (Isa. 24:3). “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, **Jehovah cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity:** the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain” (Isa. 26:20-21). “**I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah**” (Zeph. 1:2-3). “**The great day of Jehovah** is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of **the day of Jehovah;** the mighty man crieth there bitterly. That day is **a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,** a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements. And **I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah;**

and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for **he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land**" (Zeph. 1:14-18). **"I have cut off nations; their battlements are desolate; I have made their streets waste, so that none passeth by; their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, so that there is no inhabitant.** I said, Only fear thou me; receive correction; so her dwelling shall not be cut off, according to all that I have appointed concerning her: but they rose early and corrupted all their doings. Therefore wait ye for me, saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for **my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy**" (Zeph. 3:6-8). "The birth pangs of the seven years (the 70th week of Daniel 9) before the Messiah's coming to reign are absolutely necessary to remove Satan and rebellious mankind and their rule of the world system from the earth so that the Messianic Age can be born" (Showers, *M*, p. 27). (See also our discussions of the dashing of the nations to pieces and the purging of all sinners from the world in the section *Purposes of the Second Coming* of our next chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

Characteristics of the Tribulation

Characteristics of the Tribulation include:

Deception. "And Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you. For **many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will mislead many**" (Matt. 24:4-5). "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.** Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in **his time** he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.

And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false,** in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness” (2 Thes. 2:1-12). “And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and **Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth,** and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev. 12:9). “And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast**” (Rev. 13:3) “And I saw **another beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. And **he performs great signs,** so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And **he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform** in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life” (Rev. 13:11-14). “The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And **those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast,** that he was and is not and will come” (Rev. 17:8). “God’s purpose is that man, in his efforts at regeneration in his own way and not after God’s plan, shall experience in bitterness and sorrow the falsehood of his own obstinacy and pride, and this, too, by God’s ordering, in the adoration of a blasphemer” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:721). “...the cry of a common and universal brotherhood under one central headship to meet the longings of ages... the culmination of the sin of Adam to be like God in a headship which theocratically only belongs to God and His Christ. Antichrist is the last step in the development of Satanic influence and power in and through man, and we are assured that this last phase shall be specially pervaded by his energy in order to resist the incoming Messianic Kingdom. Amazing climax! So astonishing is it, that (Rev. 13:3 and 17:8) ‘all the world wondered after the beast,’ excepting only those

who are believing and wise” (*ibid.*, p. 723). (See also our discussion of the fact that God sends a delusion on the unbelievers in our section *Events Just Prior to the Tribulation* below.)

Darkness. “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for **the day of Jehovah cometh**, for it is nigh at hand; **a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness**, as the dawn spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations” (Joel 2:1–2). “**Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light**” (Amos 5:18). “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for **the day of Jehovah** is near in the valley of decision. **The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining**” (Joel 3:14–15). “**But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky**, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:29–30).

Sin. “Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and **sin is lawlessness**” (1 John. 3:4). “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God” (2 Thes. 2:1–5). “**And because lawlessness is increased**, most people’s love will grow cold” (Matt. 24:12–13). “**And the rest of mankind**, who were not killed by these plagues, **did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols** of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and **they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts**” (Rev. 9:20–21). “And men were scorched with fierce heat; and **they blasphemed the name of God** who has the power over these plagues; and **they did not repent**, so as to give

Him glory” (Rev. 16:9). “and **they blasphemed the God of heaven** because of their pains and their sores; and **they did not repent of their deeds**” (Rev. 16:11). “God will permit human nature to carry out the principles now at work to its legitimate end” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:721) “When man is cut loose from the Gospel truth, and follows his own imaginings, there is no iniquity and no crime too great which he is not ready to commit” (*ibid.*, p. 722). “...the lauded and magnified perfectibility of man and the eloquently portrayed glorious future (in which eulogy many sincerely unite, thus ridiculing themselves of the humbling cross of Christ)... The nations seeking freedom from the just claims of God and the cross of Jesus, shall reap the liberty that depraved human nature inaugurates in intensified selfishness and oppression” (*ibid.*, p. 746). “It will be a climactic period, expressly designed by a sovereign God to bring the forces of evil to a crescendo before the millennial reign of Christ which will be characterized by peace and righteousness” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 258).

Absence of love. “And because lawlessness is increased, **most people’s love will grow cold**” (Matt. 24:12).

Trials and tribulation. “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And **there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time**; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued” (Dan. 12:1). “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even **the time of Jacob’s trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:7). “for **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall**” (Matt. 24:21). “And I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of **the great tribulation**, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’” (Rev. 7:14). “...a series of trial and trouble unexampled in the history of the world” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:731)

Anti-Semitism. “**Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.** And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. But the one who **endures** to the end, he shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come” (Matt. 24:9–14). “And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to **the nations**; and **they will tread under foot the**

holy city for forty-two months” (Rev. 11:2-3). “And when **the dragon** saw that he was thrown down to the earth, **he persecuted the woman** who gave birth to the male child. And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. And **the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. And **the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus”** (Rev. 12:13-17). (See our discussion of Israel’s persecution in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation*, as well as our discussion of Israel’s purging in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation below*.)

Persecution. “Then **they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another”** (Matt. 24:9-10). “And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar **the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God**, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging **our blood** on those who dwell on the earth?’ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until **the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also”** (Rev. 6:9-11). (See our discussion of the fifth-seal martyrs in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation*, our discussion of Israel’s persecution in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation*, and our discussion of Israel’s purging in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation below*.)

Progressive, extensive and severe wrath. “And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of **Him who sits on the throne**, and from **the wrath of the Lamb**; for **the great day of their wrath has come**; and who is able to stand” (Rev. 6:15-17)? “For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe to the earth and the sea,**

because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time" (Rev. 12:12). "The wrath of God will fall progressively upon different segments of sinful humanity until at last the infliction becomes universal in extent" (McClain, *GK*, p. 186). "Throughout the visitation of these judgments, the supernatural manifestation of the divine Hand becomes increasingly evident, until the train of events is consummated by the entrance of the incarnate Son once again into human history, this time not only visibly but also in power and glory" (*ibid.*, p. 456). "When the first four vials are poured out, however, the supernatural judgments are no longer partial but become *universal* in their effects upon the inhabitants of the earth. The sole exceptions concern small areas given special divine protection, e.g., the 144,000 of [Rev.] 7:3-8, and the woman of 12:13-17; both representing certain members of the nation of Israel. Outside of these there seems to be no exemption from the pre-Kingdom judgments" (*ibid.*, p. 457).

Destruction. "Behold, **Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.** And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. **The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste;** for Jehovah hath spoken this word. **The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away,** the lofty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath **the curse devoured the earth,** and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore **the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.** The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. **There is a crying in the streets** because of the wine; **all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.** In the city is left **desolation,** and the gate is smitten with **destruction.** For **thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done.** These shall lift up their voice, they shall shout; for the majesty of Jehovah they cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye Jehovah in the east, even the name

of Jehovah, the God of Israel, in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs: Glory to the righteous. But I said, I pine away, I pine away, woe is me! the treacherous have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous have dealt very treacherously. Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows on high are opened, and **the foundations of the earth tremble. The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is shaken violently. The earth shall stagger like a drunken man, and shall sway to and fro like a hammock; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again.** And it shall come to pass in that day, that **Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.** And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for Jehovah of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem; and before his elders shall be glory” (Isa. 24:1-23). **“I have cut off nations; their battlements are desolate; I have made their streets waste, so that none passeth by; their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, so that there is no inhabitant”** (Zeph. 3:6). “For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then **destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.** But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief” (1 Thes. 5:2-4) “And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was **a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth,** so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. And **the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell.** And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. And **every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven** upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe” (Rev. 16:18–21). “During the tribulation frightful judgments will be poured out upon the Gentiles, resulting in utter destruction of their cities and civilization and leading to their complete doom at the time of the return of Christ” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 257).

Chronology of the Tribulation

As is the case with the Rapture of the church (see our previous chapter *The Rapture of the Church*), the *chronology* of the Tribulation involves both its timing and its duration.

Timing of the Tribulation

Thankfully, the Tribulation period is to occur *only once* in human history. “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, **nor ever will**” (Matt. 24:21).

The *timing* of the Tribulation is to be:

Future. That the Great Tribulation is yet future is evident from the fact that in Matthew chapter twenty-four, “immediately after the tribulation of those days... they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (vss. 29-30). If the coming of the Son of man in great power and glory has not yet occurred, then neither has the Great Tribulation which immediately precedes it. And because these two events are, in Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark thirteen, linked with Daniel’s seventieth week (via the abomination of desolation), neither has Daniel’s seventieth week yet transpired. “And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease**; and upon the wing of **abominations** shall come one **that maketh desolate**; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “Therefore **when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then** let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; **for then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:15-22). “But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and **they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory**”

(Matt. 24:29-30). “But **when you see the abomination of desolation** standing where it should not be (**let the reader understand**), **then** let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And let him who is on the housetop not go down, or enter in, to get anything out of his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that it may not happen in the winter. **For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created, until now, and never shall.** And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect whom He chose, He shortened the days” (Mark 13:14-20). “In looking over and comparing the various applications of the prophecy to other predictions and the facts of history, there is not one that will stand the test of a critical examination being based on a complete and perfect fulfillment of the 70 weeks in the past” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:665). “Apolinaris of Laodicea located the Antichrist still future in the last [Daniel’s 70th] week, considering the prophecy as only applicable to him” (*ibid.*, p. 666). “Our Lord’s great prophetic discourse recorded in Matthew and Mark fixes the time of Israel’s final and greatest trouble definitely within the days of the Seventieth Week of Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-20)” (McClain, *DP*, p. 10). “...this Seventieth Week of years must still be future... particularly because our Lord Himself places the ‘abomination of desolation’ of the Seventieth Week at the end of the present age just prior to His return in power and glory (Matt. 24:15-30)” (*ibid.*, p. 53). “The tremendous events envisioned in and following the last week of Daniel’s prophecy (9:25, 27), and subsequently developed more largely in Revelation 6-20, have never been certainly identified in any area of human history. This is evident from the utter confusion and disagreement among those who have tried to do so. Invariably, also, the chronology has to be forced into the mold of the year-day theory, and the events of history always fail to measure up to the predictions” (McClain, *GK*, p. 461).

After the end of the Church Age. “Feinberg [in *Israel*, pp. 160-161] states that Israel’s future technically begins with the close of the Church Age, with ‘the completion of the Body of Christ from Jews and Gentiles.’ At this time, ‘the blindness will be taken away from Israel,’ and then the prophetic time clock will enter the Great Tribulation, a period of time ‘which intervenes between “the fulness of the Gentiles” and the time when “all Israel shall be saved”’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 552). (See our discussions of the facts that the church is to be raptured at the end of the Church Age

and prior to the Tribulation in the *Timing of the Rapture* section of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Before the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. “**for then there will be a great tribulation... But immediately after the tribulation of those days... they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory... But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.** And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. **Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”**” (Matt. 24:21–25:34). “...early Christian proclamation shared the view of Jewish apocalyptic that the final tribulation would precede entry into the kingdom of God” [quoting Johannes Schneider, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, p. 674] (Showers, *M*, p. 215).

Before Christ’s Second Coming. “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but **in the middle of the week** he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and **on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “But the one who endures to **the end**, he shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then **the end** shall come. Therefore **when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then** let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; **for then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:13-22). “But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and **they**

shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:29-30). “Whatever the ‘abomination of desolation’ may be, there can be no doubt that Daniel put it exactly in the middle of the Seventieth Week, while our Lord placed it at ‘the end,’ just before His second coming in glory. Therefore, the Seventieth Week must also come at the end of the present age just prior to Christ’s coming in glory” (McClain, *DP*, p. 40).

After the beginning of the Day of the Lord. “For **there shall be a day of Jehovah** of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty... when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth... when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth” (Isa. 2:12-22). “Wail ye; for **the day of Jehovah** is at hand; as **destruction** from the Almighty shall it come... **the day of Jehovah cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it.. I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger**” (Isa. 13:6-13). “The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Wail ye, Alas for the day! For the day is near, even **the day of Jehovah** is near; **it shall be a day of clouds, a time of the nations...** And they shall be desolate in the midst of the **countries that are desolate;** and her cities shall be in the midst of the **cities that are wasted**” (Ezek. 30:1-7). “Alas for the day! for **the day of Jehovah** is at hand, and **as destruction from the Almighty shall it come**” (Joel 1:15). “For the violence done to thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. But look not thou on the day of thy brother in the day of his disaster, and rejoice not over the children of **Judah** in **the day of their destruction;** neither speak proudly in **the day of distress.** Enter not into the gate of **my people** in **the day of their calamity;** yea, look not thou on **their affliction** in **the day of their calamity,** neither lay ye hands on their substance in **the day of their calamity.** And stand thou not in the crossway, to cut off those of his that escape; and deliver not up those of his that remain in **the day of distress.** For **the day of Jehovah** is near **upon all the nations:** as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy dealing shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall **all the nations** drink continually; yea, they shall drink, and swallow down, and **shall be as though they had not been**” (Obadiah 1:10-16). “**The**

great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of **the day of Jehovah; the mighty man crieth there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land**" (Zeph. 1:14–18). "The day of the Lord as presented in the Old and New Testaments includes rather than follows the tremendous events of the tribulation period (cf. Isa. 2:12-21; 13:9-16; 34:1-8; Joel 1:15-2:11; 2:28-32; 3:9-21; Amos 5:18-20; Obad. 15-17; Zeph. 1:7-18)" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 175). "The day of the Lord begins before the Great Tribulation. When the day of grace ends with the translation of the church, the day of the Lord begins at once" (*ibid.*). (See also our discussion of the fact that the church is to be raptured before the beginning of the Day of the Lord in the *Timing of the Rapture* section of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

And, *after the Rapture of the church*. (See our discussion of the fact that the church is to be raptured before the Tribulation in the *Pre-Tribulation* section of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Duration of the Tribulation

The duration of the Tribulation period is exactly seven years, as it is concurrent with and bracketed by Daniel's seventieth week. This seven-year duration is confirmed by identifying two successive three and one half year periods in the book of Revelation. "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for **one week**, but **in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate" (Dan. 9:27). "Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let**

him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for **then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:15-22). “**But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains**” (Mark 13:14). “And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, ‘Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to **the nations**; and **they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months**. And I will grant authority to **my two witnesses**, and **they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days**, clothed in sackcloth.’ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and if anyone would desire to harm them, in this manner he must be killed. These have the power to shut up the sky, in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them” (Rev. 11:1-7). “**And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days**” (Rev. 12:6). “**And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time**, from the presence of the serpent” (Rev. 12:14). “and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped **the beast**, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and **authority to act for forty-two months was given to him**. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him,

everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain” (Rev. 13:4-8). “As the Dragon is cast out of the Heavens in chapter 12, and he is cast out in the ‘Middle of the Week,’ it follows that chapters 6 to 11 inclusive cover the ‘First Half’ of the Week, or 3 1/2 years, and chapters 13 to 19 inclusive the ‘Second Half’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 134). “Each time this period is mentioned in Scripture, whether as a thousand two hundred and threescore days, or forty-two months, or three and a half years, or time, times, and half a time, it always refers to Israel and a period in which God is dealing with that nation” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 290). “Since these signs will all occur in the seven years of Daniel’s seventieth week, the generation that sees the beginning of these signs will ‘not pass away until all these things have happened’ ([Matt. 24] v. 34), for they all will fall within a brief span of time” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 256). “The greater part of the Book of Revelation is simply an expansion of Daniel’s prophecy within the chronological framework as outlined by the same Seventieth Week, which is divided into two equal periods, each extending for 1260 days, or 42 months, or 3 1/2 years (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5)” (McClain, *DP*, p. 10). “...the three and a half years of Revelation are exactly one-half of seven years... Daniel’s prophecy divides the Seventieth Week into two halves... Daniel’s prophecy of the Seventy Weeks... the inspired key to the interpretation of the Book of Revelation” (*ibid.*, p. 55) “There is one question, however: Since the chronology in the Book of Revelation is always stated in terms of one-half of seven years, do the events of the book cover only *one-half* of the Seventieth Week or can both halves of the week be identified? I believe that the entire Seventieth Week of seven years can be located in the Book of Revelation, and that the key passage is 11:2-3, which reads as follows: ‘But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles [nations]: and the holy city shall they tread under foot *forty and two months*. And I will give power unto my two witnesses; and they shall prophesy a *thousand two hundred and threescore days*, clothed in sackcloth.’ Now, since the ‘*forty and two months*’ of verse 2 constitute a three and a half year period during which Gentile powers shall ‘tread under foot’ the Holy City, this must refer to the *last half* of Daniel’s Seventieth Week, because it is in the middle of the Seventieth Week that the Roman prince stops the Jewish sacrifice and becomes their persecutor (Dan. 9:27). It is likewise apparent that the ‘*thousand two hundred and threescore days*’ of verse 3 must refer to the *first half* of the Seventieth Week, because the two witnesses bear their testimony during this period, and they cannot be slain until the Roman beast comes to the height of his power when it is ‘given unto him to make war with the

saints, and to *overcome* them' (Rev. 11:7; 13:7). Thus we have here clearly the entire Seventieth Week: the first half as the period of the rising power of the Roman prince and the testimony of the Two Witnesses; while the second half is the period of the Beast's absolute dominion over the world and his terrible persecution of Israel. The exact middle of the Seventieth Week is marked by the killing of the Witnesses and the sounding of the 'seventh angel' (Rev. 11:1-15). Only one question remains: Can we locate the beginning and the end of this Seventieth Week in the record of the Book of Revelation? Since we already know that the week will end with the glorious appearing of the true Christ from heaven, it is clear that the seven-year period must *end* in chapter 19, verses 11 to 21. And since the period begins with the revelation of the false Christ, as we have seen above, the Seventieth Week must *begin* in Revelation 6:1-2, where the Roman beast begins his ruthless ride to world power. Thus chapters six to nineteen of Revelation cover the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy, an exact period of seven prophetic years divided into two equal halves at the sounding of the 'seventh angel.' Borne along by the same Spirit of prophecy, Daniel furnishes the chronological frame and John fills in the details. If we separate the two, prophecy becomes an insoluble enigma" (*ibid.*, p. 56). "If we examine the context of chapters 11-13 [of Revelation], we shall find not only one, but two periods to which this same unit of measure is applied. The first is the period of the two witnesses in conflict with the beast, stated as 1260 days, ending with their death at his hands (11:3, 7). A second period follows in which the beast, having now put down all opposition and reached the place of world power, is given 'forty and two months' to continue his reign (13:4-8). Adding together these two periods of the same length respectively, obviously the total time equals exactly seven prophetic years of 360 days each" (McClain, *GK*, p. 459). "The literality of these time-measures is now grounded in history. It is generally agreed by devout students of Biblical prophecy that the first sixty-nine 'weeks' of Daniel's prophecy are 'sevens' of *years*, and that they have been literally fulfilled by the first coming of Christ (9:25). But if the first sixty-nine sevens of years are literal years, then so also must be the last seven of years. That this last seven lies prophetically in the future has been established by the testimony of Christ Himself. The argument is as follows: both Daniel and our Lord spoke of something called 'the abomination of desolation.' Whatever this thing may be, it is certain that Daniel located it within the last 'week' of his great prophecy (Dan. 9:27 with 12:11). It is equally certain that Christ placed it at 'the end' of the present age in connection with the terrible 'tribulation' immediately preceding His second coming in glory (cf. verses 15, 21, 29, and 30, in Matt. 24). Therefore, since

our Lord has not yet come in glory, Daniel's final 'week' of years must lie in the future. This is Christ's own interpretation, and should settle the matter. It also harmonizes perfectly with the New Testament doctrine of the Church, because in this view her career on earth must be placed between Daniel's sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, an area for which there is no recorded chronology" (*ibid.*, p. 460). "A period of trouble cannot be unprecedented and at the same time general throughout the age" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 158). "The sixty-nine 'weeks' of Daniel (9:24-26) have demonstrated by their fulfillment that the time unit is a year—each 'week' being a period of seven years" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 259). "...the Book of Revelation. Chapters 6-16 detail the chronological sequence of the events of the Tribulation, ending with Armageddon and the Second Coming. Then chapters 17-18 follow *The Law of Recurrence*: Chapter 17 provides more detail about the first half of the Tribulation and chapter 18 about the second half" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 6). "In the Book of Revelation, time zones, be they days, months, or years, are always quite literal" (*ibid.*, p. 54) "Revelation 6-18 deals with the Great Tribulation period. Chapters 6-9 and 17 are concerned with the events of the first half, chapters 10-14 with the events of the middle, and chapters 15-16 and 18 with the events of the second half" (*ibid.*, p. 203). "...the Book of Revelation... never are years used in a symbolic way in this book... The mention of 1,260 days, 42 months, and 3 1/2 years are all literal and not symbolic" (*ibid.*, p. 375). "Ancient Judaism taught that a seven-year period of time will immediately precede the Messiah's coming to rule the world" (Showers, *M*, p. 21). "The Dead Sea Scrolls and other literature called the severe troubles of the seven years before the Messiah's coming 'the birth pangs of the Messiah'" (*ibid.*). (See also our discussion of Daniel's seventieth week in the *The Times of the Gentiles* section of our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*.)

The "beginning of birth pangs" is the first three and one half years of the seven-year Tribulation. "And Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will mislead many. And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But **all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs**'" (Matt. 24:4-8). "Christ introduced and discussed the *beginning* of birth pangs (Mt. 24:4-8) *before* He introduced the abomination of desolation and the Great Tribulation (Mt. 24:15-21), and it appears that He introduced and discussed events in chronological order in this section of

Matthew 24. This implies that the beginning of birth pangs will precede the abomination of desolation (of the middle of the 70th week) and the Great Tribulation (of the second half of the 70th week) and therefore will occur during the first half of that seven-year period” (Showers, *M*, p. 25). “...the first three-and-a-half years being called ‘the beginning of birth pains’” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:602)

The “Great Tribulation” is the final three and one half years of the seven-year Tribulation. “And he shall speak words against the Most High, and **shall wear out the saints of the Most High**; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and **they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time**” (Dan. 7:25). “And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end**, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as **he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed**” (Dan. 12:7). “...raised both hands emphasized the solemnity and importance of the oath... affirmed the absolute certainty of the Great Tribulation’s lasting for three and one-half years” (Showers, *M*, p. 48) “Therefore **when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)**, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall**” (Matt. 24:15-21). “And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto **the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months**” (Rev. 11:2). “And **the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days**” (Rev. 12:6). “And **there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place,**

where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent” (Rev. 12:14). “and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and **there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months**. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven. And **it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them**: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation” (Rev. 13:5–7). “Since this period of ‘desolations’ begins in the middle of the last week and lasts ‘even unto the full end’ ([Dan.] 9:27), obviously it will continue for three and a half years. This is exactly the time specified in Daniel 7:25 during which the Roman beast ‘shall wear out the saints of the Most High’; the same measure of time given in Revelation 13:5-7 when this beast ‘shall make war with the saints and... overcome them’; the same time mentioned in Revelation 11:2, during which the holy city shall be trodden down of the Gentile nations; the same time referred to in Revelation 12:6, 14, during which the ‘woman’ (Israel) shall be given the special protection of God. Thus all of divine prophecy fits together perfectly: The same persecutor, the same kind of persecution, the same nation under persecution, and exactly the same length of time. A number of very ingenious prophetic schemes have been worked out by the artifice of taking these 1260 days and turning them into years. How much more simple and satisfactory it is to take these passages just as they read without any tampering with the language. In this way, the prophecy of the Book of Revelation synchronizes exactly with Daniel’s great prophecy of the end-time” (McClain, *DP*, p. 63). “His [Antichrist’s] uncontested reign, then, will span the last three and a half years of the Tribulation” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 310). “That the Scriptures emphasize that the Great Tribulation will be three and one-half years is, of course, admitted” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 127). “The Great Tribulation will begin in the middle of the seven-year 70th week. We know this because Jesus indicated that the Great Tribulation will begin with the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15-21), which will take place in the middle of the 70th week (Dan. 9:27)” (Showers, *M*, p. 24). “...the following comments by Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons during the last quarter of the second century, are significant: ‘But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom’” [quoting Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V., chpt. 30, section 3 in *The*

Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed, by Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Buffalo: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885), I, p. 560] (*ibid.*, p. 49). “...the second three-and-a-half being hard-labor birth pains or ‘the great tribulation’ ([Matt. 24] v. 21 NKJV)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:602).

The Great Tribulation is to be “cut short.” “**And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short**” (Matt. 24:22). “The phrase *cut short* can mean ‘to terminate.’ In other words, if those days with their awful judgment were allowed to continue indefinitely, the human race would be totally destroyed. But Christ pointed out that God will allow that period to run its course, but will terminate it according to His timetable so that a remnant will be spared” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 253).

It ends with Christ’s return. “**But immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and **they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:29-30). “The great tribulation is brought to its close by the second advent of Christ and destruction of the world power of Gentiles as predicted by Daniel and many prophetic portions of the Old and New Testaments” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 257).

The chronology will be understood clearly after the Tribulation begins. “And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for **a time, times, and a half**; and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said *I*, O my lord, what shall be the issue of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for **the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end**. Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and **none of the wicked shall understand**; but **they that are wise shall understand**” (Dan. 12:6-10). “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.’... The ‘time of the end’ will arrive with the beginning of the Seventieth Week, and then prophetic chronology will instantly become so crystal clear that only the ‘wicked’ can possibly misunderstand ([Dan] 12:10)” (McClain, *DP*, p. 39).

Sociological Systems of the Tribulation

Sociologically, the Bible's description of the Tribulation involves a global government, a global economy and a global religion, all centered in "Babylon." "...one-world government, one-world religion, and one-world economy" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 307)

Government of the Tribulation

The global *government* of the Tribulation begins with a ten-nation confederacy, progresses (or rather digresses) to a seven-nation confederacy, then culminates at the Tribulation's midpoint in a world dictatorship under Antichrist. "The world government during the first half of the Tribulation is that of ten kings ruling co-equally over ten kingdoms. In the middle of the Tribulation, all the other kings will turn their authority over to the Antichrist, who will then rule the world for the second half of the Tribulation. The Antichrist's rule will terminate with the Second Coming" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 689).

The global government *begins with a ten-nation confederacy*. "And whereas thou sawest the feet and **[ten] toes**, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be **a divided kingdom**; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the **toes** of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken" (Dan. 2:41-42). "After this I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, **a fourth beast**, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and **it had ten horns**. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Dan. 7:7-8). "and concerning the **ten horns** that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows" (Dan. 7:20). "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be **a fourth kingdom upon earth**, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And **as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise**: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings" (Dan. 7:23-24). "Daniel 7:24a... Textually, after the world falls under the One World Government, then and only then does the One World Gov-

ernment split up into ten kingdoms” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 126). “And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and **ten horns**, and on his heads were seven diadems” (Rev. 12:3). “And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns** and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names” (Rev. 13:1). “And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on **a scarlet beast**, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and **ten horns**” (Rev. 17:3). “And the angel said to me, ‘Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of **the beast** that carries her, which has the seven heads and the **ten horns**’” (Rev. 17:7). “**And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour**” (Rev. 17:12). “And the **ten horns** which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire” (Rev. 17:16). “Fausset (Com. Dan. 7) correctly says: ‘the definite ten will be the ultimate development of the Roman Empire, just before the rise of the Antichrist’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:696). “...in Rev. 17 the toes or horns are limited to one hour or a brief period of time” (*ibid.*, p. 707) “...the ten horns... the formation of this confederacy is still future, and hence, not knowing who they are, it would be rashly premature to attempt even to designate any of them” (*ibid.*, p. 752). “They arise only when the last head appears, being limited to a brief existence, and as they and the head both fight with the Lamb at His Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 754) “This head and these horns arise about the same time” (*ibid.*, p. 755) “The future formation of the ten kingdoms and their confederation under Antichrist... we locate the formation and confederation in the interval” (*ibid.*, 3:149) “...the final world ruler who will emerge first as the head of a ten-nation confederacy and then will make a covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27) seven years before the second coming of Christ” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 244). “...ten-division confederation that will constitute the revived Roman Empire (Dan. 7:7-8, 20, 23-24)” (Showers, *M*, p. 65)

Three of the ten kingdoms are uprooted by Antichrist. “I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them **another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots**: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Dan. 7:8). “and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and **the other horn which came up, and before which three fell**, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows” (Dan. 7:20). “Thus

he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and **another shall arise after them;** and he shall be diverse from the former, **and he shall put down three kings**” (Dan. 7:23-24). “...it is while the whole number of ten are contemporaneously existing with the beast that the Papacy is destroyed, and not after three are fallen... after the Papacy is overthrown by this confederation and before the war with Christ, three of those kingdoms, for some cause or other, will be uprooted by the Antichrist” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:755).

Ultimately, a *world dictatorship* under Antichrist is established. “After this I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had **ten horns**. I considered the horns, and, behold, **there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things**” (Dan. 7:7-8). “and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and **the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows**” (Dan. 7:20). “Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the **ten horns**, out of this kingdom shall **ten kings** arise: and **another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings**” (Dan. 7:23-24). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdom [singular] of the world** has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15). “And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems**, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority**. And I saw **one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed**. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;** and they worshiped **the dragon**, because **he gave his authority**

to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and **authority to act for forty-two months was given to him**. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and **authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him**. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:1-10). “And the ten horns which you saw are **ten kings**, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. **These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast**” (Rev. 17:12-13). “And **the ten horns** which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. For **God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled**” (Rev. 17:16-17). “If it be asked how, in opposition to many kingdoms with their varied and clashing interests, it is possible such a head over different nations can be raised up, the answer, not dogmatically expressed, may be as follows: the conflicts now going on under Socialistic, Communistic, Nihilistic, International, and Unbelieving influences are producing in many countries a similarity of feeling, sentiment, and aim. Whatever measure of success may attend their views and measures, it will soon be found that the tendencies and results are mutually destructive, unless a centralization of power is somewhere established. State and society cannot possibly exist, the direst anarchy must prevail, unless some safeguards in behalf of government are erected and sustained. Hence the idea of self-preservation, in the line of humanitarian ideas, will suggest this confederation under Antichrist. We are satisfied with the declaration of the Spirit that this is done under Divine Providence, for it is so declared, Rev. 17:17” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:754). “The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever’ ([Rev.] 11:15, ASV)... The singular number here (supported by weight Ms. evidence) points to the satanic unity of the world system of nations at the end-time” (McClain, *GK*, p. 473). “...three and one-

half years before the second coming of Christ when he takes the role of world ruler” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 245) “First, the man of sin will rise to power as the 11th ruler within the already formed ten-division confederation that will constitute the revived Roman Empire (Dan. 7:7-8, 20, 23-24). Second, as the man of sin rises to power, he will overthrow three of the original ten rulers of the revived Roman Empire (Dan. 7:8, 20, 24). Third, after overthrowing those three rulers, the man of sin will become the dominant ruler of the revived Roman Empire (Dan. 7:20, 24, 26; Rev. 17:12-13, 16-17)” (Showers, *M*, p. 65). “In light of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16, the eastern balance of power will collapse with the fall of Russian forces and her Moslem allies in Israel and the destruction of Russia itself. With the eastern power destroyed, this will open the way for a one world government” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 126). “Babylon is to be rebuilt and become the Antichrist’s political and economic capital of the world” (*ibid.*, p. 277). (See also our discussion of Antichrist’s ruling absolutely in our section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* below.)

Economy of the Tribulation

The *economy* of the Tribulation will culminate in *world socialism*. “And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And **he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark**, either the name of the beast or the number of his name” (Rev. 13:11–17). (See our discussion of the mark of the beast in our section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* and our discussion of the fall of the city (political and economic) Babylon in our section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* below.)

Religion of the Tribulation

The *religion* of the Tribulation will have three consecutive stages. Initially, the “woman Babylon” will head the global religion. At the midpoint of the Tribulation, the “woman Babylon” will be destroyed by Antichrist. Finally, the Antichrist himself will be worshiped as God.

Initially, *the woman Babylon heads a global apostate religion*. “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you the judgment of **the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.**’ And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw **a woman sitting on a scarlet beast**, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, **‘BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.’** And **I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.** And when I saw her, I wondered greatly” (Rev. 17:1–6). “Human religions may indeed become very tolerant of one another, but they can never tolerate the one true faith of God” (McClain, *GK*, p. 189). “There can never be any neutrality in relation to the true God. If men do not love Him, they will hate Him; as our Lord warned, ‘He that is not with me is against me’ (Matt. 12:30)” (*ibid.*, p. 190). “In the first half of the Tribulation, when the world is ruled by ten kings over ten nations, these ten kings will be supporters of this one-world religious system” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 687). “Babel is Babylon (in Hebrew it is the same word)... *Babylon the Great*” (*ibid.*, p. 688) “The mystery is the fact that Babylon will develop into a one-world unified religion, and will rule the world religiously for the first half of the Tribulation. It will be headquartered and based in the city of Babylon; it will be supported by the governments of that day; and it will be the primary persecutor of believers who will not submit to its religious authority. All of this was totally unrevealed in the Old Testament” (*ibid.*). “In [Rev. 17] verse 18, it is stated that the headquarters of Mystery Babylon will be the city of Babylon” (*ibid.*, p. 689). “**And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth**” (Rev. 17:18).

At the midpoint of the Tribulation, *the “woman Babylon” is destroyed by Antichrist*. “**And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast,**

these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by **giving their kingdom to the beast**, until the words of God should be fulfilled” (Rev. 17:16–17). “I will punish the world for their evil,’ is the ultimatum of Jehovah (Isa. 13:9-11). This infliction of divine wrath will be directed primarily against two characteristic world sins: *human pride* and *false religion*. ‘For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low’ (Isa. 2:12). ‘In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats’ (Isa. 2:20). The utter impotence of all false religion will be demonstrated before the eyes of all men. What a spectacle!—the proud adherents of the great world religions and cults casting away as worthless all the precious symbols of their misplaced faith, and crawling into ‘holes’ and ‘caves’ for refuge when the true God rises up to ‘shake terribly the earth’ (Isa. 2:19, 21)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 189). “The world religious system of the first half of the Tribulation will be destroyed in the middle of the Tribulation by the Antichrist and his allied kings ([Rev. 17] v. 16)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 689). (See our discussion of the fall of ecclesiastical Babylon the Great in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below.)

Finally, *the Antichrist is acknowledged and worshiped as God*. “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, **who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**” (2 Thes. 2:1-4). “And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea**, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and **on his heads were blasphemous names**. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power** and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth** was amazed and followed after the beast; and **they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they wor-**

shipped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and **blasphemies**; and **authority to act for forty-two months was given to him**. And he opened his mouth in **blasphemies against God**, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And **all who dwell on the earth will worship him**, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:1–10). “Connected with this purely civil relationship there is also the religious claim of power to direct the worship of the nations, and it is this especially which gives him the title of Antichrist. Both are combined, and it is this combination which makes Him so fearful to contemplate; the former giving him the ability to enforce the penalties relating to the latter” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:712). “the whole Roman Empire... worship of the emperors... This religious development, culminating in imperial worship, will be repeated on a more fearful scale” (*ibid.*, p. 729). “The design actuating these confederated powers is that of self-aggrandizement, the exaltation of Humanity, in the person of a recognized leader, above that of God Himself, the bringing of all nations in subjection to this denial of the true God and His Christ, and to the acknowledgment of the deification of Humanity in this last head” (*ibid.*, p. 757). “Men have always been able to find reasons for worshipping themselves. F. L. Godet, noted Swiss theologian, pointed out that the ‘theological system’ of the Antichrist could be summed up in three propositions: ‘1. There is no personal God without and above the universe. 2. Man is himself his own god—the god of this world. 3. I am the representative of humanity; by worshipping me, humanity worships itself’” (McClain, *DP*, p. 63). “The worship of the Antichrist will replace the worship of Mystery Babylon as the world religious system, and this new world religious system will be the religion of the second half of the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 691).

Characters of the Tribulation

The *characters* of the Tribulation period can be divided into two broad categories: evil and good.

Evil Characters of the Tribulation

The *evil* characters of the Tribulation period include Satan, demons, the Antichrist, the false prophet, the apostate church (Babylon the Great) and lost mankind. “Satan will play the role of the counterfeit father... The False Prophet will play the role of the counterfeit holy spirit. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to call men to worship Messiah... In every detail... the Antichrist will play the part of a counterfeit son” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 204).

Individually, these evil characters are:

Satan. “And there was war in heaven, **Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon.** And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And **the great dragon was thrown down**, the serpent of old who is called the devil and **Satan**, who deceives the whole world; **he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.** And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.’ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. ‘For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time**” (Rev. 12:7-12). “And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea**, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.** And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him’” (Rev. 13:1-4)? “And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of **the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time” (Rev. 20:1-3).

Demons. “Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, **a great red dragon** having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And **his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.** And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child” (Rev. 12:3-4). “And there was war in heaven, **Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war,** and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And **the great dragon was thrown down,** the serpent of old who is called the devil and **Satan,** who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, **and his angels were thrown down with him.** And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.’ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. ‘For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time’” (Rev. 12:7-12). “And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are **spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty**” (Rev. 16:13–14). “And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is **Babylon** the great! And **she has become a dwelling place of demons** and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird’” (Rev. 18:2). “Fallen angels will be used on several occasions to render judgment on the earth” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 224)

The Antichrist. The Antichrist is a major character of the Tribulation period. Therefore, we will now examine his person and his career in some detail. “It was a generally received opinion of the Jews (comp. Reuss, *His. of Ch. Theol. Ap. Age*, p. 115, etc.) that the Messianic Kingdom could not be introduced without the previous manifestation of the Antichrist. This view was derived from Daniel and the other prophets... This belief was incorporated in the early Church, and was universally held as belonging to the period immediately antecedent to the open, visible Advent of the Lord Jesus at His Second Coming... The language, etc., of the apostles fully corroborates the Jewish view” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:669) “The distinctive marks of the

Antichrist, as presented by the Spirit, are (1) the last and great adversary of God and Christ; (2) the development of infidelity so that it results in a denial of Father and Son, both as it relates to their authority and redemptive work; (3) the denial of the Messiahship of Jesus based upon that of His having come in humanity; (4) the denial of the Theocratic position of Jesus, founded upon that He will not come again in humanity (i.e. as ‘Son of man’); (5) the retention of a religious element, which causes him to become the object of general worship; (6) the claimer of attributes and honor belonging to God; (7) the blasphemer by way of eminence, exceeding all that has hitherto transpired, being lawless and actuated by Satan, etc; (8) the most astounding capacity and success in obtaining adherents; (9) the obtainer of vast power over the nations; (10) the leader of ten subordinate powers; (11) the eulogized head of a sustaining power; (12) the persecutor of the believers; (13) the overthrower of the whore; (14) the slayer of all who will not worship him; (15) the performer of signs and lying wonders; (16) the direct antagonist of ‘the King’ at His Coming; (17) and finally, the last head or controlling polity arising out of the revived fourth beast or Roman Empire. No wonder that he who humbly receives the Word contemplates such characteristics with astonishment and dread; and that, when locating this Antichrist still in the future (where undoubtedly the Scriptures place it), he regards this a subject well worthy of the closest attention and study” (*ibid.*, p. 699). “...he is one who knows the truth of God as it is recorded (which he opposes), but positively and obstinately rejects it, and sets up another standard for the truth. Therefore he is no heathen, in the sense of one who has never heard the Word, but is one conversant with Bible doctrine and determined upon crushing it” (*ibid.*, p. 712).

Regarding Antichrist’s *Person*:

He is an actual *person*; not merely an idea or an influence. “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, **the son** of destruction, who opposes and exalts **himself** above every so-called god or object of worship, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains **him** now, so that in his time **he** may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then **that lawless one** will be revealed whom **the Lord will slay** with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with**

all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” (2 Thes. 2:3–10). “And I saw **a beast** coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on **his horns** were ten diadems, and on **his heads** were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and **his feet** were like those of a bear, and **his mouth** like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority**. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and **his fatal wound was healed**. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast**; and they worshiped **the dragon**, because **he gave his authority to the beast**; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘**Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?**’ And there was given to him **a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies**; and **authority to act for forty-two months was given to him**. And **he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God**, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And **it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them**; and **authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him**. And **all who dwell on the earth will worship him**, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:1–10). “Brooks (*El. of Proph. Interp.*, p. 257) asserts: ‘The Fathers were unanimous in their opinion that the Antichrist was to be a person’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:679) “Almost all great movements for good or for evil, have been gathered to a head by one central personal agency” (*ibid.*, p. 682). “Lange’s *Com.* on 2 Thess. p. 137... ‘In every worldly empire a tendency to apotheosis had been observable (Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander); of this current Paul notes the shameless consummation. Why should it be more conceivable that in this last empire the personal climax should be omitted, which was wanting in none of its predecessors? In all history there exists a reciprocity of action between the actual movement of the time and the achievements of an energetic personality. For every historical individual there is a thousandfold work of preparation, and he makes his appearance not otherwise than as a child of his age. And again the drift of the time only reaches an irresistible supremacy, when one man conceives the spirit of the time at its height, with bold grasp brings to bear what is fermenting half obscurely in a thousand minds, and so stamps the age with his seal. He can do it, if he has the courage—after all, it will be

the effrontery—to express and carry out what is in a thousand hearts” (*ibid.*, p. 683).

Some scholars envision for him a *miraculous conception*. “and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between **thy seed** and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). “that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan**, with all power and signs and false wonders” (2 Thes. 2:9) “Hippolytus made Antichrist (Baring Gould’s *Curious Myths*) the devil, occupying a phantom body, or (Brooks, *El. Proph. Interp.*) the devil assuming ‘the appearance of flesh, but not be really so, and boast himself to be born of a virgin’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:680). “During the Middle Ages many believed (Hagenbach’s *His. of Doc.*, vol. 1, p. 120, Dollinger’s *Prophecies of the Middle Ages*) ‘that Antichrist would either be brought forth of a virgin, or be the offspring of a bishop and a nun’” (*ibid.*). “Chapell (*Proph. Times*, Sep., 1873, p. 131), says: ‘if “the mystery of godliness” was God manifest in the flesh, perhaps, the “mystery of iniquity” will be Satan manifest in the flesh.’ ‘It is a serious question whether the Incarnation will not have a Satanic parallel; whether Antichrist will not be a demon-man just as Christ was a God-man; whether he will not be miraculously begotten by Satan as Christ was by the Holy Ghost’” (*ibid.*, p. 681). “His Supernatural Origin... Genesis 3:15... This verse not only contains the first prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, it at the same time gives the first prophecy of the Antichrist” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 212). “Satan will counterfeit the virgin conception and will some day impregnate a Roman woman who will give birth to Satan’s seed who is going to be the Antichrist” (*ibid.*, p. 213). “A time is coming when the situation of Genesis six will be repeated. A fallen angelic being, this time Satan himself, will impregnate a Gentile woman of Roman origin who will then give birth to Satan’s son. The end product will be a counterfeit god-man” (*ibid.*).

He is imbued with *Satanic power*. “And he [Satan] led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And **the devil said** to Him, ‘I will give You **all this domain and its glory**; for **it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish**. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours’” (Luke 4:5-7). “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in

his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders**, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” (2 Thes. 2:3–10). “And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power** and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped **the dragon**, because **he gave his authority to the beast**; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him’” (Rev. 13:2–4)? “...a man energized by Satan, or having Satanic powers, was believed in by Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Hippolytus, Cyprian, Victorinus, Lactantius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Jerome, Chrysostom, Hilary of Poitiers, Augustine, and Ambrose” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:681). “Irenaeus, who conversed with the disciples of John, said: ‘By Antichrist we understand a single individual whom Satan shall use pre-eminently as his instrument, just in the same way as he did the serpent when tempting our first parents to rebel against God’” (*ibid.*, p. 682)

Concerning his *identity*, “If, in days to come, a personal Antichrist, more God-defying and blaspheming than he who sits in Rome, shall rise, one of the marks that will signalize him as the concentration of satanic energy and hate, will be that he is a pronounced Anti-Chiliast” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:552). “...this Antichrist will arise out of and really be the last head of this same Roman power, fallen back to its former unchristian (e.g. given to idol worship), paganized condition” (*ibid.*, 2:328). “All the ancient Fathers, so far as we have their testimony, unite in declaring that the Antichrist shall arise out of the Roman Empire. Lactantius represents the early opinion, when he holds (*Div. Inst.*, B. 7, ch. 16, etc.) that the empire should continue in a divided form being ‘dispersed among many and divided’ until the final confederation. The Jews, from Daniel alone, entertained similar views which were perpetuated” (*ibid.*, p. 649). “...the Reformers were mistaken in confounding the Romish Babylon with the last and highest concentration of Antichristian power” (*ibid.*, p. 687). “This one is Satan’s great masterpiece in the imitation of the program of God” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 306). “Antichrist... it is a well-chosen title. It is a title that describes his true intent,

which is to be against Messiah. All his other names essentially portray the various characteristics which he will use in his opposition to Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 205). “The Antichrist, being the counterfeit son, will have both a natural origin and a supernatural origin in imitation of the True Son” (*ibid.*). “The Antichrist Will Not Be a Jew... how would the Gentiles accept him if he is a Jew” (*ibid.*, p. 206)? “To say that the Antichrist is to be a Jew contradicts the very nature of the Times of the Gentiles” (*ibid.*, p. 210).

Regarding Antichrist’s *Career*:

In summary, “...the Antichrist... As a single individual it is impossible for him to accomplish what is predicted; it is as a person directing a powerful government, etc., that he performs such great things” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:687). “...a false messianic ruler (the ‘strong delusion’ of 2 Thess. 2:9-11), who rises to world power in the space of three and a half years and who will wield his terrible power during a subsequent period of the same length” (McClain, *GK*, p. 460). “Satan intends to present the world with his masterpiece of deception. He will offer the world a substitute for Jesus Christ who, by Satan’s power, will appear to give the world everything that Jesus Christ will give when He assumes His rightful role as King” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 302). “The Antichrist is the counterfeit son in every respect. There has been a counterfeit multiplicity of names, a counterfeit virgin birth, a counterfeit god-man, and now a counterfeit death and resurrection. A counterfeit second coming to rule the world can be seen as he will move to possess the nations and kingdoms of the world. Satan is playing the part of the counterfeit father in this scenario. For as the True Father gave His authority to the True Son, so the counterfeit father will give his authority to the counterfeit son” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 244). “Revelation 13:1, 4-8, 11-14, 16-18... From this we can conclude: (1) The beast (Antichrist) will claim to be God and demand that all worship be given to him *in the middle of the Tribulation*. (2) He will perform impressive, successfully deceptive signs. (3) He will persecute God’s people. (4) He will rule the world. (5) He will not allow people to buy or sell without his mark (666). (6) His reign will last forty-two months, designated by Daniel as half (the second half) of the seven-year Tribulation period. (7) During this same time the ‘woman’ (Israel) will flee into the wilderness to be preserved through the rest of the Tribulation, ‘1,260 days’ (which is also three and one-half years, 12:6). (8) Also during this time, 144,000 Jews—12,000 from each tribe—will be saved, and through them so will a great multitude of others (7:4-9; 14:1-5)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:610).

In sequence:

Antichrist arrives on the scene. (See our discussion of Antichrist's arrival on the scene in the section *Events Just Prior to the Tribulation* below.)

He is identified. (See our discussion of Antichrist's identification in the section *Events Just Prior to the Tribulation* below.)

He is judged by God. "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them **another horn, a little one**, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and **a mouth speaking great things**. I beheld till **thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit**: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire" (Dan. 7:8-9). "The time sequence of events must not be overlooked here. The divine court is set in heaven, not at the end of the little horn's career, nor at its height, but at its beginning. The order in Daniel 7:8-9 is unmistakable: The little horn rises on earth and opens his mouth to speak 'great things'—and at this precise moment the prophet looks up to behold the high court of divine justice set in heaven" (McClain, *GK*, p. 184).

He is revealed. (See our discussion of Antichrist's revealing (at the removal of the restrainer) in the section *Events Just Prior to the Tribulation* below.)

He receives his power from Satan. "And he [Satan] led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And **the devil said** to Him, 'I will give You **all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish**. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours'" (Luke 4:5-7). "Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders**, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved" (2 Thes. 2:3-10). "And the beast

which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power** and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped **the dragon**, because **he gave his authority to the beast**; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him’” (Rev. 13:2–4)? “Jesus resisted Satan’s offer of power when tempted, but Antichrist gladly accepts of Satan’s tender” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:758)

He conquers nations. (See our discussion of Antichrist’s conquering at the opening of the first seal in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below.)

He confirms a covenant with Israel, beginning the Tribulation. (See our discussion of Antichrist’s confirming a covenant with Israel in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below.)

He recovers from a fatal wound. “And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and **his fatal wound was healed**. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast” (Rev. 13:3)

He is accompanied by a false prophet. “And I saw **another beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And **he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence**. And **he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast**, whose fatal wound was healed. And **he performs great signs**, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life” (Rev. 13:11–14). “And **the beast** was seized, and **with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence**, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; **these two** were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20).

He performs miracles. “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the

mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders**” (2 Thes. 2:3–9) “...the performance of miracles. That which unbelief has always ridiculed and scorned as the weakness of Christianity, will be assumed to support unbelief and will be appealed to as its grand persuasive” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:758). “Pharaoh’s Magicians... Satanic agency—‘after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders’” (*ibid.*). “Their ‘miracles,’ however astounding and well calculated to entrap the unwary and unbelieving, will not deceive the humble believer in the Word of God, simply because these scenes and agencies are too plainly foretold” (*ibid.*, p. 760).

He deceives the whole world. “And Jesus answered and said to them, **‘See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will mislead many’**” (Matt. 24:4-6). “**And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many**” (Matt. 24:11). “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; **if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him**” (John 5:43). “that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness**” (2 Thes. 2:9-12). “And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast**” (Rev. 13:3) “And he [the false prophet] **deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast**, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life” (Rev. 13:14). “Those who reject God are the most superstitious, seeking, as Shenkel says, after ghosts” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:758). “As God set the nation Israel aside who are the ‘natural branches,’ that the door might be opened for Gentiles to hear the gospel in this age, in like manner He will set aside the Gentiles when their day of grace is over” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:306).

He breaks the covenant with Israel at the mid-point of the Tribulation. (See our discussion of Antichrist's breaking the covenant with Israel in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* below.)

He presents himself as God in the temple at the mid-point of the Tribulation. (See our discussion of Antichrist's seating himself in the temple, claiming to be God, in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* below.)

He blasphemes God. (See our discussion of Antichrist's blaspheming God in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* below.)

He is worshiped. “And **all who dwell on the earth will worship him**, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain” (Rev. 13:8). “And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and **cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed**” (Rev. 13:15). “And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘**If anyone worships the beast and his image**, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, **those who worship the beast** and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’ Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev. 14:9-12).

He rules absolutely. (See our discussions of Antichrist's ruling as world dictator in the section *Government of the Tribulation* above and in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* below.)

He persecutes Israel. (See our discussion of Antichrist's persecution of Israel in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* below.)

He is conquered and killed by Christ at His appearing. (See our discussion of Christ's conquering and killing Antichrist in the section *Purposes of the Second Coming* in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

And finally, *he is resurrected and thrown alive into the lake of fire.* (See our discussion of Christ's resurrecting and casting Antichrist into the lake of fire in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

Continuing now our discussion of the evil characters of the Tribulation period:

The false prophet. “And I saw **another beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and **he spoke as a dragon**. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And **he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast**, whose fatal wound was healed. And **he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men**. And **he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast** who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And **there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast**, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And **he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name**. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six” (Rev. 13:11-18). “And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of **the false prophet**, three unclean spirits like frogs” (Rev. 16:13) “And the beast was seized, and with him **the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image**; these two were **thrown alive into the lake of fire** which burns with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20). “...the counterfeit holy spirit in the person of the False Prophet” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 249)

The apostate church (the woman Babylon or mystery Babylon or ecclesiastical Babylon or Babylon the Great). “And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is **Babylon the great**, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality’” (Rev. 14:8). “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you the judgment of **the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.**’ And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw **a woman sitting on a scarlet beast**, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads

and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, **'BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.'** And **I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.** And when I saw her, I wondered greatly" (Rev. 17:1–6). "...a fighting and struggling Church, which shall ultimately, by apostatizing (2 Thess. 2) and by lack of faith (Luke 18:1-8), fall under the power, as a punishment, of a culminated Antichrist, and endure a fearful persecution (e.g. Rev. 14, Dan. 7, etc.)" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:634). "Apostate Christendom (the bad fish and the tares of Matthew 13) will be included in mystery Babylon, which appears to consist of all the false religious systems of all ages" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 161). "When a woman is used symbolically in Scripture, she represents a religious entity" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 58). (See our discussion of the fall of ecclesiastical Babylon in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below.)

And, *lost mankind*. "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from **the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth**" (Rev. 3:10). "And **the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent** of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and **they did not repent** of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts" (Rev. 9:20-21). "And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast**, saying, 'Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?' And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them;

and authority over **every tribe and people and tongue and nation** was given to him. And **all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb** who has been slain” (Rev. 13:1–8). “And **men** were scorched with fierce heat; and **they blasphemed the name of God** who has the power over these plagues; and **they did not repent**, so as to give Him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and **they blasphemed the God of heaven** because of their pains and their sores; and **they did not repent** of their deeds” (Rev. 16:9–11).

Good Characters of the Tribulation

The *good* characters of the Tribulation period include the 144,000, the two witnesses and the Tribulation saints.

Individually, these good characters are:

The 144,000. (See our discussion of the sealing of the 144,000 in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below.)

The two witnesses. (See our discussion of the prophesying, killing, resurrection and translation of the two witnesses in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below.)

The Tribulation saints (the great multitude of Revelation seven and the sheep of Matthew chapter 25). (See our discussion of the saving of the great multitude in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* below, and our discussion of the sheep and goats judgment in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

Events in Preparation For the Tribulation

In this section we will take a look at the ideologies and events that prepare the world for the Tribulation, as well as the events that are prophesied to transpire just before the Tribulation begins.

Ideologies in Preparation for the Tribulation

It is prophesied and therefore expected that *anti-Christian ideologies* will increase in popularity and influence as the Tribulation period draws near. These ideologies include humanism, liberalism, “tolerance” and spiritualism. For a discussion of these ideologies in the light of premillennialism, see the section *Instruments of Opposition* of our chapter *The Kingdom in Church History*. See also our discussion of the ungodly characteristics of the last days of the church in the section *Chronology of the Church Age* of

our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*. “Dr. Draper (*His. Conflict between Religion and Science*, Pref.)... the ‘extensive departure of intelligent classes, etc., from the public religious faith... The time is rapidly approaching when it will give rise to serious political results’... infidelity being more in accord with the natural man—being willingly embraced as more desirable than the restraints imposed by God’s law—will ever reproduce and exalt the reasoning so oft refuted” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:134).

Events in Preparation for the Tribulation

While the primary focus of the Kingdom during this Church Age has been on gathering the kings and priests for the future Kingdom (see the section *The Current Purpose of the Church Age* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*), other events have been transpiring in preparation for the Tribulation period (which is in turn preparation for the Millennial Kingdom). *Events in preparation for the Tribulation* include the destruction of the second Jewish temple and the dispersion of the Jews, the trampling of Jerusalem by the Gentiles, the preservation of Israel as a people, the regathering of Israel to the land in unbelief, the reestablishment of Israel as a nation, war, widespread godlessness and apostasy in the church. “Instead of being defeated in His Theocratic purpose, God has been steadily making preparation for its sudden and overwhelming appearance” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:588).

Considered individually, these events in preparation for the Tribulation period are:

The destruction of the second Jewish temple and the dispersion of the Jews. “And Jesus came out from **the temple** and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. And He answered and said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, **not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down**’” (Matt. 24:1–2). “But when you see **Jerusalem** surrounded by armies, then recognize that **her desolation** is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, **in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled**. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to **this people**, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and **will be led captive into all the nations**; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:20–24). “The destruction of the temple and disper-

sion of the nation forms a new epoch, showing that Divine forbearance in allowing the nation, as such, further space for national repentance was past, until a certain time had elapsed, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:465) “Fausset (*Com. Isa. 2:3*) remarks: ‘If the curse foretold against Israel has been literally fulfilled, so shall the promised blessing be literal. We Gentiles must not, while giving them the curse, deny them their peculiar blessing by spiritualizing it’” (*ibid.*, 3:64).

The trampling of Jerusalem by the Gentiles. “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “Seeing eighteen centuries of literal fulfillment in the treading down of the city by the Gentiles, we feel impelled to await the final catastrophe” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:769). “Jesus... Messiah... the builders that rejected Him have borne their sad punishment for eighteen centuries” (*ibid.*, 3:601) (See our discussion of Jerusalem’s trampling by the Gentiles in the section *The Times of the Gentiles* of our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*.)

The preservation of Israel as a people. “And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, **I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies:** if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then **will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, while it lieth desolate without them:** and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they rejected mine ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. **And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah**” (Lev. 26:40–45). “Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth **the sun** for a light by day, and the ordinances of **the moon** and of **the stars** for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: **If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation**

before me for ever. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:35–37). “Behold, the eyes of the Lord Jehovah are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; save that **I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith Jehovah**” (Amos 9:8). “For **I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed**” (Mal. 3:6). “The modern [in 1884—*ed.*] Jews... their own scattered condition and continued preservation among the nations (as predicted) confirms the assurances of this God” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:288). “(Lev. 26:44), ‘Yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God.’ Whether they believe it or not, mercy follows them for the sake of the covenant, and mercy will yet verify that covenant in the history of the nation, for ‘their God’ has sworn it” (*ibid.*). “...a preservation of the nation. This has been done; and to-day we see that nation wonderfully continued down to the present, although enemies, including the strongest nations and most powerful empires, have perished” (*ibid.*, p. 351). “Every Jew, if we will but ponder the matter, that we meet on our streets is a living evidence that the Messiah will yet some day reign gloriously on David’s throne and over his Kingdom, from which to extend a world-wide dominion” (*ibid.*). “Why even in the time of rejection are they so wonderfully preserved, and why is their restoration so plainly predicted, unless the promises remain linked with them? Why should the threatenings be carefully given to them and the blessings pertaining to the very same people, be taken from them? Surely it is illogical, if not worse, to appropriate the covenant promises to ourselves, and leave the curses to the Jews. God has united them and bound them together in an inseparable manner with that people, and seeing the latter so fearfully verified, enjoins upon us the belief that the former will also yet be realized. The ‘hope of Israel’ is our hope; and such hope is greatly increased by an intelligent and consistent Scriptural interpretation of the design of this dispensation” (*ibid.*, p. 589). “The Jews, therefore, owing to their nationally promised perpetuity and future position as a nation in the yet unfulfilled Purposes of God, are preserved down to the present day as a people, separate and distinct from all others, who, if such were the Divine Will, can at any moment be reorganized into a distinctive nationality among the nations” (*ibid.*, 2:56). “Basnage (*His. Jews*) has well said: ‘The preservation of the Jews in the midst of the miseries which they have undergone during 1700 years is the greatest prodigy that can be imag-

ined.’ An Art. in the *Eclectic Mag.* (taken from the *Saturday Review*), Ap., 1877, entitled *The Jews in Europe*, asserts: “The Jews really stand by themselves as the case of a whole nation dispersed in all parts of the world, yet remaining a nation, cherishing a national feeling, but having no local country of its own anywhere.’ Speaking of the purity of Jewish descent, the writer adds: “The gens remains a gens by birth, and not by legal fiction. The phenomenon is one of the strangest in all history; the more it is thought of the more its thorough strangeness comes out” (*ibid.*, p. 59). “Milman [*His. of the Jews*] (p. 140)... ‘the Jews, equally inflexible and unsocial, maintain their seclusion from the rest of mankind’” (*ibid.*). “Clarke (*Ten Religions*, p. 421) says: ‘Dispersed as they are, they are still a distinct people, a nation within other nations. Like drops of oil floating on the water, but never mingling with it, so the Jews are found everywhere floating drops of national life in the midst of other nationalities’” (*ibid.*). “The greatness and majesty of God, as well as His faithfulness, are shown in this wonderful, covert preservation” (*ibid.*, p. 66). “One of the greatest of modern miracles has been the preservation of the identity of Israel as a race and nation, a fact which has been the stumbling stone for the amillennial denial of Israel’s future. To deny that Israel has a bona fide existence today is to ignore that which is plain to everyone else” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 162). “The third evidence is the ‘astounding fact that Israel has continued as a nation until this very day.’ Other ancient nations have disappeared, decayed, or assimilated, ‘but the Jews continue as a recognizable group’ to the point of the reestablishment of Israel as a nation. For Ryrie, this event ‘should prove beyond all doubt to anyone that natural Israel is not the Church’” [quoting Ryrie, *Pre-millennial Faith*, pp. 65-67] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 446). “To Walvoord [*Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 160-162], ‘one of the greatest of modern miracles has been the preservation of the identity of Israel as a race and nation’” (*ibid.*, p. 460). “If God had no future for Israel, the Jews would have long disappeared just like other ancient peoples who were exiled from their home country; this has not happened” (*ibid.*, p. 462). “Yes! Still preserved in all their woe, still unconsumed by all these penal fires! Preserved! And for what? Let a thousand glorious prophecies answer!... What a glorious Jehovah is the Lord God of Israel! With what awe, what love, what fear, what hope, should this character, as exhibited towards Israel, inspire us” [quoting Horatius Bonar, “The Responsibilities of Christians as Regards the Jews,” *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* (October, 1855), pp. 347-352] (Horner, *FI*, p. 326)! “Let men speak or think as they will, Israel in the present is with us” [quoting Horatius Bonar, “The Responsibilities of

Christians as Regards the Jews,” *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* (October, 1855), p. 350] (*ibid.*, p. 327)

The regathering of Israel to the land in unbelief. “And it shall come to pass **in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people**, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and **will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth**” (Isa. 11:11–12). “In other words, the last one [the one yet to occur at Christ’s Second Advent—*ed.*] is only the second one. If the last one is the second one, how many can there be before that? Only one. The first one could not have been the return from Babylon since that was not an international regathering from the four corners of the world, only a migration from one country (Babylonia) to another (Judea)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 102). “As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely **with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out**, will I be king over you: and **I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out**; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah” (Ezek. 20:33–38). “The regathering of verses 34–35 [of Ezekiel chapter 20] precedes the judgment. For that reason, it is better to take the regathering of verses 34–35 to speak of the regathering of Israel before the Tribulation. This regathering is now visible with the modern State of Israel, which Walvoord himself sees as having prophetic significance. Following this regathering, comes the judgment of verses 36–37 which is best understood to be the judgment of the Tribulation. It is during this period that the ‘rebels’ are purged out (the two thirds) and the rest are refined and saved. Then those who become believers become part of the final regathering of verse 38” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 543). “God will first regather His people from all over the world where they have been scattered. That this gathering is not in faith, but in unbelief, is seen from the fact that

this gathering is *with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out*. This phrase is repeated twice in verses 33 and 34. This regathering in unbelief occurs after wrath has been poured out on the people. It is no accident that out of the fires of the Nazi Holocaust, the State of Israel was born” (*ibid.*, p. 717). “In these verses, Ezekiel clearly describes a worldwide regathering in unbelief, *from* wrath and *for* wrath, in preparation for a specific period of judgment that will then lead to a national salvation, and in turn to their final restoration” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 101). “And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is become dross unto me: all of them are brass and tin and iron and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because ye are all become dross, therefore, behold, **I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and brass and iron and lead and tin into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my wrath, and I will lay you there, and melt you.** Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that *I*, Jehovah, have poured out my wrath upon you” (Ezek. 22:17-22). “It is also a regathering in unbelief because they are filled with the impurities of brass and iron and lead and tin” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 101). “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, saith the Lord Jehovah, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For **I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land**” (Ezek. 36:22-24). “While primarily dealing with the regeneration of Israel, Ezekiel 36:22-24 nevertheless makes it clear that a regathering takes place *before* the regeneration” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 102). “Gather yourselves together, yea, **gather together, O nation that hath no shame; before** the decree bring forth, **before** the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, **before the day of Jehovah’s anger** come upon you. Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah’s anger**” (Zeph. 2:1-3). “In the preceding section of Zephaniah 1:14-18, Zephaniah described some features of a time called *the*

great day of Jehovah, or as other translations have it, ‘the day of the Lord.’ This is the most common Old Testament name for the Tribulation. In Zephaniah 2:1-2, Zephaniah speaks of an event that is to occur before the *great day of Jehovah* begins. In verse one, the nation of Israel is told to gather together. It is clear from this verse that this is a gathering in unbelief. In verse two, the word *before* is used three times in relationship to the preceding passage regarding the Tribulation. One of these ‘befores’ includes the *before the day of Jehovah* itself. While other texts speak of a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment, this passage clearly states that this regathering in unbelief will occur before the Tribulation actually begins” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 719). “This is a gathering in unbelief for it is a nation not yet ashamed of her sins” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 103). “The dispersion and the restoration, the tribulation and the blessings cannot be contemporaneous. In the predictions, the latter invariably follows the former” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:57). “A part of the nation under political influences, and probably under the auspices of some government favorably disposed (various writers refer to England), is thus restored to Palestine in a state of unbelief, and thus drinks the last dregs of Jewish tribulation. This partial restoration must be carefully distinguished from the one under the Messiah, for this is a restoration which means suffering and terrible persecution by Antichrist, while the other is full of blessing” (*ibid.*, p. 85). “The regathering of historic Israel is one of the major themes of prophetic Scripture, beginning in the writings of Moses (Deut. 30:1-3) and reaching its climax in the minor prophets. Yet the sole notice given to it in many theological works is a *denial* that it will ever be fulfilled” (McClain, *GK*, p. 198). “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind **among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee**, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then **Jehovah thy God will** turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will **return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee**” (Deut. 30:1-3). “The united testimony of the prophets is all to the same point, that Israel will yet be regathered from the nations of the world and reassembled in their ancient land. The beginnings of this final regathering are already [in 1958—*ed.*] apparent in contemporary history with almost two million Jews, or approximately one in six of all the Jewish population of the world, now living in Palestine. Scriptures make clear that the regathering will continue until consummated after the second advent of

Christ” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 182). “The significance of the regathering is that it justifies the literal interpretation of prophecy which anticipated just such a movement. If the regathering is to be taken literally, as present history would indicate, it would naturally follow that the predicted golden age is ahead following the second advent of Christ. Just as the second gathering was the prelude for the first advent of Christ, so the third regathering is the prelude for the second advent” (*ibid.*, p. 186). “The present partial possession of the land is a token. The complete possession awaits the coming of Israel’s Redeemer” (*ibid.*). “A nation ‘scattered for almost two millenniums are now firmly entrenched in the land of their forefathers’” [quoting Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, preface] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 496). “The Egyptian sojourn did fulfill the predicted first dispersion from the land and provided the first regathering under Moses, both of which were predicted by the Abrahamic Covenant and both of which were literally fulfilled... The Jewish people were carried into the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities; but this second dispersion was also predicted, this time by the prophets of Israel, as was the second return seventy years later. Once again, both ‘the promise that they would be carried off into captivity and that they would return to the land were literally fulfilled.’ ...The scattering of Israel ‘over the entire earth has continued for almost 1900 years and no significant reversal was witnessed until our generation.’ Even in the third dispersion, which involved a worldwide scattering ‘among all the nations,’ prophecy was again literally fulfilled ‘in that the nation Israel was nevertheless preserved.’ In fact, ‘Israel has been preserved as a distinct people in a situation in which any other race or nationality would have long been swallowed up.’ As for the land, it was for all these centuries emptied of Jews with ‘not a single Jewish village’ and only 25,000 Jews scattered in towns and cities ‘in all of their ancient land,’ and ‘in the area which once belonged to their forefathers’” [quoting Walvoord, *Church in Prophecy*, pp. 166-174] (*ibid.*, p. 497). “The third regathering ‘is distinct from all previous historic regatherings in that it is an assembly of the children of Israel from all the nations of the earth’” [quoting Walvoord, *Church in Prophecy*, pp. 166-174] (*ibid.*, p. 498). “For Walvoord [*Church in Prophecy*, pp. 166-174], the present Jewish State is the beginning of this final regathering, for it ‘seems highly probable that the regathering of Israel, which has so significantly begun in the twentieth century, will have its consummation and completion after Christ comes back and all Israel is assembled in the Holy Land’” (*ibid.*). “Walvoord insists that just as the ‘dispersion and regathering from Egypt was literal; the dispersion and regathering from Babylon was literal; the dispersion to the entire world is literal,’ even so must the final regathering also be lit-

eral” [quoting Walvoord, *Church in Prophecy*, pp. 166-174] (*ibid.*). “For Walvoord and most Dispensationalists, it is ‘a proper conclusion that Israel back in the land is a preparation for the end of the age’” [quoting Walvoord, *Church in Prophecy*, pp. 166-174] (*ibid.*). “The present State of Israel is definitely part of the divine prophetic program which will ultimately lead to the second coming for, just as ‘the second gathering was the prelude for the first advent of Christ, so the third regathering is the prelude for the second advent’” [quoting Walvoord, *Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 185-186] (*ibid.*, p. 523). “The real problem is the failure to see that the prophets spoke of two international returns. First, there was to be a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment, namely, the judgment of the Tribulation. This was to be followed by a second world wide regathering in faith in preparation for blessings, namely the blessings of the messianic age. Once it is recognized that the Bible speaks of two such regatherings, it is easy to see how the present State of Israel fits into prophecy” (*ibid.*, p. 716). “Isaiah 11:11-12... Not only is this a literal prediction of a literal return to a literal land, it has been literally fulfilled in part since May 15, 1948, when Israel was declared a nation. Millions of Jews from all over the globe have already returned. If this has been literally fulfilled, why should there be any doubt about the restoration of the messianic political kingdom as well” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:468)? “Spiritual restoration and a return to the land are linked so that the people are never considered blessed, forgiven, or redeemed except in the land promised to their fathers” (Horner, *FI*, p. 237). “I might show you by scriptural evidence that the Jews will probably first be gathered in an unconverted state, though humbled, and will afterwards be taught to look to Him whom they have pierced [Zech. 12:10-14], through much tribulation” [quoting J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, p. 115] (*ibid.*, p. 345).

The reestablishment of Israel as a nation. “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? **Shall a land be born in one day? shall a nation be brought forth at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith Jehovah: shall I that cause to bring forth shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem,** and be glad for her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn over her” (Isa. 66:8–10) “The Jewish nation... This nation, therefore, now [in 1884—*ed.*] under trial, is still the chosen nation, and this will be manifested in due time” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:416). “Some of the futurist interpretation of the Revelation has been eminently fulfilled, and in this day. Reference here is to the return of Israel and her establishment as a

nation” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 326). “The Present Situation—1964... This booklet was first written in 1940, and a great deal has transpired since then. Following World War II, England on May 14, 1948, gave up the Mandate assigned to her under the League of Nations, and moved out of Palestine. On the same date the Jewish authorities—through David Ben Gurion—proclaimed officially the new State of Israel. Without hesitation President Truman, acting for the United States, was the first to give recognition to the new State. The Arab powers at once launched their military attack against Israel, and were decisively defeated. In February of 1949 Israel and Egypt signed an armistice, followed by similar agreements with others of the attacking nations. The State of Israel was accepted into the United Nations organization, and was given recognition by many of its member-nations. However, in spite of all this, the peace now enjoyed by Israel is an uneasy one. Under the Partition Plan, only about three-fourths of the land of Palestine is now in the hands of the Jewish State. She is still ringed about by implacable Moslem powers which have sworn to destroy Israel and to reoccupy the entire land of Palestine. Israel still desperately needs help” (McClain, *DP*, p. 72). “The preservation of Israel as a racial entity and the resurrection of Israel as a political entity are twin miracles of the twentieth century which are in perfect accord with the premillennial interpretation” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 136). “The twentieth century has witnessed the miracle of this ancient people establishing after the lapse of nineteen hundred years a political state bearing its name and embodying at least a portion of their ancient geographical possessions. This is all the more remarkable because those who are accomplishing this phenomenon are not for the most part believers in the Scriptures and do not recognize the prophetic significance of what they are doing” (*ibid.*, p. 185). “Israel today is not publicly recognized as God’s people, indeed, they do not claim any special privilege themselves. Certainly Israel as a nation is not being blessed of God in spiritual ways” (*ibid.*, p. 212). “Dispensationalism insists that Zionism and modern Israel is of major theological significance. Walvoord [in *Millennial Kingdom*, p. 136] insists that the ‘establishment of the new state of Israel... introduced a new and important factor in the interpretation of Biblical prophecy’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 495). “In yet another work [*Church in Prophecy*, pp. 166-174], Walvoord again expresses a favorable view of Zionism and the State of Israel. For Dispensationalism, ‘the remarkable revival of the nation Israel and their return to their ancient land’ is one of ‘the most striking situations from the standpoint of Biblical prophecy.’ For Dispensationalists, this was not a surprise because ‘God’s program for Israel is one of the major revelations of Scripture’ from Genesis to Revelation. Walvoord clearly believes

that the present state is prophetically significant and ‘a clear indication of the approaching end of the present age and the beginning of events which will bring history to consummation.’ The reason the Middle East is biblically significant is ‘because it contains the land which was promised to Israel in the Abrahamic Covenant’ (*ibid.*, p. 497). “While Walvoord, following Chafer’s lead, sees three dispersions and three regatherings, other Dispensationalists add a fourth. The fourth dispersion is to occur in the middle of the Great Tribulation as described in Matthew 24:15-28 and Revelation 12:6-17. The re-establishment of the present state was necessary for the fourth dispersion to occur. The fourth dispersion will be followed by the fourth and final regathering after the second coming for the enjoyment of the Messianic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 499). “The Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven year covenant (and not with the Rapture). This covenant is made between the Antichrist and the leaders of Israel. Therefore, the signing of such a covenant presupposes a Jewish leadership of a Jewish state. Such a Jewish state has to exist before such a covenant can be signed. This demands the existence of a Jewish state before the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 719). “The return of exiled Jews to their land after nearly two millennia—and their having been nationally restored—is another proof that God fulfills His promises literally” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:507). “To this moment they continue a distinct, isolated and separate nation, far more than any nation on the earth” [quoting J. C. Ryle (1816-1900), *Are You Ready for the End of Time?* pp. 148-150] (Horner, *FI*, p. 297). “If ever there is a “nation born in a day,” that nation will be Israel” [quoting J. C. Ryle (1816-1900), *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?*, p. 159] (*ibid.*, p. 348).

War. “And **after the threescore and two weeks** shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and **even unto the end shall be war**; desolations are determined” (Dan. 9:26). “...the constantly recurring wars—as if purposely to show how vain the hopes of humanity—the present attitude and warlike attitude of nations in their heavy armaments, etc., and all these instrumentalities for the destruction of human life and property on an enlarged scale, are evidences not merely of the continued corruption of human nature but of approaching wrath” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:129).

Widespread godlessness. “**But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reck-**

less, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these” (2 Tim. 3:1–6). “Cramer (p. 434) well said: ‘The more daring the blasphemers are in their riot and debauchery, the nearer the Lord.’ So also Osiander: ‘The more secure, the nearer the Judge’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:95). (See also our section *Ideologies in Preparation for the Tribulation* above.)

And, *apostasy in the church*. (See our discussion of the prophesied apostasy in the church in the section *Chronology of the Church Age* in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

Events Just Prior to the Tribulation

Events just prior to the Tribulation include the Rapture of the church, a possible time gap between the Rapture and the Tribulation, removal of Israel’s blindness, God’s sending a delusion on the unbelievers, the apostasy, Israeli wars, building of the Tribulation temple, arrival on the scene of Antichrist, identification of Antichrist and revealing of Antichrist (removal of the Restrainer).

Considered individually, these events are:

The Rapture of the church. As of this writing, the (imminent) Rapture of the church is the next event on the prophetic calendar. “The first sign indicative of the Coming open manifestation of the Son of Man will be the Translation of living saints in connection with a secret resurrection of saints” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:160). (See our discussion of the Rapture of the church in our previous chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

A possible time gap between the Rapture of the church and the Tribulation. Some scholars see the beginning of the Tribulation period immediately following the Rapture of the church (with no time gap in between), while others see a *time gap*, or interval, of anywhere from a day or two to seventy-five or more years between these two events. “... ‘the Time of the End’ is still future. It is to be applied to this interval between the two stages of the Advent, a period which may embrace, for aught we know (considering the events that are to take place in it, and that the last week of Daniel does not include the whole time of interval, but only the time when the Covenant is made with the restored Jewish nation, the breaking of the same, and Antichrist’s persecution of the Jews), from 35 to 75 years, more or less” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:336).

Removal of Israel’s blindness. “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the**

Gentiles has come in” (Rom. 11:25) “The blindness which befell Israel is scheduled for removal when ‘the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.’... The ‘until’ marks, then, the terminus of Gentile blessing, and the beginning of Israel’s restoration. This in turn can be identified as the time of the Lord’s coming for the church and the end of the age of grace” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 189). (See also our discussion of Romans 11:25 in the section *Reaffirmation by Paul* in our chapter *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*.)

God’s sending a delusion on the unbelievers. “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, **displaying himself as being God**. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then **that lawless one** will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false**, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness” (2 Thes. 2:1-12). “And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and **Satan, who deceives the whole world**; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev. 12:9). “And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast**” (Rev. 13:3) “And I saw **another beast** coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And **he deceives those**

who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to **the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life**" (Rev. 13:11–14). "The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And **those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come**" (Rev. 17:8). "The worship of Antichrist evidences that man, however atheistic some of his utterances are, cannot divest himself of some conception of religion, the necessity of worship, and the superiority of some being. For, constituted by the mercy and love of the Creator a religious being, he cannot, as Lathardt justly observes in his *Apolog. Lectures*, 'get rid of the idea;' because a belief in something higher than his individual self naturally arises from his moral constitution" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:725). "...man's depravity shall then lead him into the grossest delusions, and into believing and trusting in damnable lies. The falling back upon heathen philosophy, the denial of the personality of God, the exaltation of Humanity, etc., is clearly paving the way for a modified form of idolatry... It will be suited to the professed enlightenment of the age... The religious element in man cannot be entirely crushed, and the masses must have something to satisfy an inherent craving" (*ibid.*, p. 748) "An object all repulsive would become speedily loathsome; but clothe the skeleton with silks and rich fabrics to hide the deformity, paint the mask with a bright countenance, and many, who otherwise would be repelled, hug it in fond delusion" (*ibid.*, 3:146). "Of those who reject 'the truth' it is written, 'He shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie.' Because they have rejected the Christ of God, a judicial blindness shall fall upon them that they shall accept the Christ of humanity, who will be Satan incarnate" (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 187). "Paul pointed out that God shall send them a powerful delusion so that they should believe the lie (2 Thes. 2:11). The lie is that this individual who will have instituted a one-world government, one-world religion, and one-world economy is actually the world's messiah, the world's god" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 308). "These verses have often been interpreted as teaching that if one hears the gospel before the Rapture and rejects it, he will not have an opportunity to be saved after the Rapture. But this is not the teaching of this passage. The point of no return is the acceptance of the 'big lie' of the Antichrist's self-proclaimed deity and the submission to the worship of him by means of taking the mark of the Beast. It is only then that the point of no return is actually reached. The option of taking the mark of the Beast only begins in the

middle of the Tribulation. Even the context of this passage shows that it speaks of events that occur in the middle of the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 255). (See also our discussion of deception during the Tribulation period in our section *Characteristics of the Tribulation* above.)

The apostasy. “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for **it will not come unless the apostasy comes first**, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction” (2 Thes. 2:1–3) “...the general rush of violent departure from the faith precedes that final disclosure of the Antichristian despot... a denial of fundamental truths, which culminates finally in this apostatizing from all truth” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:689) (See our discussion of the fact that apostasy will also be a characteristic of the last days of the church in the section *Chronology of the Church Age* in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

Israeli wars. It seems evident from Scripture that one or more regional *Middle Eastern wars* will precede the final global campaign of Armageddon. Some Bible scholars see only one such war (the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog/Magog war), while others see two (the Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 war, then the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog/Magog war). While some scholars place these wars within the period of the Tribulation itself (or at least within the time interval between the Rapture of the church and the Second Coming), others see the possibility of one or possibly even both of these conflicts preceding the Tribulation, and possibly even preceding the Rapture of the church.

The eighty-third Psalm is a prayer to Jehovah on behalf of the Jews who are surrounded by enemies, that He would protect them from these enemies’ threats of annihilation. “A Song, a Psalm of Asaph. O God, keep not thou silence: Hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, **thine enemies** make a tumult; And they that hate thee have lifted up the head. **They take crafty counsel against thy people, And consult together against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; That the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.** For they have consulted together with one consent; Against thee do they make a covenant: The tents of **Edom** and the **Ishmaelites; Moab**, and the **Hagarenes; Gebal**, and **Ammon**, and **Amalek; Philistia** with the inhabitants of **Tyre: Assyria** also is joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot. Selah Do thou unto them as unto Midian, As to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the river Kishon; Who perished

at Endor, Who became as dung for the earth. Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb; Yea, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna; Who said, Let us take to ourselves in possession The habitations of God. O my God, **make them like the whirling dust; As stubble before the wind. As the fire that burneth the forest, And as the flame that setteth the mountains on fire, So pursue them with thy tempest, And terrify them with thy storm.** Fill their faces with confusion, That they may seek thy name, O Jehovah. Let them be put to shame and dismayed for ever; Yea, **let them be confounded and perish;** That they may know that thou alone, whose name is Jehovah, Art the Most High over all the earth” (Ps. 83:0–18). “The Arab States... They are a tumultuous and crafty people who unite together against the Jews. Their aim is the total annihilation of Israel so that the very name Israel will no longer be remembered (v. 4 [**They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; That the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.**]). It is no coincidence that Nasser, the former dictator of Egypt, repeated this verse almost word for word just prior to the Six Day War” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 489). It is of interest that all the countries mentioned in this Psalm are those that immediately surround Israel: Edom, Moab, Gebal and Ammon being in present-day Jordan, the capitol of the Hagarites being Damascus in Syria, Amalek being immediately south of Israel, Philistia being Gaza, and Tyre being in Lebanon. For this reason, some prophecy students understand Jehovah’s answer to this Psalm/prayer to be a separate war that precedes the Ezekiel 38/39 Gog/Magog war, setting the stage for that later invasion. Some students see *Isaiah chapter 17* as Jehovah’s answer to the Psalm 83 prayer. One notable feature of *Isaiah 17* is the complete annihilation of the city of Damascus. **“The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap... Ah, the uproar of many peoples, that roar like the roaring of the seas; and the rushing of nations, that rush like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but he shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like the whirling dust before the storm. At eventide, behold, terror; and before the morning they are not. This is the portion of them that despoil us, and the lot of them that rob us”** (Isa. 17:1–14).

In *Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39*, Ezekiel prophesies *the Gog/Magog war*. In this war, a coalition of larger and more geographically distant nations including Russia and Iran attacks Israel at a time when the Israelites

are dwelling in “unwalled villages,” seemingly at relative peace (possibly as a result of the previous Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 war). In this war, Israel is greatly outnumbered by her enemies, and would most certainly have perished but for Jehovah’s supernatural intervention. “And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward **Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal**, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of **Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal**: and **I will turn thee about, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army**, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them handling swords; **Persia, Cush, and Put** with them, all of them with shield and helmet; **Gomer**, and all his hordes; the house of **Togarmah in the uttermost parts of the north**, and all his hordes; even many peoples with thee. Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou, and all thy companies that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. **After many days** thou shalt be visited: **in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel**, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them. And **thou shalt ascend, thou shalt come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy hordes, and many peoples with thee**. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: and **thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take the spoil? hast thou assembled thy company to take the prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil? Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In that day when my people Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of them riding upon hors-**

es, a great company and a mighty army; and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, that prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring thee against them? And **it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, that my wrath shall come up into my nostrils.** For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains, saith the Lord Jehovah: **every man's sword shall be against his brother. And with pestilence and with blood will I enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah**" (Ezek. 38:1-23). "And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn thee about, and will lead thee on, and will cause thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel; and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes, and the peoples that are with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.** And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and **the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel.** Behold, it cometh, and it shall be done,

saith the Lord Jehovah; this is the day whereof I have spoken. And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall **make fires of the weapons** and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and **they shall make fires of them seven years**; so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall make fires of the weapons; and they shall plunder those that plundered them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord Jehovah. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them that pass through on the east of the sea; and it shall stop them that pass through: and **there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude**; and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And **seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them**, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown in the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord Jehovah. And they shall set apart men of continual employment, that shall pass through the land, and, with them that pass through, those that bury them that remain upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And they that pass through the land shall pass through; and when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land. And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Speak unto the **birds** of every sort, and to **every beast of the field**, Assemble yourselves, and come; **gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood**. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will set my glory among the nations; and **all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God, from that day and forward. And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them**: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them;

and I hid my face from them. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel;** and I will be jealous for my holy name. And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; when I have brought them back from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 39:1–29). "Ezekiel 38 uses *hema* ('fury,' v. 18) and *ap* ('face,' v. 18) together with *ebra* ('wrath,' v. 19) for 'that day' (v. 19) when God will pour out His wrath against the armies of six nations that will attack Israel with a massive military invasion (vv. 1-16). Note that this outpouring of *hema*, *ap*, *ebra* divine wrath will involve the sword (v. 21), pestilence (v. 22), and beasts (39:4). This invasion and judgment are to occur after a restoration of the Jews to their homeland (38:8, 12) and when they feel so safe and secure that they will have no defenses of their own for their protection (38:8, 11, 14). Israel, which began to be restored to its homeland in 1948, will feel safe and secure as the result of establishing a binding covenant with the Antichrist at the beginning of the 70th week (Dan. 9:27). But the Antichrist will turn against Israel in the middle of the 70th week and, as noted in an earlier chapter, will desolate it during the second half of that seven-year period. Thus, Israel will feel safe and secure only during the first half of the 70th week. It would appear that this invasion and judgment of Ezekiel 38 will take place during the first half of the 70th week. Thus, there will be an outpouring of God's *hema*, *ap*, and *ebra* wrath during the first half of the 70th week, and it will involve the sword, pestilence, and beasts" (Showers, *M*, p. 113). "The name *Rosh* is the basis for the modern name *Russia*" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 106). "Gomer, located in present-day Germany" (*ibid.*, p. 108). "In answer to who is involved in this confederacy, it is Russia and the allied states of Iran, Ethiopia, Somalia, Germany, and Armenia" (*ibid.*). "One interesting observation is that not a single Arab nation participates in this invasion. While some of the nations listed here are Moslem, they are not Arab" (*ibid.*). "The cup of iniquity of Russia is almost full. With this invasion it will overflow, and this will precipitate God's judgment on Russia. It is God Who is in control; it is He who is bringing the invasion about... The key sin is her long history of anti-Semitism, a problem that

persists in Russia to this day” (*ibid.*, p. 109). “...the author [Fruchtenbaum—*ed.*] views the Russian invasion as taking place some time *before* the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 117)

Building of the Tribulation temple. The building of the Tribulation temple may take place before the Tribulation, or it may take place during the first half of the Tribulation. It must take place before the midpoint of the Tribulation, however, in order to make possible Antichrist’s midtribulation desecration of the temple. “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for **one week**, but **in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)... for then shall be great tribulation**, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matt. 24:15-21) “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness” (2 Thes. 2:1-12). “And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, ‘Rise and measure **the temple of God, and the altar**, and those who worship in it. And leave out **the court which is outside the tem-**

ple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months” (Rev. 11:1-3). “Disagreement has been recorded with respect to the identification of the temple in which this lawless one is to be seated. Early writers contended that it is a church of some description. Later writers are more agreed that it is a restored Jewish temple. It may be no more than a temporary tabernacle which will be serving for the Jewish worship of Jehovah, which will be in progress at that time (cf. Dan 9:27; Rev 13:6)” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:71). “The Jews before the end of the Jewish age will return to Palestine and rebuild the Temple, the Tribulation Temple in which the man of sin will sit boasting of divine prerogatives and demanding divine worship (Dan. 9:27; 2 Thess. 2:3-4; Rev. 11:1-2)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 164). “[Revelation] Chapter 11 opens with a clear distinction between the people who worship in the ‘temple’ and the ‘Gentiles’ who tread underfoot ‘the holy city’ (vss. 1-2). In the same verses, John is told to ‘measure’ the temple, the altar, and the people who worship there—a symbolic action suggesting the resumption of divine possession” (McClain, *GK*, p. 462). “...the third Jewish Temple, sometimes known as the Tribulation Temple” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 104) “It is interesting to note that while all the other eleven tribes have lost their tribal identity since the records were destroyed in A.D. 70, the Tribe of Levi has not” (*ibid.*, p. 137). “The Jews would not accept a new Jewish State anywhere but in Israel; nor will the Jews accept a new Jewish Temple anywhere but in the Temple Compound” (*ibid.*, p. 138). “One group, based in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, is in the process of making the furnishings for the next Temple. A second group, located in the Moslem Quarter of the Old City, is training *Cohens*, descendants of the Aaronic line, in how to perform the sacrificial rites” (*ibid.*). “A temple will be rebuilt in which animal sacrifices and offerings will again be made for the first half of the seven years ([Dan. 9] v. 27)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:599)

Arrival on the scene of Antichrist. “Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that **antichrist is coming**, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour” (1 John. 2:18).

Identification of Antichrist. “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for **it will not come unless** the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction” (2 Thes. 2:1-3) “That there was to be a revelation of the identity of the Antichrist before the Tribulation

is clear from 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3... In this passage, two events are said to occur before the day of the Lord, which always refers to the Tribulation. The *first* is the apostasy which was discussed earlier. The *second* is the revelation of *the man of sin* and *the son of perdition*" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 127). "Exactly how the Antichrist will be identified is not stated. Perhaps it will be determined by the numerical value of his name or by some other means. But he will be known" (*ibid.*). "Paul stated that the Tribulation could not have come yet because two events, both of which must precede the Tribulation, had not yet occurred (v. 3). The *first* is the apostasy of the church, and the *second* is the revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition" (*ibid.*, p. 566).

And, *revealing of Antichrist (removal of the Restrainer)*. "And **Jehovah said, My spirit shall not strive with man for ever**, for that he also is flesh: **yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years**. The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown. And Jehovah saw that **the wickedness of man was great in the earth**, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And **Jehovah said, I will destroy man** whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations: **Noah walked with God**. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. And **God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth**" (Gen. 6:3–13). "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for **it will not come unless** the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still

with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that **in his time he may be revealed**. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only **he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed** whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false” (2 Thes. 2:1-11) “And now ye know what withholdeth’... ‘the decree of God’s Providence,’... ‘your election of God.’... until this gathering out process has progressed up to a certain point... restrains that fearful predicted outbreak until a determined number of God’s people are secured” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:328). “These saved ones are the antiseptic salt, hindering, like the Spirit who indwells them, the untimely dissolution of humanity” (Chafer, *S*, C4:5/31). “...the ‘man of sin’... his revelation must follow the translation of the church very speedily, if not immediately... the Roman prince will be clearly revealed the moment he makes his seven-year covenant with the Jewish people” (McClain, *DP*, p. 54) “The Spirit characteristically restrains and strives against sin (Gen. 6:3)” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 80) “The Spirit of God will return to heaven after accomplishing His earthly work, much as the Lord Jesus Christ returned to heaven after completing His earthly work. In both cases, the work of the Second Person and the Third Person continues, but in a different setting and in a different way” (*ibid.*, p. 81). “That wicked one Paul anticipated is the masterpiece of deception Satan will offer to the world as a substitute for Messiah. In every generation Satan has had his instrument prepared should permission be granted him to put his plan in operation. However, as Paul reminds us, ‘Now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper [God’s] time’ ([2 Thes. 2] vs. 6). God’s restraint by the work of the Holy Spirit is exercised on Satan so that Satan will not be able to introduce his masterpiece of deception until God’s appointed time. Thus it will be in the Tribulation period that Satan’s kingdom will have its greatest manifestation here on this earth” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 302). “The restraining work of the Holy Spirit is the restraint that prevents the Antichrist from being revealed until the proper time” (Showers, *M*, p. 122). “The main points appear to be as follows. *First*: to comfort the believers of Thessalonica, letting them know that they are not in the Tribulation, nor has the Tribulation arrived. *Second*: to teach that there will be two separate revelations of the Antichrist

at different points in time. *Third*: that two things are being restrained: the mystery of lawlessness in general now, and the Antichrist specifically in the future” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 565). “The revelation to believers before the Tribulation may be to the Church if the Rapture has not occurred, or it may be to a new generation of believers who will have accepted the gospel after the Rapture of the Church. Whoever the believers may be at that time, they will receive a revelation as to the identity of the Antichrist, and it will occur at some time before the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 566). “While the first revelation will be to the believers before the Tribulation, the second revelation in the middle of the Tribulation will be to Israel. By the very act of the Abomination of Desolation, the Antichrist will be revealed as truly being the lawless one, and then Israel can realize with whom they have made their covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 567).

Events of the Tribulation

As we saw in our section *Chronology of the Tribulation* above, the seven years of the Tribulation period, the seven years that make up Daniel’s seventieth week, are neatly divided by Daniel into two halves of three and one half years each. We will therefore examine the Tribulation events accordingly. We’ll first examine the events of the first half of the Tribulation, then the events of the middle of the Tribulation, then the events of the last half of the Tribulation.

Events of the First Half of the Tribulation

As per Daniel 9:27, the events of the first half of the Tribulation begin with Antichrist’s confirming a seven-year covenant with Israel and conclude at the Tribulation’s midpoint with the “abomination of desolation.” These events commence with the seven “seal” judgments of Revelation chapter six (and continue with the first six “trumpet” judgments), which, as we saw earlier, coincide with the “beginning of birth pangs” which precede the “abomination of desolation” in Matthew chapter twenty-four. “**And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be **the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘See to it that no one misleads you. For **many will come in My name, saying,**

“I am the Christ,” and will mislead many. And you will be hearing of **wars** and **rumors of wars**; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For **nation will rise against nation**, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be **famines** and **earthquakes**. But **all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs**. Then **they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name**. And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another. And many **false prophets** will arise, and will mislead many. And because **lawlessness** is increased, **most people’s love will grow cold**. But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved. And **this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations**, and then the end shall come. Therefore when you see **the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** which was spoken of through **Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place** (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak” (Matt. 24:3–18). “And I saw when the Lamb broke one of **the seven seals**, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, ‘Come.’ And I looked, and behold, **a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer**. When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come.’ And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to **take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another**; and a great sword was given to him. When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, ‘Come.’ I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, ‘**A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine.**’ When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come.’ I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name **Death**; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with **sword** and with **famine** and with **pestilence** and by the **wild beasts of the earth**. When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of **those who had been slain because of the word of God**, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How

long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also. I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great **earthquake**; and the **sun** became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole **moon** became like blood; and the **stars** of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand’” (Rev. 6:1–17)? “...the events of the first half of the Tribulation. Some are sequential, with one following the other in chronological sequence. Included in these are the Seal and Trumpet Judgments. There are also five events that transpire throughout the first half of the Tribulation. They are: First, the ministry of Elijah; second, the 144,000 Jews and the worldwide revival; third, the ministry of the Two Witnesses; fourth, the political system of the ten kings; and fifth, the religious system of the Ecclesiastical Babylon” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 235). “All together, the Messiah pointed out five events that will occur during the first half of the Tribulation. First, there will be tremendous persecution of the saints ([Matt. 24] vv. 9-10), a fact also given in Revelation 6:9-11. The one-world religious system, known as Ecclesiastical Babylon, will be doing the persecuting and will be responsible for the death of the saints during the first half of the Tribulation (Rev. 17:1-6). Second, the first half of the Tribulation will be characterized by the rise of many false prophets (v. 11). This point is also brought out in Zechariah 13:2-6. Third, there will be a tremendous rise of sin and iniquity (v. 12), because evil will no longer be restrained (2 Thess. 2:6-7). Fourth, those Jews who survive to the end of the Tribulation will be saved (v. 13). The fifth event of the first half of the Tribulation will be the worldwide preaching of the gospel (v. 14), which will be conducted by the 144,000 Jews of Revelation 7:1-8. The results of the ministry of the 144,000 are recorded in Revelation 7:9-17, where it clearly states that *a great multitude* of Gentiles will come to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 631).

Considering these events individually:

Antichrist confirms a covenant with Israel. “Wherefore hear the word of Jehovah, ye scoffers, that rule this people that is in Jerusalem: Because **ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us;** for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not be in haste. And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And **your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.** As often as it passeth through, it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night: and it shall be nought but terror to understand the message. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it. For Jehovah will rise up as in mount Perazim, he will be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act. Now therefore be ye not scoffers, lest your bonds be made strong; for **a decree of destruction have I heard from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, upon the whole earth**” (Isa. 28:14-22). “And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of **the prince that shall come** shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And **he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week:** and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:26-27). “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; **if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him**” (John 5:43). “It is generally supposed [in 1884—*ed.*]... a covenant with the Jews, raising them into the position of a nation... While this opinion is worthy of the serious consideration of the student, yet another covenant, compact, or agreement that the last head of the Roman power shall enter into is more specifically noted in the Scriptures, and may be the one here denoted, viz., the agreement and union with the ten horns or powers mentioned in Rev. 17:12, 13” (Peters, *TTK*,

2:664). “The freedom of the Jews from idolatry since the Advent of Jesus and the destruction of their city, has been their particular boast, especially in these days from Rationalizing pens; this boast shall also be taken from them, and John 5:43, be verified, in that rejecting Jesus who ‘came in the Father’s name,’ they will, in this Antichrist, ‘receive another who shall come in his own name’” (*ibid.*, p. 747). “Concerning this individual Gabelein [Arno C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel*, p. 142], says: ‘Out of the Roman empire there shall arise in the future a prince. This prince or chief of the fourth empire is identical with the little horn of Daniel vii.’ He is further to be identified with the ‘king of fierce countenance’ of Daniel 8:23, with the ‘wilful king’ of Daniel 11:36, with the ‘man of sin’ of 2 Thessalonians 2, and with the ‘beast out of the sea’ of Revelation 13:1-10. Inasmuch as all the covenants made by Messiah with Israel are eternal covenants, Messiah can not be the one making the covenant, inasmuch as it will be temporary. This covenant, which will guarantee Israel the possession of their land and the restoration of their religious and political autonomy, is to be viewed as a false fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. This covenant deceives many in Israel into believing that this ‘man of sin’ is God (2 Thess. 2:3). It is the proclamation of this false covenant that marks the beginning of the seventieth week” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 250). “As the head of the federated empire he will make a seven-year covenant or treaty with Israel (9:27), which will be broken after three and a half years (v. 27)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 304). “On the issue of the Rapture, Dispensationalism is pretribulationist. Because of this, most pretribulationists have assumed that the Rapture will begin the Tribulation. As Ryrie [in *Basic Theology*, pp. 465-466] points out, that need not be true. Saying that the Rapture is pretribulationist does not mean it comes just before for ‘actually nothing is said in the Scriptures as to whether or not some time (or how much time) may elapse between the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation.’ The starting point of the Tribulation is the signing of a seven year covenant between Israel and the Antichrist... When this covenant is made, it will somehow guarantee Israel’s security and so ‘the outlook for Israel will seem bright.’ However, as the Tribulation continues, all this will change” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 530). “Many have taught only on assumption that the Rapture will begin the Tribulation. However, this is not the case” (*ibid.*, p. 564). “The tribulation begins with the signing of a seven-year covenant between the Antichrist and Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 769). “Isaiah 28:14-22... The figure of a flood, when used symbolically, is always a symbol of a military invasion... The same point made in Daniel 9:27 is made by Isaiah. The Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven-year covenant between the leaders of Israel and the

Antichrist. Once that covenant is signed, the Tribulation begins and a decree of destruction is issued by God Himself” (*ibid.*). “...it is *not* the Rapture that begins the Tribulation, but the signing of the seven-year covenant. Keeping this in mind will prevent many misunderstandings concerning the belief in the imminency of the Rapture” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 128). “There is a common misconception that Israel will accept the Antichrist as the messiah. The Scriptures nowhere state any such thing. The fact is, Israel will not accept him as the messiah. Israel will make a covenant with him and will place her trust for her security in this covenant. But Israel will never accept him as the messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 199). “...there will be a segment of Jews, as there were in Daniel 9:27, who will refuse to have anything to do with this covenant” (*ibid.*).

The Lamb takes the title deed of the earth, and prepares to evict the usurpers of His realm. “And **Jeremiah said, The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth; for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.** So Hanamel mine uncle’s son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of Jehovah, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin; **for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself.** Then I knew that this was the word of Jehovah. And **I bought the field** that was in Anathoth of Hanamel mine uncle’s son, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. And **I subscribed the deed, and sealed it,** and called witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. So I took **the deed of the purchase, both that which was sealed, according to the law and custom, and that which was open:** and I delivered **the deed of the purchase** unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel mine uncle’s son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed **the deed of the purchase,** before all the Jews that sat in the court of the guard. And I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Take **these deeds, this deed of the purchase which is sealed, and this deed which is open,** and **put them in an earthen vessel; that they may continue many days.** For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land” (Jer. 32:6-15). “For **Jehovah** will rise up as in mount Perazim, he will be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, **his strange work,** and bring to pass his act, **his strange act.** Now therefore be ye not scoffers, lest your bonds be made strong; for **a decree of destruction have I heard from the**

Lord, Jehovah of hosts, upon the whole earth” (Isa. 28:21–22). “And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne **a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals.** And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, **‘Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?’** And no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look into it. And I began to weep greatly, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look into it; and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.**’ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came, and He took it out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. And when **He had taken the book,** the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before **the Lamb,** having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, **‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.’** And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’ And the four living creatures kept saying, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshiped” (Rev. 5:1-14). “The Sealed Book of Revelation 5... In the magnificent scene of chapters 4 and 5 there is seen in the hand of God a ‘book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals’ (5:1). The Lamb receives this book from the hand of God, and as He breaks its seals there fall upon the world with increasing severity the judgments of heaven. As to the nature of the book (lit. ‘roll’), Deismann showed some years ago, on the basis of archaeological evidence [Adolph Deismann, ‘Treasures in Earthen Vessels,’ *The Biblical Review*, October, 1922], that it must be understood in the light of a similar document which appears in Jer. 32:6-15. This was not a book at all in the ordinary sense, but rather a title-deed writ-

ten on both sides of a sheet of material, which was then rolled up and sealed, leaving the roll so that one copy would be outside and visible but the other copy hidden inside. In case of tampering or dispute, the breaking of the seals would reveal the original copy and establish the lawful owner in his rights. Thus Biblically interpreted, the sealed document of Revelation 5 becomes a symbol of high importance; and the breaking of its seals by our Lord marks the first judicial assertion (in Revelation) of His regal rights, for the purpose of punishing and dispossessing the usurpers of His realm. In this sense, the breaking of the first seal becomes a strong harbinger of the impending Kingdom” (McClain, *GK*, p. 472). “As Creator, He alone is its legitimate owner; therefore, the right to rule the entire universe is exclusively His, including the right to use His power to crush any enemy who challenges His rule” (Showers, *M*, p. 76). “God was the landlord; mankind was the tenant possessor” (*ibid.*, p. 83). “...mankind forfeited tenant possession or administration of their earth inheritance to Satan because they followed Satan’s lead to rebel against God (Gen. 3)” (*ibid.*, p. 84). “...the theocracy was lost and replaced by a satanocracy” (*ibid.*). “Because mankind forfeited their God-given tenant possession of the earth to Satan, God placed nature under a curse (Gen. 3:17-19)... creation was made subject to vanity, corruption, groaning, and travails in pain. It can hardly wait until the day when, in conjunction with redemption, it will be released from this curse and defilement (Rom. 8:19-23)” (*ibid.*). “But Adam sinned, and so the crown fell from his head; and, by a judicial permission this once fair domain of creation has lapsed into the hands of the usurper, Satan” [quoting James Kelly, *The Apocalypse Interpreted*, Vol. I, p. 288] (*ibid.*, p. 85). “Parallel to the fact that an Israelite was forbidden to lose his tenant possession inheritance to a person outside his tribe is the fact that it was wrong for mankind to forfeit their tenant possession inheritance to a being outside mankind. But they did forfeit their tenant possession inheritance to Satan, a being outside mankind (Satan is an angel [2 Cor. 11:14], not a human)” (*ibid.*). “He also has established a program through which a kinsman of mankind redeems both mankind and the tenant possession of the earth which mankind lost to Satan” (*ibid.*). “In Matthew 19:28 Jesus declared that ‘the regeneration’ would take place ‘when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory.’... involved mankind’s tenant possession or administration of the earth as God’s representative... takes over the rule of the earth as the Kinsman-Redeemer, He will restore mankind’s forfeited inheritance. The first Adam lost that inheritance; Christ, as ‘the last Adam’ (1 Cor. 15:45), will restore it” (*ibid.*, p. 86) “...in Acts 3:19-21 Peter was referring to the future Messianic Age (the Millennium)... This restoration, to be that of the original

creation order, will include restoration of mankind's tenant possession or administration of the earth as God's representative plus removal of the curse and defilement of nature" (*ibid.*, p. 87). "Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send **Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time**" (Acts 3:19–21). "...although Christ paid the redemption price to redeem mankind's forfeited tenant possession inheritance of the earth, He will not return the administration of the whole earth to Adam, the man who forfeited it. As the Kinsman-Redeemer and last Adam, Christ will keep the earth to administer it for God's purposes (Rev. 11:15)" (Showers, *M*, p. 88). "...it seems apparent that the sealed scroll Christ took from the right hand of God in heaven (Rev. 5) is the deed of purchase for mankind's tenant possession or administration of the earth... just as scroll deeds of purchase were made when Jeremiah paid the redemption price for his cousin's tenant possession of land, so a scroll deed of purchase was made when Christ paid the redemption price for mankind's tenant possession of the earth by shedding His blood on the cross" (*ibid.*). "Provision has accordingly been made, not merely for the salvation of man, but for the recovery of his lost inheritance. The redemption price has been duly paid; and "the evidence of the purchase," represented by the expressive symbol of the sealed book, is exhibited in this vision as in the Divine possession; its formal production at length taking place, because now, "He whose right it is," is coming forth to assert it" [quoting James Kelley, *The Apocalypse Interpreted*, Vol. I, p. 289] (*ibid.*). "Jeremiah's scroll deeds were placed in a secure place where they could be preserved for a long period of time, since he did not take actual possession of the land immediately after paying the redemption price for it because circumstances removed him for many years to a location far from the land. In like manner, Christ's scroll deed was placed in a secure place (God's right hand in heaven, Rev. 5:1, 7) for a long period of time because He did not take actual possession of the earth immediately after paying the redemption price for it at the cross, being removed for many years to a location far from the earth (heaven, Acts 1:9-11)" (*ibid.*, p. 89). "Just as foreign squatters controlled the land of Israel (including the land Jeremiah had purchased) for many years while the Jews and Jeremiah were removed from it, so foreign squatters (Satan and the human members of his kingdom) are controlling the world system during the years Christ is removed from the earth" (*ibid.*). "...of the tribe of Judah,'... (Gen. 49:8-10)... We can conclude, then, that in

the context of Revelation 5 the title ‘the Lion of the tribe of Judah’ is applied to Christ to indicate that He is the one who has the power and right to defeat Satan and his followers, by evicting them and their rule from the earth, and to take possession of the earth to rule it as the last Adam” (*ibid.*, p. 90). “The Hebrew word translated ‘root’ in the expression ‘root of Jesse’ ‘denotes both the relic of past glory and also the hopeful starting-point for a better future.’ [quoting Christian Maurer, ‘rhiza,’ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VI, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, p. 986] The idea involved is ‘From the root a fallen tree can renew itself and put forth fresh shoots, Job 14:7-9. The root, then is the hope of a new beginning after catastrophe.’ [Ibid.]” (*ibid.*) “Christ defeated Satan and his forces when He paid the redemption price of His shed blood. Through the payment of that price, Christ defeated Satan and his forces in the sense that He gained the right to take tenant possession of the earth away from them and rule the earth as the last Adam. This truth sheds light on the meaning of Christ’s statement just before He went to the cross, ‘the prince of this world is judged’ (Jn. 16:11). Christ’s death sealed Satan’s doom. At the proper time, determined sovereignly by God, Christ will exercise the right He gained at the cross to throw out the usurper” (*ibid.*, p. 92). “...those people who have been redeemed by Christ’s blood ‘shall reign on the earth’ (5:9-10). It is important to note that the verb translated ‘shall reign’ is in the future tense in the Greek text and that this declaration will be made when Christ takes the scroll from God’s hand. Thus, the redeemed will reign on the earth after Christ takes the sealed scroll” (*ibid.*, p. 9). “Thus, once again, Revelation 5 associates Christ’s redemptive work with the future rule of the earth. It is interesting to note that the Apostle Paul also declared that church saints ‘shall reign’ (future tense) with Christ (2 Tim. 2:12 [‘If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us;’])” (*ibid.*, p. 93). “...the following conclusion: The sealed scroll of Revelation 5 is the deed of purchase for mankind’s tenant possession or administration of the earth. This deed was made when Christ paid the redemption price by shedding His blood on the cross for mankind’s tenant possession of the earth” (Showers, *M* p. 93). “The significance of Christ’s action with the sealed scroll of Revelation 5 is the evidence it provides—that He is the true Kinsman-Redeemer, the one who paid the redemption price in the past and therefore has the right to take tenant possession of the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 95). “Revelation 5 makes it clear that He alone is worthy to break them, because only the kinsman-redeemer could legitimately break the seal or seals of a deed of purchase, and Christ is the only Kinsman-Redeemer of mankind’s forfeited inheritance.

Only Christ has paid the redemption price” (*ibid.*). “Just as an armed force will attack an alien occupying army with a tremendous bombardment before it launches the invasion that will evict that alien army, so Christ, through the breaking of the seals, will attack the domain of Satan and his forces (the alien forces occupying the earth since the fall of mankind) with a tremendous bombardment of divine wrath or judgment before He launches the invasion (His great and terrible Day of the Lord invasion of the earth when He comes with His angels), which will evict Satan and his forces from the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 96). “On the day of His Second Coming to the earth, when Christ confronts Satan and his forces gathered in Israel to try to prevent His return to take possession of the earth (Rev. 19:11-19), He will read publicly the open scroll deed of purchase—the final, conclusive evidence that He is the true Kinsman-Redeemer and has the right to evict His enemies and take tenant possession of the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 98). “The sealed scroll of Revelation 5 is the deed of purchase for mankind’s forfeited inheritance of tenant possession of the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 99). “The scroll is the key to understanding the significance or purpose of the future events of Revelation 6 through 22, which constitute the fulfillment of the Kinsman-Redeemer’s second responsibility—the eviction of God’s enemies from the earth and taking of its tenant possession” (*ibid.*). “The seven-sealed book is taken to be the title deed to the earth. As noted by Renald Showers (b. 1934) [in *Maranatha, Our Lord Come!*, p. 99]: ‘The sealed scroll of Revelation 5 is the deed of purchase for mankind’s forfeited inheritance of tenant possession of the earth... Through breaking the seven seals, Christ will instigate a tremendous bombardment of divine wrath or judgment against the domain of Satan and his forces for the last seven years before His Second Coming’” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:605). “Only Christ, the Lamb, is found worthy to open the books and release on the earth the judgments therein (5:1-7); only He has defeated Satan by His death and resurrection (Col. 2:14; Heb. 2:14-15)” (*ibid.*). **“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him”** (Col. 2:13-15). “Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, **that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through**

fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives” (Heb. 2:14-15). “Isaiah 28:21–22... Two of the Old Testament names for the Tribulation are given in this passage: *Jehovah’s strange work* and *Jehovah’s strange act*. It is given these two unusual names because of the latter phrase in verse 22: *for a decree of destruction have I heard from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, upon the whole earth. It is strange in that it calls for the destruction of the whole earth*. This decree is issued in Heaven because of the covenant that is signed on earth. It is *strange* in that it calls for the destruction of the *whole* earth. This decree of destruction is the same as the Seven-Sealed Scroll of Revelation five. ...with the breaking of the seals, there is massive destruction of the earth. But this decree of destruction will be issued only when the covenant is signed” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 200). “So then, the same point made in Daniel 9:27 is made by Isaiah. The Tribulation begins with the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant between the leaders of Israel and the Antichrist. Once that covenant is signed, the Tribulation begins and a decree of destruction is issued by God Himself” (*ibid.*, p. 201). (See also our discussion of the loss of our inheritance of tenant possession of the earth to Satan in the section *The Effects of the Fall* of our chapter *The Fall*.)

Elijah prepares Israel. “Behold, **I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me:** and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Mal. 3:1). “Behold, **I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come.** And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (Mal. 4:5-6). “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of **John the Baptist** until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And **if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come**” (Matt. 11:11–14). “And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ‘Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.’ And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?’ And He answered and said, ‘**Elijah is coming and will restore all things;** but I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.’ Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about **John the Baptist**” (Matt. 17:9–13). “But the angel said to him,

‘Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name **John**. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother’s womb. **And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord**’” (Luke 1:13–17). “Elijah is a forerunner of the Sec. Advent (the open Parousia) just as John was a forerunner of the First Advent (the public appearance of the Messiah)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:87). “Tertullian (*On the Res.* ch. 22), Commodianus (*Instruct.*, Sec. 41) and others, make Elias still future, an idea being developed that he would be a contemporary of the Antichrist at the last times” (*ibid.*, p. 565). “The rejection of the Kingdom and its postponement serves to explain the apparent difficulties and adds most forcibly to the inspiration of the Word, evincing a preservation of unity in the most delicate of Divine purposes. Such a remarkable preservation of agreement, indicative both of God’s willingness to make John the Elias, if the nation had repented under his preaching, and of God’s foreknowing that John would be rejected and that another Elias was therefore appointed to come, is beyond the ability of ‘mere fishermen’ to concoct, bearing as they do a relationship to the deepest purposes of God” (*ibid.*, p. 566). “Before, probably but a very short time before, the open Revelation of Jesus with His saints in behalf of the Jewish nation (Zech. 14), Elijah the Prophet will be sent to the Jews as predicted (Mal. 4:5, 6), being unto them a forerunner as John the Baptist at the First Advent” (*ibid.*, 3:162). “We doubt not that in the darkest hour of gloom, when feeling the persecuting power of the Antichrist, and when all hope seems to have perished, Elijah, according to promise, will come, and will prepare the remnant to accept so heartily the Lord Jesus” (*ibid.*, p. 164). “He is divinely commissioned to do a work of preparation in the nation of Israel: ‘Prepare ye the way of the LORD,’ will be the burden of his message (Isa. 40:3); and it will sound to the nation a note both of comfort and of warning. He will announce the end of Jewish affliction, certain judgments of God, and the good news of the coming Kingdom (Isa. 40:1-2, 9-11)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 181). “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. **Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received of Jehovah’s hand double for all her sins. The**

voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain: and **the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;** for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. **The voice of one saying, Cry.** And one said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the breath of Jehovah bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever. **O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God! Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young**” (Isa. 40:1-11). “John the Baptist... when asked by the Pharisees, ‘Art thou Elijah?’, replied, ‘I am not’ (John 1:21, ASV). And our Lord, after the death of John, said to the disciples, ‘Elijah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things’ (Matt. 17:11, ASV)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 181). “The context of the Isaiah passage is in harmony with this: for the messenger here comes to warn of the leveling judgments of God (40:4), as well as to announce the good news of the Kingdom (40:9-11)” (*ibid.*, p. 182). “Elijah... John the Baptist... since there were to be ‘two comings’ of Messiah, so also there must be ‘two forerunners’” (*ibid.*, p. 337). “John was a type of Elijah in that he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. If Israel had accepted the message, then John the Baptist would have accomplished the function of Elijah, which was the work of restoration. However, John the Baptist and the Messiah were both rejected, and so Elijah is yet to come to perform the work of restoration before the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 134).

The two witnesses prophesy for 1260 days (3.5 years), are killed, resurrected and translated. “And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, ‘Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to **the nations;** and **they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.** And I will grant authority to **my two witnesses,** and **they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days,** clothed in sackcloth.’ These are the

two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and if anyone would desire to harm them, in this manner he must be killed. These have the power to shut up the sky, in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. And when they have finished their testimony, **the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.** And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. And **after the three and a half days the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet;** and great fear fell upon those who were beholding them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And **they went up into heaven in the cloud,** and their enemies beheld them” (Rev. 11:1-12). “Not only will multitudes from among the Gentiles participate in the earthly millennial kingdom having been redeemed through faith by blood, but also a remnant from among Israel will participate in that earthly Davidic kingdom. In order to bring this remnant to faith in Christ, God will send two witnesses to minister to the people of Israel in Jerusalem (Rev. 11:3-12)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 312). “In verse three, the timing of the ministry is given as 1,260 days, which is the equivalent of 3 1/2 years. These 3 1/2 years cover the first half of the Tribulation period” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 231). “It is best to take these men to be two Jewish prophets whom God will raise up during the Tribulation itself” (*ibid.*, p. 232). “The center of their ministry will be the City of Jerusalem, whereas that of the 144,000 Jews will be worldwide” (*ibid.*, p. 233).

The 144,000 are sealed. Particularly because the identity of the 144,000 is central to the theology of Jehovah's Witnesses²¹, we will give a fair amount of space here to the 144,000's proper identification. "**After this I saw** four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, 'Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.' And I heard **the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:** from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed" (Rev. 7:1-8). "And I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him **one hundred and forty-four thousand**, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless" (Rev. 14:1-5). "In chapter seven the 144,000 are sealed by God, set apart to a special ministry, before the

21 Jehovah's Witnesses, who deny that Israel is to have any future role in the Kingdom, believe that the 144,000 of Revelation chapters seven and fourteen are properly identified as the full number of Christians who are to co-reign with Christ (invisibly, from heaven) during the Millennial Kingdom. They believe the other 99+% of Jehovah's Witnesses, in contrast to these 144,000 members of the "anointed," "heavenly" class, are never to be born again, are not in the new covenant, and have, not the (biblical for this Church Age) "heavenly" hope but an "earthly" one. Of course, if Jehovah's Witnesses are mistaken on their identity of the 144,000, then their entire ecclesiology, with its identification of Jehovah's Witnesses as "God's organization," etc. is unbiblical and false.

great tribulation begins. They seem to be sealed at the very outset of the tribulation period. In all probability the multitude of Gentiles, described in the passage that follows (Rev. 7:9-17), has come to a knowledge of salvation through the ministry of this group. In chapter fourteen the same group is pictured at the termination of the tribulation, when the kingdom is established. The returning King is on Mt. Zion, as was predicted of Him (Zech. 14:4). At His return the faithful witnesses gather unto Him, having been redeemed (Rev. 14:4) and having faithfully witnessed in the midst of apostasy (Rev. 14:4-5). They are called 'the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb' (Rev. 14:4), that is they are the first of the harvest of the tribulation period that will come into the millennium to populate the millennial earth. As the judgments are about to be poured out upon Babylon (Rev. 14:8), upon the Beast (Rev. 14:9-12), upon the Gentiles (Rev. 14:14-17), and upon unbelieving Israel (Rev. 14:18-20), these 144,000 are viewed as being preserved through all that the earth experiences so that they may be the first-fruits of that period" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 300). "Of the various purposes for the Tribulation, two are related to Israelology. The first purpose is to bring about a worldwide revival (Matt. 24:14; Rev. 7:1-17). The means by which God will accomplish the second [first?—*ed.*] purpose of the Tribulation is found in Revelation 7:1-8. In verses 1-3, the four angels commissioned to bring judgment on the earth are commanded to hold off their destruction until a specific number of servants are sealed. Sealing was done for two reasons: service and protection. Both reasons apply here. They are sealed for protection so that they cannot be hurt, either by the judgments poured out by God or by the persecutions against believers. They are also sealed for service, for they are the ones who will proclaim the message of the gospel in the Tribulation. In verse four, the identification of those who are sealed is clearly specified as being 144,000 Jews. To make it even more clear, in verses five through eight, twelve tribes are listed with the statement that 12,000 are chosen from each of the twelve tribes listed. Such careful delineation definitely indicates that these 144,000 are Jews and will be nothing else, in spite of much speculation to the contrary. The emphasis is on the Jewishness of the 144,000. There is no reason, exegetically or theologically, to make them a symbol of the Church, a common attempt by Covenant Theologians. This ministry of the 144,000 Jews preaching the gospel fulfills the prophecy of Matthew 24:14: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.* Following the vision of the 144,000 Jews, John saw the results of their ministry in Revelation 7:9-17. In verses 9-10, John saw a multitude of Gentiles from every nationality and language group standing

before the throne of God. The expression *after these things* means that the salvation of these myriads of Gentiles follows chronologically the 144,000 Jews and there is a cause and effect relationship. After describing the worship of the One on the throne (vv. 11-12), the text proceeds to identify who these Gentiles are who are found around the throne (vv. 13-14). These Gentiles are identified as those who have come out of the Great Tribulation. They are saved Gentiles for they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Since they follow chronologically the ministry of the 144,000 Jews, the implication is that they are the Gentiles who become believers as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 Jews. Because of the massive persecution that these Tribulation saints have undergone, this passage concludes with a description of the comfort they now enjoy in the presence of God (vv. 15-17)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 767). “Rev. 14:1-5... The first verse presents what appears to be a millennial scene, with the 144,000 Jews of Revelation seven now on Mount Zion with Messiah, the Lamb. They have the name of God the Father on their foreheads, which is the seal that protected them from death (Rev. 7:3-4). The question is: Why bring in a millennial scene at this juncture of the Book of Revelation? The answer lies in its connection with the previous two chapters, where Satan organized his attempt to destroy the Jews. The first verse of chapter 14 opens with the 144,000 Jews standing on Mount Zion with the protective seal on their foreheads prominently displayed. This shows that Satan’s attempt at total Jewish destruction will fail. This is the purpose of the first proclamation, and it will provide comfort to the Tribulation saints. Verses 2-3 describe the song of the 144,000, a song that they alone will know. Four characteristics are described next (vv. 4-5). *First*, they are male virgins, a necessity in light of their calling to evangelize the world during the first half of the Tribulation. The severity of the judgments falling on the earth, and the persecution of the saints initially by the Ecclesiastical Babylon and then by the counterfeit trinity will not be conducive to marriage. *Second*, they follow Messiah wherever He may lead. *Third*, they are the *firstfruits*, a term that indicates the first of much more to come later. The very fact that the 144,000 are merely the firstfruits of many more Jewish believers to come further points to the failure of the program of the counterfeit trinity. *Fourth*, in relation to their morality, they are without a lie or blemish; they are not tainted by any kind of false religious or political system” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 265). “During the Tribulation period, 144,000 Jews from the twelve tribes are ‘sealed’ (cf. 14:3), 12,000 from each (7.5-8). Since the literal hermeneutic requires that *Israel* and *tribe* be taken literally—and since they are presented as such throughout the Bible—it follows that God will preserve His rem-

nant through the Tribulation so they can go into the millennial kingdom just as He promised. This remnant, plus the great multitude (14:3, 6) of others who come to Christ during the Tribulation, will be the ‘sheep’ Christ welcomes into His messianic kingdom (Matt. 25:33-34)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:511).

Specifically, we would emphasize:

The 144,000 are sealed at and/or toward the beginning of the Tribulation. (Jehovah’s Witnesses and many Covenant theologians teach that the 144,000 have been sealed throughout the past two thousand years of church history.) “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And **I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:** from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed” (Rev. 7:1-8). “The first eight verses of the chapter are devoted to a description of the 144,000 sealed servants of God. In this passage the circumstances of their salvation are only implied. The fact that they are said to ‘have the seal of the living God’ implies their salvation, for the seal is the designation of ownership. Again, their salvation is implied in that they are called ‘the servants of our God.’ Such a designation could only be ascribed to saved individuals. In chapter fourteen these 144,000 are specifically said to be ‘redeemed from among men’ (v. 4) and are ‘the first-fruits unto God.’ The fact that they are associated with the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in the worship of God assures us of their salvation. Thus the promise concerning individual salvation is seen to be fulfilled in the 144,000, even though these are only a portion of Israelites saved during that period” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 269). “Taken in its proper context, Revelation 7:1-8 pictures twelve tribes of Israel miraculously preserved through

the Great Tribulation because they have trusted in Christ and are saved and are servants of God. They are pictured here as preserved through the Great Tribulation in contrast to the multitude from every nation who are not preserved physically, as described in Revelation 7:9-17. As the first half of Revelation 7 deals with those not martyred, the last half of Revelation 7 deals with the martyred dead who accept Christ and then are martyred for their faith. While the 144,000 may be witnesses, the Scriptures do not indicate this specifically. Their presence in the world intact is the dramatic evidence of the keeping power of God, and this is the point of their preservation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 263). “Ryrie [in *Basic Theology*, pp. 490-492] again discusses the 144,000. Ryrie rejects the posttribulational position, ‘the 144,000 Jews to be “spiritual Israel” which is forced to keep this group in an unsaved state throughout the Tribulation. Ryrie insists on taking the text literally and takes them to be Jews who will be saved at the beginning of the Tribulation. The very fact that they ‘have the seal of the living God,’ and are ‘the bond servants of our God,’ simply makes it unreasonable that they are unsaved during the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 532).

They are literal Jews. (Jehovah’s Witnesses and many Covenant theologians teach that they are “spiritual Jews,” i.e. [mostly Gentile] “anointed” Christians.) “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard the number of those who were sealed, **one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed**” (Rev. 7:1-8). “A study of the various renderings of the twelve tribes in both the Old and New Testaments illustrates the fact that one tribe is always omitted in order to keep the number to twelve. Sometimes this is the tribe of Levi. Here it happens to be

the tribe of Dan. The problem is that if the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, are considered separate tribes, it brings the number to thirteen. Accordingly, the omission of Dan here is really not significant and offers no support for denial that these are actually Israelites” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 262). “Ladd’s question, ‘How then can these twelve tribes be literal Jews since they are not the literal twelve tribes of Israel?’ can be answered rather simply: they *are* the literal twelve tribes of Israel, and the absence of Dan does not disqualify the other names from being the literal tribes of Israel. God simply chose not to select 12,000 from the Tribe of Dan for His purpose concerning the 144,000” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 299). “In fact, every tribe listed in Revelation seven is found among the twelve tribes of Israel. True, the Tribe of Dan is missing, but that is hardly sufficient to claim that all the others listed are ‘simply not the twelve tribes.’ It is not true that the Tribe of Ephraim is omitted. The name is simply substituted by his father’s name, Joseph. Nor is there any reason to assume that ‘the Tribe of Manasseh is included twice.’ The Tribe of Joseph stands for the Tribe of Ephraim while the Tribe of Manasseh stands for itself. Even if Manasseh is included twice, it does not negate them from being literal Jews. Again, this is careless exegesis. Ladd is trying hard to push his posttribulational theology into the text. Revelation 7:4 clearly states that these 144,000 came from every tribe of the children of Israel, yet Ladd states that they ‘are simply not the twelve tribes of Israel.’ Who, then, should the reader believe: John who wrote the book or Ladd? The names that John does list are: Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. Are these not the familiar Jewish names from the Old Testament that speak of the tribes of Israel? Ladd declares that ‘the twelve tribes listed are simply not the twelve tribes of Israel,’ but with only one exception (Dan), they are those very tribes of Israel. The fact that the tribe of Dan is missing is hardly exegetical evidence to dismiss all those mentioned from being Jewish” (*ibid.*, p. 300). “Ladd uses the missing Dan to get to his foregone conclusion that these 144,000 are the Church. He states: ‘We may believe that John deliberately listed the 144,000 in an irregular listing of tribes to say that here are those who are true spiritual Jews without being literal Jews: in other words, the church.’ It is really difficult to take Ladd seriously, for this is very imaginative exegesis. He is working overtime to try to do away with the Jewishness of the 144,000. Only because of the exclusion of Dan, Ladd insists that these are not literal Jews but the Church. For him ‘the 144,000 are the church on the threshold of the Great Tribulation.’ Ladd, a Posttribulationist, does not have a single verse that actually puts the Church into the Tribulation, so he must use a back door approach; this

is one such back door. The 144,000 are clearly in the Tribulation. By making the 144,000 the Church, Ladd is able to put the Church in the Tribulation” (*ibid.*). “Furthermore, having one tribe missing is not peculiar to the Book of Revelation. In Deuteronomy 33, Moses addressed the tribes one by one. Every tribe is named but one: Simeon. Not even Ladd would claim that such an ‘irregular listing’ by Moses means they were not literal Jews but the Church” (*ibid.*, p. 301). “After writing about the 144,000 in Revelation 7:1-8, John then talks about another multitude in Revelation 7:9-17 *which no man could number*, and which came out of every nation and language and group. A simple reading of the text would make these two different groups distinguished from each other in two ways. The first group is Jewish, but the second is Gentile. The first group is numbered at exactly 144,000 with 12,000 coming from twelve tribes. The second group is a huge *multitude that no man could number*” (*ibid.*). “McClain [in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 461-463] notes that the 144,000 are ‘definitely distinguished from the uncounted multitude from “all nations” later in the same chapter’ (*ibid.*, p. 531). “While Ladd and other Covenant Theologians try very hard to make the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 into non-Jews, though Jewish tribes are carefully listed, Dispensationalist Ryrie [in *Basic Theology*, pp. 468-469] has no problem taking the text as it reads and identifies the 144,000 as Jews” (*ibid.*, p. 532). “Dan is left out of the 144,000. The Bible nowhere spells out why Dan is excluded... Dan is included in the Millennial Israel (Ezek. 48:1)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 207). “Now these are the names of the tribes: From the north end, beside the way of Hethlon to the entrance of Hamath, Hazar-enan at the border of Damascus, northward beside Hamath, and they shall have their sides east and west, **Dan**, one portion” (Ezek. 48:1). “The mention of the four winds shows that these 144,000 Jews will come from all parts of the world and not only from Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 220). “In place of the name of Ephraim there is the name of his father Joseph (v. 8), but it is the same tribe. Such an interchange between Joseph and Ephraim is not unusual and also appears elsewhere, as in Ezekiel 37:16” (*ibid.*). “And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For **Joseph**, the stick of **Ephraim**, and for all the house of Israel his companions” (Ezek. 37:16) “The text itself does not state the reason why the Tribe of Dan is left out. The actual reason is simply to maintain the symmetry of twelve. When all tribal names are actually listed, the total comes to thirteen and not twelve because Joseph produced two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh. In order to maintain the symmetry of twelve, one name must always be dropped. This

is not the only place this happens. For example, in Deuteronomy 33, Moses presents his twelve tribal blessings, as Jacob did in Genesis 49. But to maintain the symmetry of twelve, Moses also had to drop one tribe, and that was the Tribe of Simeon. In Ezekiel 47-48, in describing the tribal settlement in the Messianic Kingdom, to maintain the symmetry of twelve, Ezekiel drops the tribe of Levi, putting this tribe in a separate place and category. Just as there was no sinister reason for dropping Simeon, there is no sinister reason for dropping Dan. In all cases, it was merely to retain the symmetry of twelve. In the Book of Revelation, three numbers are prominent: four, seven and twelve. Hence, the dropping of Dan” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 220). “Revelation speaks of a role for Israel in the last days before the Second Coming, a specific and significant involvement in God’s future plan, first mentioned during the Tribulation: ‘Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 *from all the tribes of Israel*’ (7:4). Neither word, *tribe* or *Israel*, is ever scripturally used in anything but a literal way” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:57). (See also our discussion of the fact that in the Bible, “tribes” always refers to literal tribes of people in the section *The Church is Not “Israel”* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

They are “first fruits.” “And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as **first fruits** to God and to the Lamb” (Rev. 14:3–4). “The reference to the 144,000 as ‘the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb’ (14:4) cannot mean the first in *time* of all the redeemed in world history, for this would displace the saints of the Old Testament. In the context of Revelation, they are the ‘firstfruits’ of the nation of Israel to be redeemed out of end-time judgments, to form the nucleus of the living nation on earth in the Millennial Kingdom. For they are divinely protected from physical harm and therefore do not die (7:3)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 479).

Their existence is in harmony with the broader doctrine of the Jewish remnant:

In summary, “In considering the Old Testament prophecies it was noted that God has a remnant within the remnant of the nation. It is believed that the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 constitute a special part of the remnant of Israel, set apart by a sovereign act of God, to be special witness during the tribulation period. Several considerations are important here. The first is as to whether the 144,000 are literal or figurative. Some have held

that this was a representative number to symbolize an innumerable host of Israel saved during the tribulation. Darby [in Kelly, editor, *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby*, Prophetical XI, II, 37] says: ‘The number... is symbolic; it is the perfect number of those who escape of the remnant in Israel. God alone can know the number of those He seals.’ Scott [in Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 166] takes the same view when he writes: ‘The number of the sealed is of course symbolic, and simply denotes that God has appropriated a certain, complete, yet limited number of Israel for Himself.’ This would make the 144,000 identical to the saved of Israel of the tribulation period. Now it is made clear that many of the saints of Israel are slain during the tribulation (Rev. 13:7; 20:4) whereas these 144,000 are sealed, evidently with a view to their preservation through the period. Thus the remnant of the nation, which is subject to death, can not be the same as the 144,000 who are not subject to death. These must be viewed as a separate company. It would seem to be better to conclude, with Ottman [in Ford C. Ottman, *The Unfolding of the Ages*, p. 166], ‘To lose sight of a *literal* Israel here is to throw a pall of darkness over the whole subject,’ and again [Ibid., p. 180], ‘In this sealed company from the twelve tribes of *Israel* is, whatever may be said to the contrary, plainly and literally before us.’ And since Israel is literal here and the tribes are literal, it would seem best to take the numbers literally also. If these 144,000 are seen to be only a part of the total remnant, the comparative smallness of the number, when compared with the number of saved Gentiles (Rev. 7:9), creates no problem. And, if God is setting these apart as sovereignly appointed witnesses, why should there not be a specific number appointed” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 297)? “It is to be noted that the remnant of Romans 11:26 is not converted until the second advent of Christ and the 144,000 are ministering as sealed witnesses immediately after the church has been raptured. It would thus seem that the 144,000 are a part of the remnant of Israel, but not the entire remnant itself. It may be that Paul was likening himself to one of these witnesses when he speaks of himself as ‘one born out of due time’ (1 Cor. 15:8). Scofield [in C.I. Scofield, *Reference Bible* p. 1226] remarks: ‘Gr. *to ektromati*, “before the due time.” Paul thinks of himself here as an Israelite whose time to be born again had not come, nationally (cf. Mt. 23:39 [“**O Jerusalem**, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, **from now on you shall not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”**”]), so that his conversion by

the appearing of the Lord in glory (Acts 9:3-6) was an illustration, or instance before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel. See Ezek. 20:35-38; Hos. 2:14-17; Zech. 12:10-13:6; Rom. 11:25-27.' They are the set-apart witnesses of whom Paul was the prototype. And as there were specifically numbered groups who were sent out as witnesses during the Lord's ministry (the twelve and the seventy), there will be a specifically designated group appointed here also" (*ibid.*, p. 298). "...the Remnant of Israel is fulfilling the calling of the nation as a whole" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 773).

Specifically, three facts are pertinent to this discussion: 1. *The Jewish remnant always exists.* "...the Remnant of Israel... there is never a time when it is non-existent" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 601). "There are two Israels: Israel the Whole and Israel the Remnant. Ethnically, the two are the same, but spiritually, they are not. The Remnant at any point of history may be large or small but there is never a time when it is non-existent, except immediately after the Rapture" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 763). 2. *The remnant has not always been easily identified.* "And Jehovah said unto him [Elijah], Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. **Yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel**, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings. 19:15-18). "These seven thousand were the remnant of that day, quite small compared to the nation as a whole. The remnant corresponds to the still small voice. The remnant in contrast to Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, is the quiet thing; so quiet, that Elijah did not know they even existed. God's presence was in this remnant" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 603). 3. *The remnant will believe in Immanuel.* "Then said Jehovah unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and **Shear-jashub** thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field" (Isa. 7:3) "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name **Immanuel**" (Isa. 7:14). "And Jehovah spake unto me yet again, saying, Forasmuch as this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory: and it shall come up over all its channels, and go over all its banks; and it shall sweep onward into Judah; it shall overflow and pass through; it shall reach

even to the neck; and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O **Immanuel**. Make an uproar, O ye peoples, and be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for **God is with us**. For Jehovah spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A conspiracy, concerning all whereof this people shall say, A conspiracy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be in dread thereof. Jehovah of hosts, him shall ye sanctify; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And **he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence** to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many shall stumble thereon, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind thou up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait for Jehovah, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him” (Isa. 8:5-17). “It is Isaiah the prophet who put the remnant concept into theological terms. It is mostly found in the unit comprising chapters 7-12 and called ‘The Book of Immanuel’ since, in the Hebrew text, that name is found three times (7:14, 8:8, 10). Building on the contrast of the noise and the quiet, Isaiah (8:5-8) points out that the non-remnant tends to put its trust in that which is noisy (the Assyrian Army) but the remnant has a quiet confidence in the God of Israel and the One to come, Immanuel. Ultimately the noise will destroy the non-remnant which puts its faith in the noise, but Immanuel will save the believing (8:9-11). Immanuel thus becomes the point of division between the remnant and the non-remnant. For the remnant, Immanuel will prove to be a sanctuary, but for the non-remnant Immanuel will prove to be a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense (8:14-15). The remnant places its trust in the law and the prophets (8:16) and, therefore, waits upon the Lord (8:17). So important was the doctrine of the remnant to Isaiah that he named one of his sons Shear Yashuv which means ‘a remnant shall return’ (7:3). With that naming, Isaiah was looking forward to the future final salvation of the Remnant of Israel (10:20-23). Until then, it is God who will protect the remnant and guarantee its survival (46:3-4)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 604).

Concerning the biblical doctrine of the remnant (Note: The following discussion of the doctrine of the remnant is from Fruchtenbaum’s *Israelology*, which in turn quotes heavily from Pentecost’s *Things to Come*, pp. 291-301):

Regarding the Jewish remnant in general: Regarding the necessity of a remnant, “Pentecost discusses the 144,000 Jews in conjunction with the doctrine of the remnant. This he does in five categories, the first of which is the ‘necessity of a remnant.’ The necessity of the existence of a believing Jewish remnant is based on the four unconditional and eternal covenants God made with Israel, and the very nature of these covenants ‘demands the existence of a remnant to whom and through whom these covenants can be fulfilled.’ The Abrahamic Covenant promised ‘a land, a seed, and a blessing, which would be universal and eternal.’ This requires ‘a remnant to be that promised seed, who can occupy the land given that seed and through whom the promised blessing may come.’ The Palestinian Covenant ‘gives the basis on which Israel will occupy the land,’ and this makes ‘the existence of a remnant imperative to receive the promised inheritance of the land.’ The Davidic Covenant promised ‘a king, a kingdom, and a throne to the seed of Abraham,’ and ‘an everlasting earthly kingdom over which David’s son should reign.’ This fact also necessitates ‘a remnant to whom the promises of the Davidic covenant can be fulfilled.’ The New Covenant promised a national salvation and restoration of Israel and so ‘there must be a remnant of the nation continuing with whom God can fulfill His word.’ Finally, the very character of God requires the existence of a remnant, for ‘God has made these solemn promises to the nation Israel’ and ‘the very character of God is at stake in their fulfillment.’ God’s integrity ‘makes the existence of a remnant necessary” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 533). *Regarding the remnant in Israel’s history*, “In the second category, Pentecost summarizes the ‘remnant in Israel’s history’: Even a casual survey of Israel’s recorded history will establish the principle that God dealt with a believing remnant within the nation. Caleb and Joshua (Num. 13-14), Deborah and Barak (Judges 4), Gideon (Judges 7), Samson (Judges 13-17), Samuel (1 Sam 2), the Levites in Jeroboam’s day (2 Chron. 11:14-16), Asa (2 Chron. 15:9), the seven thousand faithful ones in the days of Elijah (1 Kings 19:18) all illustrate this point... God preserved for Himself a faithful, believing, witnessing remnant in times of apostasy, persecution, and indifference” (*ibid.*). *Regarding the remnant in the prophets*, “In the third category, he summarizes the ‘remnant in the prophets’: It would be impossible to cite all the references to the remnant in the prophetic books. A few passages will be cited to show that such a subject is a main line of prophetic revelation. Isaiah speaks of it in 1:9, 4:3-4, 6:12-13; 10:21; 26:20; 49:6; 51:1; 65:13-14. Entire chapters, such as twenty-six, thirty-three, thirty-five, and sixty-five, are devoted to it. Jeremiah follows the same theme in passages such as Jeremiah 15:11, 33:25-26, and 44:28. The entire passage in chapters thirty through thirty-

three is based upon the existence of the remnant. Ezekiel takes up the theme in such references as 14:22; 20:34-38; 37:21-22. It appears again in the other prophets: Hosea 3:5; Amos 9:11-15; Zechariah 13:8-9; Malachi 3:16-17" (*ibid.*, p. 534). *Regarding the remnant in the New Testament*, "In the fourth category, the author summarizes the 'remnant in the New Testament.' Pentecost affirms the existence of a special Jewish remnant even throughout the gospel period which was 'a believing group within the spared nation.' It is important to realize that the Remnant of Israel is always within Israel and not outside of it. The ministry of John, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy disciples was all limited to Israel as a nation and the kingdom was offered to Israel alone; but it is also true that 'God was dealing throughout Christ's earthly ministry with the remnant that existed then.' However, Pentecost then reveals the persistent weakness of Dispensationalism in developing a theology of Israel Present. He states that between the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus until the Great Tribulation 'it is not possible to refer to a remnant of the nation Israel.' However, this is simply not true, as Romans 11 makes very clear. Pentecost declares that in 'the body of Christ all national distinctions disappear,' but the Bible nowhere teaches this; for in every context where the Scriptures teach that there is 'neither Jew nor Greek' it is speaking of how one is saved. Earlier in his own work, Pentecost showed that there is still a distinction between Jewish believers and Gentiles believers, so he goes well beyond the text with such declarative statements. Pentecost is correct in that all 'Jews who are saved are not saved into a national relationship, but into a relationship to Christ in that body of believers'; however, the point is that these Jews who become believers do not lose their nationality, their Jewishness, anymore than Gentiles cease to be Gentiles. The author's declaration that 'there is no continuing remnant of Israel with whom God is particularly dealing today' is simply a false conclusion. There is *always* a remnant of the Israel which is the 'Israel of God' of Galatians 6:15-16. Paul's argument in Romans 11:1-10 is to emphasize that there is still a Remnant of Israel today. Pentecost does make reference to Romans 11:5 and correctly rejects the view of Covenant Theology 'that the church becomes the remnant and will be the witness in and through whom the promises of God are fulfilled to a "spiritual" Israel.' Nevertheless, Romans 11 does speak of a Jewish remnant in this present age of grace, and the Remnant of Israel is always part of the nation and not apart from it. The point is that there is still a Remnant of Israel today. True, all Jewish believers are part of the Church, but they are still part of Israel, for they and they alone make up the 'Israel of God.' These unproven statements

Pentecost makes reflect a poor development of Israelology as it relates to Israel Present” (*ibid.*).

Regarding the Jewish remnant in Revelation: “In the fifth category, Pentecost deals extensively with the ‘remnant in Revelation.’ Pentecost begins the discussion on the remnant in Revelation by referring to Paul’s comments in Romans 11. He points out that 11:25 teaches that ‘the blindness of Israel is a temporary blindness,’ but then he repeats his error of the previous section by deducting a false conclusion: ‘Because the nation is now blinded, God can not have a remnant within the nation with whom the covenants will be fulfilled.’ The point of Romans 11:1-20 is exactly the opposite: that God does have a believing Remnant of Israel today. Not only does Romans 11:25 teach that ‘the blindness of Israel is temporary blindness,’ it also teaches that this blindness is in part, that is it is a partial blindness, for there are Jews who believe. It is that part of Israel which is not blinded that makes up the Remnant of Israel today. Pentecost goes on to say that ‘the “all Israel” in Romans 11:26’ refers to the ‘believing remnant, the believing Jews at the second advent of Christ.’ What is not at all clear from Pentecost is the question as to whether or not the all Israel which makes up the Remnant of Israel at the second coming includes all Jews living at that time; the implication is that it does not” (*ibid.*, p. 535). *Regarding the existence of the remnant,* “Having given this [the paragraphs quoted immediately above—*ed.*] as an introduction, Pentecost moves on to discuss the remnant in Revelation in six points. The first point is the ‘existence of the remnant.’ Pentecost concludes that the very fact that Satan attacks Israel in the Tribulation, an Israel that has ‘regathered in unbelief back to the land’ and is now forced ‘to flee for preservation from the Satanic attack’ shows that ‘a remnant does exist in the tribulation period,’ and it is ‘this remnant that God is preparing for the fulfillment of all Israel’s covenants and promises” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 535). *Regarding the status of the remnant,* “...second point is the ‘status of this remnant.’ Again, Pentecost states that Israel, when regathered before the Tribulation, ‘is still in unbelief.’ However, God intends to bring the nation to salvation and will use a variety of means, such as the Scriptures, the work of the Holy Spirit in ‘convicting and enlightening,’ miraculous signs, ‘the ministry of the 144,000 sealed of Israel’ of Revelation seven and the two witnesses of Revelation 11. Pentecost feels that ‘the majority will not repent,’ but ‘some may be turned to Jehovah by these signs.’ In passing, it should be noted that Pentecost understands the 144,000 to speak of literal Jews, and he will develop this point later; but insofar as the status of the remnant is concerned, the entire nation is ‘unsaved at the beginning of the tribulation,’ though throughout

the Tribulation many Jewish ‘individuals are experiencing salvation’ and ‘the nation will be saved finally at the second advent’” (*ibid.*, p. 536). *Regarding the means of salvation of the remnant*, “The third point is the ‘*means of salvation* of the remnant.’ The remnant will come to saving faith because the Holy Spirit will still be active in the Tribulation, though some of His ministries will differ from the way He operates today. Furthermore, according to Matthew 24:14, there will be the preaching of ‘the gospel of the kingdom’ which includes ‘two distinct facets’: the proclamation of the coming of the kingdom; and, ‘that the salvation is through the blood of the lamb’” (*ibid.*). *Regarding the ministry of the remnant*, “The fourth point concerns the ‘*ministry* of the remnant,’ and Pentecost believes that ‘this believing remnant holds the position of a witnessing body during the tribulation period.’ The very purpose of Israel’s calling in the Old Testament, to be ‘the witness for God to the nations of the earth,’ will be fulfilled by the remnant in the Tribulation, for ‘God will raise up a faithful witness during the tribulation to fulfill this original purpose for this nation’” (*ibid.*). *Regarding the relation of the 144,000 to the remnant*, “The fifth point is the ‘*relation* of the 144,000 to the remnant.’ Covenant Theologians, including premillennial ones like Ladd, struggle hard and use all sorts of exegetical gymnastics to try to prove that the 144,000 Jews are not Jews and that the twelve tribes of Israel are not the twelve tribes of Israel but are somehow representative of the Church; however, Pentecost, like all Dispensationalists, takes the text at face value and accepts the 144,000 to be Jews. He has no trouble making the twelve tribes of Israel mean the twelve tribes of Israel. His concern here is to determine just how these 144,000 Jews of Revelation seven relate to the remnant. Just as in the Old Testament God had ‘a remnant within the remnant of the nation,’ Pentecost views the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 to ‘constitute a special part of the remnant of Israel, set apart by a sovereign act of God, to be special witness during the tribulation period.’ While a minority of Dispensationalists viewed the figure 144,000 as a figurative number, ‘to symbolize an innumerable host of Israel saved during the tribulation,’ and, therefore, ‘make the 144,000 identical to the saved of Israel of the tribulation period,’ Pentecost speaks for the majority of Dispensationalists by taking the figure literally. This is an exact number because of their special role in the Tribulation. They are sealed for the purpose of being preserved through the Tribulation and, therefore, ‘are not subject to death.’ For that reason, they ‘must be viewed as a separate company.’ Pentecost concludes that ‘since Israel is literal here and the tribes are literal, it would seem best to take the numbers literally also.’ Because these are set apart by God as special witnesses, then there should be no problem

with such a specific number like 144,000, and no reason not to take that figure literally. The 144,000 are to be viewed as being ‘part of the remnant of Israel, but not the entire remnant itself.’ This is obvious from at least one fact alone: the 144,000 are saved at the beginning of the Tribulation, while the nation or ‘the remnant of Romans 11:26 is not converted until the second advent of Christ.’ Furthermore, these 144,000 are not only a part of the remnant, they ‘are ministering as sealed witnesses immediately after the church has been raptured.’ Pentecost views them as carrying out the program of world evangelism in the Tribulation. A minority of Dispensationalists have held to the view that the 144,000 of Revelation seven are a distinct group from the 144,000 of revelation 14, but Pentecost again speaks for the majority of Dispensationalists by making them the same group. Since to separate them requires one ‘to spiritualize certain things in the two chapters,’ it is wiser to stick to a literal interpretation and to ‘make them identical.’ The 144,000 in Revelation seven are ‘set apart... before the great tribulation begins’ and are ‘sealed at the very outset of the tribulation period.’ The myriad of Gentiles saved ‘come to a knowledge of salvation through the ministry of this group.’ In Revelation 14, the same 144,000 are viewed as being with the Messiah in the Messianic Kingdom. These 144,000 Jews are called the *firstfruits* which means ‘they are the first of the harvest of the tribulation period that will come into the millennium to populate the millennial earth.’ They are the firstfruit of many more Jews to come to saving faith” (*ibid.*). And, *regarding the destiny of the remnant*, “The sixth point concerns the ‘*destiny* of the remnant.’ The specific destiny of the remnant is the Messianic Kingdom when their Messiah will rule over them from the Throne of David. Pentecost concludes that the ‘promises are not heavenly, but earthly, and will be fulfilled in the millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 537).

The 144,000 will proclaim the gospel to the nations during the Tribulation period. “The Old Testament pictures Israel as the witness for God to the nations of the earth. Israel was unfaithful to this ministry. God will raise up a faithful witness during the tribulation to fulfill this original purpose for this nation” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 297). “God will set apart Israel again during the Tribulation to be His light to the world (Rev. 7:1-8)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 259). “Matthew 24:14... 144,000... Israel in the Old Testament was the servant of God and their ministry was to receive revelation from God and then to disseminate that revelation to the nations that were in darkness due to their ignorance of God. These 144,000, then, will be set apart as God’s emissaries to the Gentiles to bring those in darkness a knowledge of the salvation that was provided through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a result of their ministry, an innumerable company will be

brought to faith in Jesus Christ and experience the blessings of the salvation He has provided” (*ibid.*, p. 311). “It is difficult to accept any interpretation that spiritualizes the names of the Jewish tribes into the Israel of God or the church universal. That principle of interpretation is valid that states: ‘When the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense.’ Concerning the 144,000 sealed ones, one concludes that when the church is caught up to be with the Lord, God will call a remnant of His people—He has ever had a true witness to Himself and His goodness among His people Israel even in the darkest hours of their apostasy and declension—to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, for ‘this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come’ (Matt. 24:14). The presence of that remnant is brought out in many Old Testament passages and explains the existence and purpose of the imprecatory psalms. The result of their testimony is seen in the great multitude of Gentiles saved (Rev. 7:9-17)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 162). “It is by means of these 144,000 that the gospel will be proclaimed to all nations during the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 532). “The 144,000 Jews... They will be evangelists during the first half of the Tribulation, conducting a worldwide revival” (*ibid.*, p. 775). “Revelation 7:1-17... In verses 1-8, John describes the *means* by which God will bring about this worldwide revival, while verses 9-17 portray the *results* of the revival” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 175). “...this revival will occur during the first half of the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 176). “During the first half of the Tribulation, God will evangelize the world by means of the 144,000 Jews and thus fulfill the prophecy found in Matthew 24:14” (*ibid.*, p. 177). “**And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come**” (Matt. 24:14). “[Rev. 7:9-10, 13-14]... ‘After these things’... After the vision of the 144,000 Jews, John saw myriads and myriads of Gentiles, as well as other Jews who have come to a saving knowledge of the Savior during the Tribulation. The connecting link, after these things, is chronological and also shows a cause and effect relationship between the first and the second parts of Revelation seven. Thus, by means of the 144,000 Jews, God will accomplish the second purpose of the Great Tribulation, that of bringing about a worldwide revival” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 177). “This ministry of the 144,000 Jews preaching the gospel fulfills the prophecy of Matthew 24:14” (*ibid.*, p. 221). “...the 144,000 Jews (Rev. 7:4-8), are scattered into the world, preaching ‘the gospel of the kingdom’ (Matt. 24:14) and winning ‘a great multitude’ of others to Christ (Rev. 7:9)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:602).

And, *the 144,000 will enter alive the Messianic Kingdom*. “For this reason, **they [the great multitude] are before the throne of God;**

and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and **He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them.** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat” (Rev. 7:15-16) “Then I looked, and behold, **the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand,** having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song **before the throne** and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth” (Rev. 14:1-3). “They are seen ‘before the throne’ (Rev. 14:3). Thus the destiny of this remnant is the kingdom over which Christ will rule from the ‘throne of David.’ These promises are not heavenly, but earthly, and will be fulfilled in the millennium” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 301). “These 144,000 come up again in a later chapter entitled, ‘Populating the Millennial Kingdom,’ where he provides a pretribulational answer as to who enters the Messianic Kingdom. The 144,000 are again identified as Jews and will be among those to enter the Messianic Kingdom. Beyond these will be ‘the faithful Jewish survivors of Ezekiel 20:38” [quoting Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, pp. 488-489] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 532). “and **I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel:** and ye shall know that I am Jehovah” (Ezek. 20:38). “There will be a large portion of the Jewish population who will become members of the Remnant of Israel only at the end of the Tribulation. These can be called the Faithful Remnant. Based upon all the passages involved, this group will make up the majority of the one-third of the nation that will survive the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 786).

The Seven Seal Judgments

With the opening of *the seal judgments*, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse begin their rides. “The seven seals... all seven will be part of the same program of Christ’s evicting Satan and his forces and taking tenant possession of the earth” (Showers, *M*, p. 111). “One of the marks of the richness of the depiction in Rev. is that God’s wrath is also against devils and powers which oppose God, as is made plain by the revelation of God in Christ... and in this connection we are given the picture of two antithetical forces of wrath. The devil with his great wrath—Rev. 12:17 has the image of the angry dragon—and along with him the angry nations (11:18) fight

against God and His kingdom. This is the great eschatological wrath which opposes the wrath of God... The drama of revelation can thus be understood in large measure as a battle between two wraths” [quoting Gustav Stahlin, ‘orge,’ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. V, p. 439] (*ibid.*). “...the objects of God’s wrath (Satan and his forces, including all nations, people, and angels who oppose God)” (*ibid.*, p. 122) “There are seven Seal Judgments, with the seventh containing the Seven Trumpet Judgments. The seventh Trumpet Judgment contains the seven Bowl Judgments” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 204). “...each series of judgments is more intense” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:605) “The time up to the fourth seal is described as ‘the beginning of birth pains’ (Matt. 24:8), and by the sixth seal ‘the great day of their wrath’ will have arrived. The intensity of God’s wrath will be increasing; once again, if God had not foredetermined to shorten these days there would be no flesh alive by the end of the Tribulation (cf. Matt. 24:22)” (*ibid.*, p. 607).

Seal 1: Antichrist conquers. “I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them **another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up** by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Dan. 7:8) “Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and **the other horn which came up, and before which three fell**, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them” (Dan. 7:19-21) “and as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and **another shall arise after them**; and he shall be diverse from the former, and **he shall put down three kings**” (Dan. 7:24). “And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘See to it that no one misleads you. For **many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will mislead many**” (Matt. 24:4-5). “And I saw when the Lamb broke **one of the seven seals**, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, ‘Come.’ And I looked, and behold, **a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer**” (Rev. 6:1-2). “And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads**, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And **the beast which I saw was like a**

leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and **authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.** And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain” (Rev. 13:1–8). “As Daniel’s ‘Beast’ represented the ‘FOURTH KINGDOM’ upon the earth, the Roman Empire, it is evident that its characteristics describe the old Roman Empire, while the characteristics of John’s Beast represent the revived Roman Empire” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 121). “The body being that of a LEOPARD, with the feet of a BEAR, and the mouth of a LION is to show that the revived Roman Empire in its last stage will include the characteristics of the first ‘Three Wild Beasts’ of Daniel, that is, of the LION (Babylon), the BEAR (Medo-Persia), and the LEOPARD (Greece), and as the largest part of the ‘Beast,’ the body, is represented by the LEOPARD, the prevailing characteristic of the revived Roman Empire will be GRECIAN” (*ibid.*). “Christ as the Lamb, is holding and breaking the ‘seals’ of the Book. He does not appear as a White Horse Rider until chapter 19” (*ibid.*, p. 134). “...our Lord appears as the Lamb *in heaven* breaking the seal which releases the rider of the white horse *on earth*” (McClain, *GK*, p. 452). “The rider on the white horse is the counterpart of the ‘little horn’ of Daniel’s vision” (*ibid.*, p. 453). “His activity during the first half of the 70th week will be characterized by a driving compulsion to conquer the whole world and bring it under his dominion” (Showers, *M*, p. 105). “...the judgment of the world. Isaiah 3:1-15 indicates that sometimes God judges rebellious people by removing good leaders or rulers and giving them oppressive rulers. Thus, there are times when God gives people the kind of rulers they deserve” (*ibid.*, p. 109). “For, behold, the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah stay and staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water; the mighty man, and the man of war; the judge, and the prophet, and the diviner, and the elder; the captain of

fifty, and the honorable man, and the counsellor, and the expert artificer, and the skilful enchanter. And **I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed**, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor: **the child shall behave himself proudly against the old man, and the base against the honorable**. When a man shall take hold of his brother in the house of his father, saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand; in that day shall he lift up his voice, saying, I will not be a healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: ye shall not make me ruler of the people. For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen; because their tongue and their doings are against Jehovah, to provoke the eyes of his glory. The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have done evil unto themselves. Say ye of the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for what his hands have done shall be done unto him. As for my people, **children are their oppressors, and women rule over them**. O my people, they that lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. Jehovah standeth up to contend, and standeth to judge the peoples. Jehovah will enter into judgment with the elders of his people, and the princes thereof: It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses: what mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor? saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts” (Isa. 3:1-15). “During the 70th week, God will inflict on the rebellious world a ruler who will be the ultimate expression of its own spirit of lawlessness... That rebellious nature will make him an oppressive, dictatorial tyrant who will subject the world to his self-centered whims, causing the world to suffer the horrible consequences of the same spirit of lawlessness that prompts it to rebel against God. Thus, God will judge the world by giving it the kind of ruler it deserves” (Showers, *M*, p. 109). “Just as God raised up Pharaoh, who despised and stubbornly resisted Him and tried to annihilate His people, to demonstrate His awesome power through him and thereby impress the world with Himself (Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17), so He will bring the Antichrist on the world scene for a similar purpose” (*ibid.*). “...to judge the lawless world by giving it the kind of lawless ruler it deserves” (*ibid.*, p. 122) “By establishing a one-world government, he will imitate the worldwide authority that will belong to Jesus Christ in His Kingdom: ‘He was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation’” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 303). “That the figure is not Messiah is indicated by the fact that the crown here is a *stephanos* crown, the crown of an overcomer or vic-

tor. It is not the *diadem* crown, the crown of sovereignty and royalty, the type of crown Messiah will wear in chapter 19” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 204). “This rider is not to be confused with Christ (cf. Rev. 19) because: (1) This is not the Second Coming, which is after the Tribulation; (2) Christ will come with a ‘sword,’ the Word of God, not a bow; (3) At His return, Christ will not be ‘bent on conquest’ but will be engaged in the final conquering; (4) By parallel with Matthew 24:4-5, this is a false Christ” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:605).

Seal 2: War. “And when He broke **the second seal**, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come.’ And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted **to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another; and a great sword was given to him**” (Rev. 6:3-4). “And you will be hearing of **wars and rumors of wars**; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For **nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom**, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely **the beginning of birth pangs**” (Matt. 24:6-8). “The rider of the second seal will be given a great sword and will remove peace from the earth... it will be equal to the wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom in Jesus’ beginning of birth pangs statements in Matthew 24:6-8” (Showers, *M*, p. 113). “There are three major wars during the period of the Tribulation, and the second seal is the first of these three wars. The second war will be in the middle of the Tribulation, and the third, which is the Campaign of Armageddon, toward the end of the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 216).

Seal 3: Famine. “And when He broke **the third seal**, I heard the third living creature saying, ‘Come.’ And I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had **a pair of scales** in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, ‘**A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.**’ And when He broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come.’ And I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. And authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, **to kill** with sword and with famine and with pestilence and **by the wild beasts of the earth**” (Rev. 6:5-8). “For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and **in various places there will be famines** and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs” (Matt. 24:7-8). “...the failure of crops... espe-

cially during the interval, to teach, if possible, men their dependence upon a higher power, and their impotency to relieve themselves from the entailed curse” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:152) “When the third seal is broken, a voice in the midst of the four beasts speaks. The person speaking determines the prices of food and sets limits on the famine—he administers the famine... either God or Christ, not mankind or Satan, will administer the famine associated with the third seal” (Showers, *M*, p. 113). “The judgment of a worldwide famine, however, is tempered by mercy. For while there is a famine of food, there will be an abundance of medicine, for the *oil and wine* are not hurt. These items were used for medicinal purposes” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 217). “Revelation 6:7-8...*by the wild beasts of the earth*... Once food becomes scarce, wild animals which generally leave man alone will begin to attack man for food” (*ibid.*).

Seal 4: Death. “And when He broke **the fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come.’ And I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name **Death; and Hades** was following with him. And **authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill** with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth” (Rev. 6:7-8). “For **nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom**, and in various places there will be **famines and earthquakes**. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs” (Matt. 24:7-8).

Seal 5: Martyrs. “And when He broke **the fifth seal**, I saw underneath the altar **the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained**; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, **until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also**” (Rev. 6:9-11). “**Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.** Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. **This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations**, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:9–14). “...when Christ or the Antichrist is to be chosen” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:739) “No doubt too, one

cause of the exceeding bitterness and animosity manifested toward the followers of Jesus, will be the previous proclamation that this last revived head [Rev. 13:3, 12] will be the Antichrist” (*ibid.*). “And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after **the beast**” (Rev. 13:3) “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship **the first beast**, whose fatal wound was healed” (Rev. 13:12). “After the Church is caught out the preaching of the ‘Gospel of the Kingdom’ will be resumed. Matt. 24:14. As it is a proclamation that Christ is about to set up an ‘Earthly Kingdom,’ it will be exceedingly distasteful to Antichrist and his followers, and a ‘Great Persecution’ will follow. Matt. 24:9-13. It is the ‘souls’ of the martyrs of this Persecution that John saw under the Altar” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 134). “Before the opening of the sixth seal the martyrs of that time will have already borne their faithful testimony to ‘the Word of God’ and died for its sake (6:9)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 455). “Excepting the 144,000 sealed Israelites, in the supreme ‘trial’ those who choose Christ will be killed, while those who reject Him will live” (*ibid.*, p. 465)! “The fact that John did not see believers being slain, but instead saw the disembodied souls of saints who had been slain before he saw them, forces the conclusion that when Christ breaks the fifth seal, it will not cause the martyrdom of those saints” (Showers, *M*, p. 110). “The martyred saints of the fifth seal will be living and dying during the first four seals” (*ibid.*, p. 119).

Seal 6: Cosmic disturbances. “And I looked when He broke **the sixth seal**, and there was a great **earthquake**; and **the sun became black** as sackcloth made of hair, and **the whole moon became like blood**; and **the stars of the sky fell to the earth**, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. And **the sky was split apart** like a scroll when it is rolled up; and **every mountain and island were moved out of their places**. And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for **the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand**’” (Rev. 6:12-17)? “For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and **earthquakes**” (Matt. 24:7). “The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?” ([Rev. 6] v. 17). These responses clearly indicate that unregenerate mankind will be convinced that these cataclysmic phenomena

are expressions of God's wrath directed against them. Certainly this would not be their conclusion if they were the ones causing these catastrophic disturbances... it is the unregenerate, who will be living on the earth when the sixth seal is broken, who will say, 'The great day of his wrath is come' (v. 17)... the narrow or 'great and terrible day of the LORD'... it appears that they will conclude that the narrow Day of the Lord has come with the breaking of the sixth seal... this conclusion of the unregenerate will be wrong" (Showers, *M*, p. 119). "The cosmic disturbances involved with the sixth seal will cause the unregenerate to flee in terror to the mountains to hide from God's wrath (Rev. 6:12-17). By contrast, the cosmic disturbances involved with 'the great and terrible day of the LORD' will not cause them to flee and hide. Instead, when Christ comes out of heaven, the rulers and armies of the nations will be gathered together with the Antichrist and the False Prophet, ready for battle in bold, defiant rebellion against God and Christ (Rev. 19:11-19). Apparently the display of supernatural powers associated with the Antichrist and the False Prophet (2 Th. 2:9-10; Rev. 11:7-10; 13:4, 11-15), along with the presence of Satan and his angels on the earth during the second half of the 70th week (Rev. 12:7-17), will cause this radical change in the unregenerate between the time of the sixth seal and the time of Christ's coming" (*ibid.*, p. 121). "...only with the sixth seal do unbelievers recognize that it is the wrath of God" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 218). "Even the unsaved under the sixth seal will recognize the judgment as the 'wrath of the Lamb' (Rev. 6:15-16)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:653).

Seal 7: Silence in heaven, prayers, thunder, lightning, earthquake. "And when He broke **the seventh seal**, there was **silence** in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and **seven trumpets** were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the **prayers of all the saints** upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of **thunder** and sounds and flashes of **lightning** and an **earthquake**. And the seven angels who had the **seven trumpets** prepared themselves to sound them" (Rev. 8:1-6). "At the breaking of the 'Seventh Seal' there will be 'silence in Heaven' for a limited period. This will be a period of preparation for the greater conflict to follow" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 134).

The First Six of the Seven Trumpet Judgments

The seventh seal judgment (see the paragraph immediately above) contains the seven trumpet judgments.

Trumpet 1: Hail, fire, blood, one third of earth burned up. “And **the first sounded**, and there came **hail and fire**, mixed with **blood**, and they were thrown to the earth; and **a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up**” (Rev. 8:7). “This is a repetition of the ‘Seventh Egyptian Plague.’ Ex. 9:22-26. That was ‘literal.’ Why should not this be” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 134)? “And Jehovah said unto Moses, Stretch forth thy hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and Jehovah sent **thunder and hail, and fire ran down unto the earth**; and Jehovah rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So **there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail**, very grievous, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail” (Ex. 9:22–26).

Trumpet 2: A fiery mountain thrown into the sea; one third of the sea destroyed. “**And the second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood; and a third of the creatures, which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed**” (Rev. 8:8-9).

Trumpet 3: A star falls from heaven; one third of fresh water spoiled. “**And the third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter**” (Rev. 8:10-11).

Trumpet 4: One third of the sun, moon and stars darkened, an eagle proclaims woe. “**And the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were smitten, so that a third of them might be darkened and the day might not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.** And I looked, and I heard **an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, ‘Woe, woe, woe, to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound’**”

(Rev. 8:12–13)! “Revelation 8:13... Because the three final Trumpet Judgments are especially severe for mankind on the earth, they are called Woe Judgments... This severity is so pronounced that there is a warning of their approach sounded with a voice in the atmospheric heavens. The *eagle* is most likely a *seraph* (Rev. 4:7) chosen to give this warning to the earth” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 224).

Trumpet 5: Locusts torment men for five months. “And **the fifth angel sounded**, and I saw **a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. And he opened the bottomless pit; and smoke went up out of the pit**, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. And out of the smoke came forth **locusts** upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And they were told that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to **torment for five months**; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. And **in those days men will seek death and will not find it; and they will long to die and death flees from them.** And the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads, as it were, crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. And they had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle. And they have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to **hurt men for five months.** They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon. The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things” (Rev. 9:1-12). “The meaning of this scourge of ‘Scorpion Locusts’ seems to be that a vast army of ‘Demons’ will be liberated from the ‘Bottomless Pit,’ who shall enter into and take possession of the ‘bodies’ of men, and so ‘torment’ them that they shall desire to die and shall not be able, the demons preventing them” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 135). “...fallen angel. The *Abyss* is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels or demons. It is the place where the demons feared to be sent when they were cast out by Messiah (Lk. 8:31). It is temporary, for the final abode for fallen angels will be the Lake of Fire. Not all demons are confined in the Abyss at the present time. Those that are, are waiting there to be released for specific judgments on mankind” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 226).

“...all suicide attempts will fail. Men will be forced to endure the torment in all its fury” (*ibid.*).

Trumpet 6: Four angels released, one third of mankind killed by two hundred million horsemen. “And **the sixth angel sounded**, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, ‘**Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.**’ And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they might **kill a third of mankind**. And the number of the armies of the **horsemen** was **two hundred million**; I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads; and with them they do harm. And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts” (Rev. 9:13-21). “These two invasions of ‘Scorpion Locusts’ and ‘Infernal Cavalry’ warn us that in the days after the Church is caught out, Satan and his ‘Demon Forces’ will be increasingly active and do all they can to torment and destroy mankind” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 135). “...four fallen angels” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 227) “...the *east* in Scripture is always Mesopotamia and never China. This army of two hundred million are demons and not Chinese” (*ibid.*, p. 228). “To summarize why these two hundred million are demons and not Chinese, four things should be noted: *first*, they are led by four fallen angels; *second*, the location of the army is stated to be the Euphrates, where Babylon is located (which in the future will be the headquarters of the counterfeit trinity); *third*, the description given in the text rules out this army’s being human; and *fourth*, the kings of the east are not connected with this at all” (*ibid.*, p. 229).

Ecclesiastical (“Mystery”) Babylon the Great falls. “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you the judgment of **the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made**

drunk with the wine of her immorality.’ And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, **‘BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.’** And I saw **the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.** And when I saw her, I wondered greatly. And the angel said to me, ‘Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast. These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.’ And he said to me, **‘The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth’**” (Rev. 17:1-18). “In the primitive ages this figurative name of Babylon was frequently given heathen Rome by the Christians, on account of the resemblance of the character of those two cities, for their idolatry and for their oppressing—one the Jews; the other the Christians. St. Peter dates his first letter from Babylon (1 Pet. 6:13), that is, from Rome

as St Jerome and Eusebius tell us. “The appellation of Babylon (said Tertulian) is used by St. John for the city of Rome, because she resembles ancient Babylon, in the extent of her walls; her haughtiness; on account of her dominion; and in persecuting the saints” (Lib. adv. Jud.). St. Austin also says, “Rome is a second Babylon and a daughter of the ancient Babylon” (de Civ. lib. 22, c. 18). Babylon the great is therefore sufficiently distinguished” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:708). “...the attempted union of Church and State during ‘Times of the Gentiles.’ The character and destiny of the State forbids such a union. The State, as now constituted, is selfish, and for the sake of self-interest, as the history of the past painfully illustrates, and as history of the future predicted shows, will sacrifice the Church” (*ibid.*, 3:14). “The ‘Woman’ is destroyed Three and a Half Years BEFORE THE CITY; and the fact that the first verse of the chapter eighteen says— ‘after these things,’ that is after the destruction of the ‘Woman’ what happens to the ‘City’ occurs, shows that the ‘Woman’ and the ‘City’ are not one and the same” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 140). “**After these things** I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, **Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!** And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality” (Rev. 18:1–3). “That Christ was to have a ‘Bride’ was first revealed to Paul (Eph. 5:23-32), and the ‘Mystery’ that Antichrist is to have a ‘bride’ was first revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos. The name of Antichrist’s ‘bride’ is ‘Babylon the Great’” (Larkin, *DT*). “All the outstanding festivals of the Roman Catholic Church are of Babylonian origin. Easter... Lent... the ‘Rosary’... the ‘Sign of the Cross’... Celibacy... Tonsure... Monks... Nuns” (*ibid.*) “...confusion which is the meaning of the word Babylon” (*ibid.*, p. 141). “All this was a ‘Mystery’ in John’s day, because the ‘Papal Church’ had not as yet developed; though the ‘Mystery of Iniquity’ was already at work (2 Thess. 2:7)” (*ibid.*) “For **the mystery of lawlessness is already at work**; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way” (2 Thes. 2:7). “The Woman, as a ‘State Church,’ will control and rule the State, and her long dream of world-wide Ecclesiastical Supremacy will at last be realized... after the ‘True Church’ (the Bride of Christ) is taken out of the world the ‘False’ or ‘Papal Church’ (the bride of Antichrist) will remain... the professing body of Christians (having the ‘form of Godliness without the power’) left behind... confiscate her wealth

(eat her flesh) and burn her churches and cathedrals with fire. Rev. 17:16” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 141). “This will occur at the time the worship of the Beast is set up, for Antichrist in his jealous hate will not permit any worship that does not centre in himself” (*ibid.*). “...she shall again be ‘drunk with the blood’ of the martyrs of the Tribulation Period” (*ibid.*). “The meaning of chapter seventeen of the Book of Revelation is no longer a Mystery; the prophetic portrait of the Woman there given corresponds too closely with the history of the Papal Church to be a mere coincidence” (*ibid.*). “As he [the Antichrist] will break with the Jewish people in the middle of the Seventieth Week, even so he will break with the apostate church which he has supported as long as he needed her influence in his rise to world power. Just as the Jew will pay dearly for the treaty with the Roman beast, so the great harlot will pay dearly for her ride (Rev. 17:16)” (McClain, *DP*, p. 61). “Ecclesiastical Babylon (First Half [of the Tribulation]) - [Rev.] 17:1-18” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 9) “The headquarters of this one-world religion will be the rebuilt city of Babylon [Some scholars, as Peters and Larkin above, suggest Rome; others, as Fruchtenbaum here, rebuilt Babylon.—*ed.*], the mother of idolatry, for it was here that idolatry and false religion began (Gen. 11:1-9)” (*ibid.*, p. 235). “In [Rev. 17] verse six, the woman is drunk with the blood of those who suffered martyrdom for Messiah. This answers the question as to who was killing and hurting the fifth seal saints: the false super-church. The myriads of Gentiles who are saved under the ministry of the 144,000 Jews will suffer persecution by the Ecclesiastical Babylon, and many will be martyred” (*ibid.*). “‘Babylon the Great’... this is the great apostate ‘church’ on earth ([Rev.] 18:2)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:613)

The great multitude is saved. “And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar **the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained**; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And **there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also**” (Rev. 6:9–11). “After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes**, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’ And all the angels were

standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, ‘Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’ And one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘These who are **clothed in the white robes**, who are they, and from where have they come?’ And I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.** For this reason, **they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple;** and He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes” (Rev. 7:9-17). “And in her [the woman Babylon] was found **the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.**’ After these things I heard, as it were, a loud voice of **a great multitude in heaven**, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER” (Rev. 18:23–19:2). “...another class of saved of the ‘End Time.’ They are not the Church, for they come out of the ‘Great Tribulation.’ They are probably Gentiles who accept Christ as their Saviour after the Church is caught out” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 134). “Finally, in connection with these devastating events preliminary to the establishment of the Kingdom, Joel holds forth bright hope for all who turn to the Lord— ‘whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered’ (2:32). This gracious provision, as we shall see later, will be in force during *all* the judgments associated with the setting up of the Kingdom on earth; a fact which demonstrates that these judgments cannot be placed in the category of *final* judgment, for then the day of salvation will be past” (McClain, *GK*, p. 186). “This body [the church] of the saved in heaven, referred to as the ‘tabernacle’ of God, must not be confused with ‘the great multitude’ of Rev. 7:9-17; for, according to the divine identification, the latter are those who are seen coming (Grk. present tense) up out of ‘the great tribulation’ of those terrible days (vs. 14, ASV), whereas the Church is to be kept out of that ‘hour of trial’ (Rev. 3:10, ASV). Moreover, though both groups are redeemed through grace by the same Lord, the descriptions of their respective destinies are clearly different, as

may be seen by comparing the account in Rev. 7:14-17 with New Testament predictions of the Church's regal future" (*ibid.*, p. 467). "...144,000... The result of their ministry will be that 'a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe people and language' ([Rev. 7] vs. 9) will '[wash] their robes and [make] them white in the blood of the Lamb' (v. 14)" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 252). "These who are saved out of the Tribulation period will 'have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb' (v. 14). They will be participants in the millennial kingdom that will be established at Christ's second advent (vv. 15-17). Thus we see that salvation during the Tribulation period will be by the grace of God received by faith based on the blood of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 312). "Most conservative interpreters regard Revelation 7:9-17 as referring also to those who die as martyrs" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 226). "In chapter 7 the contrast is between the 144,000 of Israel, who are sealed and protected through the Great Tribulation, and the multitude of the saved (which no man can number), who do not survive the Tribulation and who are not sealed" (*ibid.*, p. 230). "...great multitude... in heaven (Rev. 7:9-17)" (Showers, *M*, p. 248) "These are they who came out of the Great Tribulation,' is a translation of a present tense participle. Concerning the use of this specific present tense participle in Revelation 7:14, A.T. Robertson wrote, 'Present middle participle with the idea of continued repetition'" [quoting A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. VI, p. 352] (*ibid.*, p. 250). "R.H. Charles came to the same conclusion as Robertson. He asserted that the combination of this present tense participle with the two finite verbs ('washed' and 'made...white') in the same verse (14) is a Semitic type construction giving the sense of continuous action to the participle." [quoting R.H. Charles, *The Revelation of St. John in The International Critical Commentary*, Vol. I, p. 213] (*ibid.*). "In light of the significance of this participle, we can conclude that the elder was indicating that the people of the great multitude were coming out of the Great Tribulation individually (one by one) and continuously through death, mainly death by martyrdom. Thus, when discussing the continuous action significance of the participle in the elder's declaration, Charles stated, 'The martyrs are *still* arriving from the scene of the Great Tribulation.' Jeremias also concluded that the great multitude of Revelation 7 consisted of martyrs." [quoting Joachim Jeremias, "hades," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. I, p. 149] (*ibid.*). "Revelation 7:9-17... *After these things... Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple...* The expression *after these things* means that the salvation of these myriads of Gentiles follows chronologically the 144,000 Jews and there is a cause and effect rela-

tionship. After describing the worship of the One on the Throne (vv. 11-12), the text proceeds to identify who these Gentiles are that are found around the Throne (vv. 13-14). These Gentiles are identified as those who have *come out of the Great Tribulation*. They are saved Gentiles, for they have *washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb*. Since they follow chronologically the ministry of the 144,000 Jews, the implication is that they are the Gentiles who come to Messiah as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 Jews. Included are the fifth seal saints who suffered martyrdom. Because of the massive persecution that these Tribulation saints have undergone, this passage concludes with a description of the comfort they now enjoy in the presence of God (vv. 15-17)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 221). “From this chapter it should be evident that the Holy Spirit will be still at work in the Tribulation, for the work of regeneration is His particular ministry. While the work of restraining evil is removed, allowing the Antichrist to begin his evil rise to power, the Holy Spirit Himself will still be in the world and will have an active ministry. While He will no longer be baptizing (for that is a special ministry for the Church only), He will be performing some of His other ministries, such as regeneration, filling, sealing, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 222) “Israel will not come into God’s Kingdom empty-handed, for ‘the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth’ (Rev. 14:7 NKJV) from every ‘tribe’ of Israel will win ‘a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the...Lamb’ (7:9 NKJV). Thus, in the mystery, the fall of Israel became the salvation of the Gentiles, and the rise of Israel will bring salvation to countless souls: ‘If their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?’ (Rom. 11:15; Col. 1:26-27)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:35). “The ‘great multitude’ of others are those won to Christ by the 144,000 converted Jews ([Rev.] 7:4-9; cf. 14:3)” (*ibid.*, p. 614). “The identification of saints during the Tribulation is with either the 144,000 saved Jews or the myriad others converted through their efforts” (*ibid.*). This writer would add that Jehovah’s Witnesses’ identification of the great multitude as an assembly of non-spirit-anointed persons living during this (church) age who entertain an “earthly” hope, as opposed to the 144,000 with their supposedly “heavenly” hope, is entirely baseless. It would be presumptuous for anyone alive now to claim to be able to identify the members of this great multitude before the great tribulation, out of which this group comes (Rev. 7:14), even begins. It is this writer’s hope that some present-day members of the Jehovah’s Witnesses will indeed abandon their false doctrines and wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb during the Tribulation, and thus become part of this great multitude. How much better,

though, for us to repent and be washed in the blood of the Lamb *now*, and be kept from this future hour of testing entirely (Rev. 3:10) via the Rapture of the church! As of this writing, this option is still available for any who would come to Jesus for salvation before the end of this gracious Church Age (John 5:39-40).

There shall be no more delay. “**How long, O Jehovah? wilt thou hide thyself for ever?** How long shall thy wrath burn like fire” (Ps. 89:46)? “And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that **there shall be delay no longer**” (Rev. 10:5-6) “...‘there shall be delay no longer’ ([Rev. 10] vs. 6, ASV)... If in the Old Testament there was one thing which to the prophets was mysterious about the eagerly expected Messianic Kingdom, it was the seeming long delay in its establishment. As an example of the acute distress felt in the presence of this mystery, let the student read the cry, ‘How long, LORD?’ (Ps. 89:46), in the context of the entire psalm. So also the redeemed have felt down through the centuries as they have prayed, ‘Thy kingdom come.’ As the pledge that these prayers shall be answered we have the great angelic shout of chapter 10: There is to be no more long delay, for very shortly the mystery of a long-deferred kingdom will be finished. In fact, from this point in the chronology of the book, within the brief span of ‘forty and two months’ (13:5), the satanic usurper will be fully dispossessed and the rightful King will arrive in power and glory” (McClain, *GK*, p. 473). “What an encouragement for the redeemed to know that there are no dark hours to God. Even when all seems to be lost, for those who have eyes to see, the Lord still sits upon His throne high and lifted up in the heavens; and the unfailing character of His Universal Kingdom guarantees that the Mediatorial Kingdom of His Son shall be established on earth, in spite of all satanic opposition” (*ibid.*, p. 474). “...there is to be ‘delay no longer’ ([Rev. 10] vs. 6, ASV). The mystery of a silent heaven is now at last to be cleared away” (*ibid.*).

Events of the Middle of the Tribulation

The *middle* of the Tribulation period is clearly delineated by Daniel’s “abomination of desolation.” “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but **in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan.

9:27). Other midtribulation events include Satan's casting out of heaven, Antichrist's ruling absolutely, Israel's persecution and exile from her land, and implementation of the "mark of the beast." "The sixth Trumpet Judgment concludes at the time of the middle of the Tribulation and is followed by a temporary cessation of the judgments poured out of Heaven. The Tribulation enters into the temporary proverbial eye of the hurricane. But it does not mean that the earth will be at peace. The nations will be in turmoil as the Antichrist proceeds to take over the political, economic and religious control of the entire world" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 237). "In the Book of Revelation, the events of the middle of the Tribulation comprise chapters 10-14 and chapter 17" (*ibid.*). "To summarize Revelation 11-16, Revelation 11 closes with the announcement that the Bowl Judgements are about to be poured out. This point is now temporarily dropped, to be picked up again in chapters 15-16. Chapters 11-14 are parenthetical to do two things: first, to add some details about the events of the middle of the Tribulation; and second, to show why the Bowl Judgments are so necessary. Revelation 12-13 then points out the events on earth necessitating the seven Bowl Judgments contained in the seventh trumpet, namely, the actions of the counterfeit trinity. Revelation 14 shows how the program of the counterfeit trinity will fail and also announces some of the results of the Bowl Judgments. The Bowl Judgments are then described in Revelation 15-16" (*ibid.*, p. 270).

The middle of the Tribulation features a number of pivotal events. Considered individually:

Satan is cast out of heaven to the earth. "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, **Michael, one of the chief princes**, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia" (Dan. 10:13). "However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except **Michael your prince**" (Dan. 10:21). "Now **at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time**; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued" (Dan. 12:1). "The fact that Israel will survive at all is due to the ministry of the Archangel and Chief Prince, Michael" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 774). "And the seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.' And He said to them, '**I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.** Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you. Nevertheless

do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven” (Luke 10:17–20). “When Jesus said—‘I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,’ (Luke 10:18), He was not referring to some past fall of Satan, but it was a prophetic utterance, by way of anticipation, of his future fall, when he shall be cast out of Heaven by Michael the Archangel” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 114). “Yet in the same manner these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject **authority**, and revile angelic majesties. But **Michael** the archangel, when he **disputed with the devil** and argued about the body of Moses, **did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment**, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you’” (Jude 1:8–9). “Although Michael is a holy angel and Satan is a fallen being, positionally Satan is greater than Michael; Michael is the Archangel, but Satan is the Anointed Cherub. Michael did not rail against someone greater than he, but committed the situation to the Lord” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 1011). “And there was war in heaven, **Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon**. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And **the great dragon was thrown down**, the serpent of old who is called **the devil and Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, **and his angels were thrown down with him**. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.’ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. ‘For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time**’” (Rev. 12:7–12). “A heavenly reserve, in the person of Michael the archangel, will be sent into the action on behalf of the besieged Israelites. Through the centuries the chief ministry of this great angel has been to defend the interests of the chosen nation (Dan. 12:1)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 193). “And in the final scene this conflict reaches even into the heavens where Satan meets defeat at the hand of Michael ([Rev.] vss. 7–9), the great angel to whom has been divinely assigned the protection of the interests of Israel (Dan. 12:1)” (*ibid.*, p. 462). “Michael... the archangel who had led the forces of the holy angels against Satan and the demon world through all these centuries” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 201). “Israelology in the field of Angelology Proper would point to Michael the Archangel. Michael holds two positions in the angelic hierarchy. First, he is the Archangel, or chief-angel

in authority over the other angels. He alone has the position of Archangel. Second, he is also a Chief-Prince (Dan. 10:13). There are a plurality of Chief-Princes in the angelic hierarchy and Michael is one of a number. The main function of a Chief-Prince is to serve as a guardian angel over a nation. Michael is the Chief-Prince over Israel (Dan. 10:21) and it is because of his work on behalf of Israel that Israel will survive the Tribulation (Dan. 12:1). It was Michael's role as Chief-Prince that led to his disputation with Satan over the body of Moses (Jude 9)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 848). "*Satan... the opponent to God's program*" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 242) "...his access to Heaven is removed forever... he now knows it is only 3 1/2 years before the Second Coming" (*ibid.*, p. 262). "Michael, besides being the Archangel, is also the Chief Prince and protective angel assigned to Israel" (*ibid.*, p. 285).

Satan gives the earthly kingdom to Antichrist. "Again, **the devil** took Him to a very high mountain, and **showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; and he said to Him, 'All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.'** Then Jesus said to him, 'Begone, Satan! For it is written, "YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY"' (Matt. 4:8-10). "Antichrist'... He will accept the 'Kingdoms of this world' that Satan offered Christ, and that Christ refused. Matt. 4:8-10" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 124). "And he led Him up and showed Him **all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time. And **the devil said** to Him, 'I will give You all this domain and its glory; for **it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish**'" (Luke 4:5-6). "And then **that lawless one** will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan**, with all power and signs and false wonders" (2 Thes. 2:8-9) "And **the great dragon** was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called **the devil and Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him" (Rev. 12:9). "And **the beast** which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.** And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth** was amazed and followed after the beast; and **they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast;** and they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him'" (Rev. 13:2-4)? "And he laid hold of

the dragon, the serpent of old, **who is the devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20:2)

Antichrist blasphemes God. “Then I kept looking because of the sound of the **boastful words which the horn was speaking**; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire” (Dan. 7:11). “and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth **uttering great boasts**, and which was larger in appearance than its associates” (Dan. 7:20). “And **he will speak out against the Most High** and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time” (Dan. 7:25). “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, **who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship**, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**” (2 Thes. 2:3-4). “And **there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies**; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And **he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven**” (Rev. 13:5-6) “The question now may be raised as to what form the beast’s blasphemy of God and the Church will take. Since to blaspheme is to speak impiously and injuriously of divine things, in what way will he speak? To this the inspired record gives no specific answer in the passage. But from the general teaching of Scripture there are some legitimate inferences which may be drawn. First, among all the redeemed, none have attracted a greater measure of satanic hatred than the Church which is the body and bride of Christ. For its members are destined to reign with Him in the highest level of His Kingdom, a comparable place once held by Satan himself. Second, when the satanic beast of the end-time reaches the height of his absolute earthly power, the Church will have been removed to heaven wholly beyond his malignancy. Third, this mysterious disappearance of millions of people from the earth bodily in ‘the twinkling of an eye’ (1 Cor. 15:51-52) will be a world-shaking event, something impossible to keep from public knowledge by any power or device of news control. Such an event, clearly miraculous in nature, will demand some plausible explanation on the part of the beast who will then be on the march toward political supremacy and seeking to attract to himself as world leader the admiration and confidence of all men. In this dangerous emergency, with

his leadership at stake, what could be more reasonable than to find the beast resorting to the well-known technique of ‘the great lie,’ explaining perhaps to his followers that the vanished people were opposers of social progress, ‘apostles of discord’ standing in the path of religious unity; and therefore they have been taken away by divine judgment? Perhaps this will be part of the ‘strong delusion’ welcomed by the ungodly of that coming day (2 Thess. 2:11). At any rate, a lying explanation of this kind would certainly satisfy the meaning of the ‘blasphemy’ of Rev. 13:6, for it would malign both the character of God and also that of the true Church which today is the only light of the world and salt of the earth” (McClain, *GK*, p. 468).

Antichrist seats himself in the temple, claiming to be God. “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but **in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “Now I am come to make thee understand **what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days**” (Dan. 10:14) “And the king shall do according to his will; and **he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods**; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done. **Neither shall he** regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor **regard any god**; for **he shall magnify himself above all**” (Dan. 11:36-37) “Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)**, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for **then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:15-22) “Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the son of destruction, **who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship**, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**” (2 Thes. 2:3-4). “And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and**

on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority**. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast**, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And **he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God**, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And **all who dwell on the earth will worship him**, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:1-10). “And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to **worship the first beast**, whose fatal wound was healed. And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to **make an image to the beast** who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And there was given to him to **give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed**. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six” (Rev. 13:11-18). “And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the

beast and those who **worshiped his image**; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20). “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not **worshiped the beast or his image**, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4). “...the removal of the worship instituted by the Jews at their partial restoration, or, to the restoration of idol, image worship and the exclusion of other forms... ‘And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate;’... idol or image worship or something relating to false worship is meant, by which desolation is produced... it appears that when the last head of this Roman power arises and causes by oppression and fearful persecution the worship of God to cease (i.e. forbids the liberty of such worship), in place of that worship shall be substituted the image worship to which all are forced upon pain of death, just before the Millennial age is ushered in (see Rev. 19:20; 14:9-14; 13:14-16)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:664). “The sign which Christ revealed is that of the ‘abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,’ standing in the holy place (Matt 24:15). This is Christ’s own recognition and interpretation of Daniel 9:26-27, which passage is the one being considered. This intimation on the part of Christ respecting the man of sin serves as an introduction to His own description of the great tribulation (cf. Matt. 24:21-22), which, as has been seen, is Daniel’s seventieth week—the last seven years of Gentile times. Thus, again, this sinister personage is placed, relative to the time of his appearing, within that yet future hour of trial to come on the earth” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:349). “There is another reason for the Roman prince’s change of attitude toward the Jew. From 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation 13:8-15 we learn that, intoxicated with his great power, he will actually take his seat in the temple of God and demand the honors and worship of God Himself. This to the sternly monotheistic Jew will certainly be the very ‘abomination of desolation,’ and many will refuse to bow the knee, in spite of the fact that this idolatrous worship will become almost universal (Rev. 13:8). This refusal on the part of godly Jews will furnish the Roman beast with the necessary pretext for the breaking of his treaty and the forcible cessation of the Jewish Temple sacrifice” (McClain, *DP*, p. 62). “...set up some detestable thing (probably an image of himself) in the Temple” (Showers, *M*, p. 43) “Jesus referred to this Daniel 9:27 ‘overspreading of abominations’ in Matthew 24:15. Then He said, ‘then shall be Great Tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor

ever shall be' (Mt. 24:21), thereby indicating that the Great Tribulation will begin when the overspreading of abominations of Daniel 9:27 occurs" (*ibid.*). "In all probability, he will sit in the very Holy of Holies" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 254). "The image will be set up in the Holy of Holies to carry on the Abomination of Desolation... So while the Antichrist will be disposed of after 1,260 days, the image will remain in the Temple another thirty days beyond that. Then it, too, will be disposed of" (*ibid.*, p. 256). "Thus, the two stages of the Abomination of Desolation, lasting a total of 1,290 days will be the declaration of deity by the Antichrist in the Holy of Holies followed by the setting up of his image in the same place" (*ibid.*). "...the specific event that will mark the beginning of the second half of the Tribulation: the Abomination of Desolation *standing in the holy place* ([Matt. 24] v. 15). The Abomination of Desolation will involve two stages. The *first* stage will be when the Antichrist will take over the Jewish Temple, sit down in the Holy of Holies, and declare himself to be god (2 Thess. 2:3-10). The *second* stage of the Abomination of Desolation will be when the False Prophet will make an image of the Antichrist and stand it up in the Holy of Holies (Rev. 13:11-15; Dan. 12:11). This act of the Abomination of Desolation will signal that the second and worse half of the Tribulation has begun" (*ibid.*, p. 632). "...Antichrist will erect his own image in the middle of the Tribulation (2 Thess. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:11-18) and attempt to kill all who refuse to worship it (7:13-14; 12:13; 13:10)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:602). "...the Romans did not desecrate the temple with 'the abomination of desolation' ([Matt. 24] v. 15 NKJV)" (*ibid.*, p. 644)

Antichrist breaks the covenant with Israel. "And **your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand**; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (Isa. 28:18). "And he will make a **firm covenant** with the many for one week, **but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate" (Dan. 9:27). "By his very nature, the Man of Sin will be violently anti-Semitic. His treaty with the Jews will be based wholly on political expediency. Therefore, once he has reached the pinnacle of world power aided by their great wealth and influence, he will have no further use for them... he will break with the Jewish people in the middle of the Seventieth Week" (McClain, *DP*, p. 61)

The "Great Tribulation" begins. "Therefore **when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through**

Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall**” (Matt. 24:15–21). See our discussion of the fact that The “Great Tribulation” is the final three and one half years of the seven-year Tribulation period in our section *Chronology of the Tribulation* above.

Antichrist rules absolutely. “After this I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them **another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots:** and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Dan. 7:7-8). “and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and **the other horn which came up, and before which three fell,** even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows” (Dan. 7:20). “Thus he said, **The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.** And as for the **ten horns,** out of this kingdom shall **ten kings** arise: and **another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings**” (Dan. 7:23-24). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **“The kingdom [singular] of the world** has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15). “And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems,** and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.** And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And **the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;** and they worshiped **the dragon,** because he

gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and **authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.** And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and **authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.** **And all who dwell on the earth will worship him,** everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:1-10). “And the ten horns which you saw are **ten kings,** who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. **These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast**” (Rev. 17:12-13). “And **the ten horns** which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. For **God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled**” (Rev. 17:16-17). “...the little horn, or the Antichrist Stage ([Daniel chapter 7] vv. 24b-26)... he will be allowed to rule for only a time, times, and half a time, which from other passages (Dan. 9:27; 12:7; Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5) means 3 1/2 years” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 30). (See also our discussion of the Tribulation’s ultimate governmental form, world dictatorship, in our section *Government of the Tribulation* above.)

Israel is persecuted. Regarding the *fact* of Israel’s persecution, “I beheld at that time because of **the voice of the great words which the horn spake;** I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire” (Dan. 7:11). “and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and **a mouth that spake great things,** whose look was more stout than its fellows” (Dan. 7:20). “Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that

had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows. I beheld, and **the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them**; until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom” (Dan. 7:19-22). “and as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall **ten kings** arise: and **another shall arise after them**; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. **And he** shall speak words against the Most High, and **shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time**” (Dan. 7:24-25). “And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate**; and **even unto the full end**, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:27). “Now I am come to make thee understand **what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days**” (Dan. 10:14) “**He shall enter also into the glorious land**, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; and he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to sweep away many. **And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain**; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of **thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time**: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book” (Dan. 11:41-12:1). “In Daniel 11:36-12:4, the prophet was given a vision of what conditions will be like for his people (Israel) during the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 768). “Then *I*, Daniel, looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on the brink of the river on this side, and the other on the brink of the river on that side. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, **How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?** And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and

his left hand unto heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever that **it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished**" (Dan. 12:5-7). "In Daniel 12:5-7, a question is raised as to how long this period will be allowed to continue. The answer is that the persecution of the Jews will last for three and one-half years" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 768). "**Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.** And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another" (Matt. 24:9-10). "**Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.** Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! But **pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.** For **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short**" (Matt. 24:15-22). "Matthew 24:15-28... In this passage, Christ provided a warning sign to those Jews living at the time the covenant is broken and the Abomination of Desolation occurs, which commences the persecution of the Jews (vv. 15-20)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 771). "And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to **the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months**" (Rev. 11:2-3). "A great sign appeared in heaven: **a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;** and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. Then **the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hun-**

dred and sixty days” (Rev. 12:1-6). “Between the ‘fifth’ and ‘sixth’ verses of this chapter the present ‘Church Period’ comes in. Here is the ‘gap’ between the ‘Sixty-ninth’ and ‘Seventieth’ Weeks of Daniel’s ‘Seventy Weeks.’ John jumps over this ‘gap,’ from the Ascension of Christ to the casting out of Satan, because he is not dealing in these Tribulation chapters with the Church but with Israel, and wishes to continue her history without a break” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 136). “The Woman of Revelation 12 is connected with the sun, the moon, and the twelve stars. The Old Testament background is Joseph’s dream in Genesis 37:9-10 which makes it evident that the sun represents Jacob, the moon Rachel, and the twelve stars the twelve sons of Jacob who fathered the twelve tribes of Israel. The Woman in this chapter represents the nation of Israel, who produced the *man child*, who is Jesus the Messiah. The *rest of her seed* who have *the testimony of Jesus* are the Jewish believers such as the 144,000” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 302). “And **Joseph** dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren: and they hated him yet the more” (Gen. 37:5). “And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream: and, behold, **the sun and the moon and eleven stars** made obeisance to me. And he told it to **his father**, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall **I and thy mother and thy brethren** indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth” (Gen. 37:9-10)? “The moon represents Rachel, who in turn represents Jewish women, especially Jewish motherhood (Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:18)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 772). “Thus saith Jehovah: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, **Rachel weeping for her children**; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not” (Jer. 31:15). “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, **Rachel weeping for her children**; And she would not be comforted, because they are not” (Matt. 2:18). “Israel is pictured as a woman, a motif taken from the Old Testament concept of Israel as the Wife of Jehovah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 259). “A good reason why this cannot be the Church is that it would be an anachronism, with the Church giving birth to Messiah whereas the opposite is true” (*ibid.*, p. 260). “And there was war in heaven, **Michael** and his angels **waging war with the dragon**. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And **the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth**, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation, and the

power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time**” (Rev. 12:7-12). “And when **the dragon** saw that he was thrown down to the earth, **he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child**. And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished **for a time and times and half a time**, from the presence of the serpent. And **the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood**. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. And **the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring**, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Rev. 12:13-17). “When Satan is cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:13) and desires to pour out vengeance on that group with whom God is particularly dealing, since the church is not on earth, he attacks the nation Israel” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 295). “All persecutions of Israel, ‘both past and future, [are] traced back to Satan himself” [quoting McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 461-463] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 531) “Whenever the figure of a flood is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a military invasion” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 263). “And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems**, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority**. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshiped **the dragon**, because **he gave his authority to the beast**; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ And there was given to him **a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him**. And **he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God**, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that

is, those who dwell in heaven. And **it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them**; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. **If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints**” (Rev. 13:1-10). “And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and **cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed**. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six” (Rev. 13:11-18). “He continues forty-two months, which is the last half of the seven years. He persecutes the saints—Israel (cf. Dan. 7:21-22)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:351). “As great as has been Israel’s sufferings in days past, unprecedented suffering awaits them in this period. But God has determined to preserve a remnant in Israel even though Satan will seek to exterminate every physical descendant of Abraham in order to prevent the fulfillment of the covenant God gave to him. John described this persecution (Rev. 12:13-17), and it is only the willingness of Gentiles to harbor the fleeing Jews that will prevent their utter destruction” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 253). “...Daniel’s great prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. In chapter 9 a future ‘prince’ out of the Roman Empire (vs. 26b) makes a ‘firm covenant’ with Daniel’s people for a period of ‘one week,’ i.e., one period of seven years (vs. 27, ASV). In the midst of this period he breaks with the people of Israel, stops their sacrificial system, and inaugurates a time of persecution

lasting to the end of the week, obviously three and a half years. The same persecutor, the same persecuted people, and the same period of persecution, are referred to in Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 13:5-7; with which compare Daniel 12:1, 7” (McClain, *GK*, p. 460). “Satan’s perpetual hatred of Israel is based on the fact that it is through Israel that God will fulfill His program of redemption... in this [Rev. 12:6] passage, the time of Israel’s flight and hiding is given as 1,260 days or 3 1/2 years. This refers to the second half of the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 261). “Revelation 12:6, 13-17 says that when the Jews flee, Satan will persecute them so severely that God will have to intervene to preserve them for the remaining three and one-half years of the 70th week” (Showers, *M*, p. 69). (See also our discussion of the fact that the holy city is trampled for forty-two months in our section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* below.)

Regarding the *reasons* for the persecution, “Satan has no controversy with the wicked and is attempting to vent his wrath only against the people of God, not against his own subjects” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 229). “Satan’s perpetual hatred of Israel is based on the fact that it is through Israel that God will fulfill His program of redemption” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 773). “Satan has a special antagonism against Israel since this is the nation through which God works out His program of redemption. Because of this hatred of Israel, *Satan stood up against Israel* and tempted David to number Israel knowing it would lead to the death of many Israelites (I Chron. 21:1). This is why Satan is found frequently in heaven for he enjoys accusing Israel before God (Zech. 3:1-2). This is also why in the Tribulation his primary activity will be to try to destroy Israel once and for all (Rev. 12:6-17). He will be largely responsible in gathering the Gentile armies against the Jews in the Campaign of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16). Satan is the source of all anti-Semitism” (*ibid.*, p. 848). “**And Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel**” (1 Chron. 21:1). “**And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to be his adversary. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, Jehovah that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire**” (Zech. 3:1-2)? Satan’s aim is *to thwart God’s purpose*. He aims to thwart God’s purpose *by preventing Israel from repenting*. “Since Christ will not crush Satan and his forces and take possession of the earth until the nation of Israel repents (Zech. 12-14; Acts 3:12, 19-21), during the 70th week Satan and his forces will exert great effort to annihilate Israel before it can repent (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15-16; Rev. 12:7-17)” (Showers, *M*, p. 94). (See our discussion of Israel’s repentance in the section *Events of the Last*

Half of the Tribulation below.) He aims to thwart God's purpose *by making fulfillment of the covenants impossible*. "Satan will seek to exterminate every physical descendant of Abraham on the face of the earth, because if he could accomplish that, then the Abrahamic Covenant could not come to fulfillment" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 302). (See our discussion of the Abrahamic Covenant in our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*, and our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Second Coming is to fulfill the covenants and prophecies in the section *Purposes of the Second Coming* of our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

Israel is exiled from the land. "And **he** shall speak words against the Most High, and **shall wear out the saints of the Most High**; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and **they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time**" (Dan. 7:25). "Therefore **when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains**; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! But **pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath**; for **then there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. Then if anyone says to you, "Behold, here is the Christ," or "There He is," do not believe him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. **If therefore they say to you, "Behold, He is in the wilderness," do not go forth**, or, "Behold, He is in the inner rooms," do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather" (Matt. 24:15-28). "Verses 23-28 contain a special message directed to the believing remnant within Israel, warning them not to heed any rumor that the Messiah has returned and so come out of hiding" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 771). "Why not on the Sabbath? In Israel on the Sabbath day there is no public transportation. The buses are all locked up and the trains do not run" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 258). "And **the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days**. And there was war in

heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him... ‘Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.’ And when **the dragon** saw that he was thrown down to the earth, **he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent**” (Rev. 12:6-14). “To the ‘Woman’ will be given the ‘wings of a great eagle,’ that she may fly into the ‘Wilderness,’ into ‘her place,’ where she shall be nourished for a ‘Time, Times, and Half a Time,’ or 3 1/2 years. This takes us back to the flight of Israel from Egypt, of which God said—“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on ‘Eagle’s Wings,’ and brought you unto myself.’ Ex. 19:4” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 136). “There is a restoration now, but there will be one more forced exile from the land in the middle of the Great Tribulation, the one spoken of in Matthew 24:15-28 and Revelation 12:6-14” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 418). “The reason for this flight ([Matt. 24] v. 21) is because at this time world-wide anti-Semitism will break out in all its fierceness. Satan’s attempt to annihilate the Jews once and for all will have begun in earnest” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 633). “Revelation 12:14 states that Israel will hide in the wilderness from Satan for ‘a time, and times, and half a time.’ Daniel 7:25 uses this identical time designation for the length of time that Antichrist will persecute the saints of the 70th week” (Showers, *M*, p. 45). “...flee to the mountains... (Matt. 24:16)... This was a specific warning to avoid the center of trouble (Jerusalem) and flee to the mountains, which is what the remnant will do at that time” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:638).

Israel is gathered at Bozrah. “**I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah**, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men” (Mic. 2:12). “The remnant is gathered together as *the sheep of Bozrah*. Since the sheep of Bozrah are not any different than other sheep, this gathering together as *the sheep of Bozrah* simply means that they are to be gathered in Bozrah. The ancient city of Bozrah was located in the region of Mount Seir. Mount Seir is a very rocky range of mountains, and its name means the

'hairy mountains.' This fulfills the requirement of the Matthew passage. It is located in the wilderness section of ancient Edom and so fulfills the requirement of the Revelation passage. The very nature of the chain of mountains of Mount Seir makes it quite defensible, fulfilling the requirements of the Isaiah passage. Mount Seir is located on the western side of ancient Edom, extending from southeast of the Dead Sea down to the city of Akaba. It towers over the Arabah, part of the rift valley from the south shore of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Eilat. Today the area is in southern Jordan. The city is now known as Petra" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 776). "A really fascinating issue is the exact location of Bozrah in the mountain range of Mount Seir. Two places have been suggested. One is the present Arab village of *Buseira*, which seems to retain the name of Bozrah. This is the main argument in favor of it. Another suggestion is the city now known as Petra. While both cities meet all the above requirements, this author prefers the identification with Petra. Petra is located in a basin within Mount Seir, and is totally surrounded by mountains and cliffs. The only way in and out of the city is through a narrow passageway that extends for about a mile and can only be negotiated by foot or by horseback. This makes the city easy to defend, and its surrounding high cliffs give added meaning and confirmation to Isaiah 33:16. Only a few abreast can enter through this passage at any one time, giving this city even greater defensibility. The name *Bozrah* means 'sheepfold.' An ancient sheepfold had a narrow entrance so that the shepherd could count his sheep. Once inside the fold, the sheep had more room to move around. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold, with its narrow passage opening up to a spacious circle surrounded by cliffs. This is not true of the town of Buseira. Furthermore, by modern Petra is a site known as *Butzeira*, which retains the Hebrew *Botzrah* better than *Buseira*" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 292). "He shall dwell on **high**; his **place of defence** shall be the munitions of **rocks**; **his bread shall be given him**; **his waters shall be sure**" (Isa. 33:16). "He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but **these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon**" (Dan. 11:41). "Another reason this city was chosen is revealed in the context of Daniel 11:40-45. This passage concerns the conquests of the Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation as he begins his world political takeover. The key verse which bears upon the discussion here is in verse 41" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 777). "The passage states that while the Antichrist will conquer the whole world, three nations will escape his domination: Edom, Moab and Ammon. All three of these ancient nations currently comprise the single modern state of Jordan. The city of Bozrah in Mount Seir is lo-

cated in ancient Edom or southern Jordan. Since this area will escape the domination of the Antichrist, it is logical for the Jews to flee to this place. Thus, God will provide a city of refuge outside the Antichrist's domain for the fleeing remnant. It will be a very defensible city located in Mount Seir. Furthermore, as they flee and while they are living there, food and water will be miraculously provided" (*ibid.*). "It is here in Edom that the 'City of Refuge' that God has provided for Israel is located, and is known today as Petra" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 137).

The mark of the beast (666) is implemented. "And I saw **another beast coming up out of the earth**; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And **he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.** And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And **he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark,** either the name of the beast or the number of his name. **Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six**" (Rev. 13:11-18). "And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, **'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God,** which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, 'Write, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!"' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with

them” (Rev. 14:9–13). “...he [Antichrist] will slay all who will not receive his mark and tender homage to him (Rev. 13:15-17 and 14:9-13)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:698). “The purpose of the mark will be to serve as a sign of identification of those who will own the Antichrist as their god... The verse does not speak of credit cards, banking systems, a cashless society, a one-world money system, or computers, etc.” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 251) “Each letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet and in the order of numerical value they are as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 200, 300, and 400. So everyone’s name in Hebrew has a numerical value. The numerical value of the author’s name is 966. The name of Jesus the Messiah has the numerical value of 749. In this passage, whatever the personal name of the Antichrist will be, if his name is spelled out in Hebrew characters, the numerical value of his name will be 666. So this is the number that will be put on the worshipers of the Antichrist. Since a number of different calculations can equal 666, it is impossible to figure the name out in advance. But when he does appear, whatever his personal name will be, it will equal 666. Those who are wise (v. 18) at that time will be able to point him out” (*ibid.*). “No one will take the mark out of ignorance, for by this time there will have been two worldwide proclamations of the gospel. The first was the 144,000 during the first half of the Tribulation, and the second was the angel in Revelation 14:6-7 in the middle of the Tribulation” (*ibid.*, p. 267). “And I saw **another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people**; and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters” (Rev. 14:6-7).

The Seventh of the Seven Trumpet Judgments

With the seventh trumpet, *the mystery of God is finished*. “but **in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets**” (Rev. 10:7). “...days... plural number... The Bowl Judgements all come toward the end of the Tribulation and with them *the mystery of God is finished*. The seventh trumpet that contains the seven Bowl Judgments is the third woe. For this reason, it is the worst of all. The little Book contains all the information regarding the seventh trumpet with the Bowl Judgments, as found in Revelation 15-16” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 239). “...the seventh trumpet is not a singular judgment, but a process by which the mystery of God is finished... the seventh trumpet is the process of

the Seven Bowl Judgments... The mystery is that there will be a series of seven climactic judgments that will destroy the satanic mystery of the man of sin. This was not revealed in the Old Testament” (*ibid.*, p. 693). *God’s Kingdom is foreseen.* “And **the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.’** And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, ‘We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because **Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.’** And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm” (Rev. 11:15-19). “Revelation 11:14-19... *The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever...* the word *kingdom* is singular, and so Messiah will gain the one-world kingdom of the Antichrist” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 269). “...the Temple in Heaven. The *Ark of the Covenant* mentioned is the original ark of which Moses made a copy” (*ibid.*, p. 270). *The seventh trumpet judgment contains the seven bowl judgments.* “The ‘Seventh Trumpet’ includes all that follows down to the end of chapter nineteen. We must not forget in our study of the Book of Revelation that the ‘Seventh Seal’ includes the ‘Seven Trumpets’ and the ‘Seven Vials,’ and that the ‘Seventh Trumpet’ includes the ‘Seven Vials,’ for the ‘Seventh Seal,’ and the ‘Seventh Trumpet,’ and the ‘Seventh Vial’ all end alike with ‘voices,’ ‘thunderings,’ ‘lightnings’ and an ‘earthquake.’ Rev. 8:5, 11:19; 16:18” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 136). “...the seventh Trumpet Judgment will contain the seven Bowl Judgments, which will finish the judgments of God declared by the prophets. All the prophecies dealing with the Tribulation’s second half will then be fulfilled” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 238). “The results spelled out under the seventh trumpet come after the seven Bowl Judgments are complete” (*ibid.*, p. 274).

Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation

The last half of the Tribulation features a number of events that bring to a climax the time of Jacob’s (and the world’s) trouble. “...the last half of

Daniel's seventieth week, known more specifically as the Great Tribulation" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 164). "So horrendous will be those days that unless they were shortened, no one would be saved. For Israel's sake they are shortened. Immediately after the tribulation of those days the Son of Man will appear, coming in clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (*ibid.*).

Considered individually:

The holy city is trampled for forty-two months. "And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to **the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months**" (Rev. 11:2-3). "This will be the final Gentile control of Jerusalem, and it will last 42 months, or 3 1/2 years. It will be this Gentile takeover of the city and the Temple that will cause a cessation of the sacrifices" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 254). (See also our discussion of Israel's persecution in our section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* above.)

"This good news of the Kingdom" is preached. "And **this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come**" (Matt. 24:14). This verse is central to the worldview and self-identification of Jehovah's Witnesses. At the time of this writing, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that they are fulfilling this verse today. However, this is impossible for at least two reasons. First, this prophecy is to have fulfillment *during the Tribulation period* (see vs. 21), not before; same as all the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four. Second, Jehovah's Witnesses are today preaching not only a false gospel (Gal. 1:8-9; believing the JW gospel does not result in personal spiritual regeneration; this is one evidence among many that it is false; for more on this please see this writer's self-published book *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses*), but a false kingdom message: a kingdom message in which the man-made and self-appointed organization of Jehovah's Witnesses has attempted to usurp both the church's and Israel's roles in the Kingdom. (It should be noted as well that Matt. 24:14 is a *prophecy* of a future eschatological event; not a *command* for Christians alive now.) "Melville, Newton, and a host of able writers, have aptly said: 'that the Gospel preached for a witness, conveys the idea of rejection rather than of acceptance'" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:117) "Matt. 24:14... the critical student is reminded of the peculiar phrase 'the Gospel of the Kingdom,' i.e. the Gospel preached is glad tidings concerning the covenanted Messianic Kingdom. It is not simply glad news of repentance, faith, etc., but distinctively of the Kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 137). "...the 'Gospel of the Kingdom'... it is to be preached again after the Rapture of the Church, for a 'witness' unto all nations, that the time has come for the setting up of the Kingdom (Matt.

24:14)... the ‘Gospel of the Kingdom’ has nothing to do with ‘salvation,’ but is simply an announcement that the ‘Messianic Kingdom’ is AT HAND” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 86). “The Gospel of ‘The Kingdom.’ Matt. 24:14. This is the ‘Good News’ that God purposes to set up a Kingdom on this earth over which David’s Son, JESUS, shall reign, as prophesied in Luke 1:32-33. Two preachings of this Gospel are mentioned, one past, beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist, and preached by Jesus and His Disciples, but it ended with the rejection of Jesus as King. This Gospel is to be preached again after the Church is taken out. It will be the fulfillment of Matt. 24:14, where it says: ‘This Gospel of “THE KINGDOM” shall be preached in all the world for a WITNESS unto all nations; and then shall the end come.’ This has no reference to the Gospel that is now being preached to the nations. It is the Gospel of SALVATION, but the ‘Gospel of the Kingdom’ is not for ‘Salvation’ but for a WITNESS, that is, it is the announcement that the time has come to SET UP THE KINGDOM. It will be preached first by Elijah the forerunner (Mal. 4:5-6 [‘Behold, **I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come.** And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.’]), and by others who shall be commissioned to bear the news to all nations as a proclamation of the coming of Christ as King to occupy the ‘Throne of David,’ and for the purpose of regathering Israel to the Promised Land” (*ibid.*, p. 126). “The Jewish question will have divided the nations of the earth, that is, after the kingdom gospel will have been preached in all the inhabited earth by the 144,000 Jewish missionaries (cf. Matt. 24:14; Rev. 7)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:343). “The passage in question [Matt. 24:14] is found in a context belonging to the future great tribulation” (*ibid.*, 5:282). “...Matt. 24:14, where the issue is the end of Israel’s age” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 180). “The gospel of the kingdom is national, whereas the gospel of grace is individual” (*ibid.*, p. 255). “Fitzwater [in P.B. Fitzwater, *Christian Theology*, p. 522] has stated the premillennial viewpoint with clarity: ‘When the Church has been caught up, removed from the earth, then will be resumed the kingdom message begun by John the Baptist when he cried, “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:2)... When John’s voice was stilled, Christ took it up, and when Christ was rejected and crucified, the kingdom passed into abeyance—the nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return”’ (*ibid.*, p. 272). “The critics of this position have charged that since the gospel of the kingdom is being preached during the tribulation there can be no preaching of the cross. The tribulation will witness the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. Matthew 24:14 makes this very

clear. However, the preaching of the cross and the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom are not mutually exclusive” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 271). “It must be recognized that the term gospel in its literal usage means simply ‘good news.’ The gospel of the kingdom was the good news that the promised King was soon to appear on the scene to offer the promised kingdom. In such usage the gospel of the kingdom was not primarily soteriological but eschatological in concept. The gospel of the kingdom did not offer a way of salvation, but rather offered the hope of the fulfillment of Israel’s eschatological promises, which contained within them the fulfillment of the soteriological hopes, as has previously been seen in contemplating the two aspects of the Old Testament salvation” (*ibid.*, p. 272). “There were two phases to John’s preaching of the gospel of the kingdom: ‘Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matt. 3:2) and ‘Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29). The one was just as much a part of John’s message as the other. In these two declarations it may be stated that John proclaimed a cross as well as a kingdom. So it will be in the tribulation period” (*ibid.*). “Thus the message, as recorded in the Book of Acts, centers around the call to repentance that was a precondition to blessing under the Palestinian Covenant. Christ in Matthew 24:14 predicted that ‘this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world.’ The Gospel of the kingdom is the message that John the Baptist proclaimed to Israel. It involved first a call to repentance, then an invitation to behold or to look by faith to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). This is the same message that will be proclaimed in the world during that period Christ called, literally, ‘the tribulation, the great one’ (Matt. 24:21). This future period is the unfulfilled seven years of Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy weeks (Dan. 9:24-27). During this period the Gospel of the kingdom will be preached to Gentiles by 144,000 who will be sovereignly redeemed and commissioned to be God’s servants (Rev. 7:1-8). They will proclaim salvation by grace through faith based on blood so that men can have ‘washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’ (v. 14). The same message will be proclaimed by the two witnesses (11:3), prophets God will raise up to bring a message to the nation Israel. Indeed, their message is no different than the one the prophets have always brought to a disobedient covenant people down through the ages. The general response to both the witness of the 144,000 and that of the two witnesses is found in Revelation 9:20-21: ‘The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshipping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their

murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.’ In Revelation 16:9-11 we find the same response. In fact, again and again in these passages we can see that in spite of all the wrath God poured out on unbelievers, men refused to repent. The Tribulation is a period in which God will significantly deal with the nation Israel to bring it to repentance, thus setting the stage for the fulfillment of the covenanted blessings believers will experience and the establishment of the kingdom after Christ’s second advent. This emphasis on repentance stresses the significance of the covenant God made in Deuteronomy 28-30, where repentance was seen as a precondition to the enjoyment of the covenanted blessings” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 121). “During the time that the politico-religious system of the beast is in absolute control, the Gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world (Matt. 24:14)” (*ibid.*, p. 251). “...the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in all the inhabited earth to all nations during the future Tribulation period (Mt. 24:14)” (Showers, *M*, p. 214). “...the apostles... the gospel of the kingdom, which they had been proclaiming for some time, did not include the ideas of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection” (*ibid.*, p. 238). “The ‘gospel of the kingdom’ as announced by John (Matt. 3:3), by the disciples who were specially commissioned (Matt. 10:7), by the seventy (Luke 10:9), and by the Lord (Matt. 4:17) proclaimed the good news that the promised kingdom was ‘at hand.’ The Lord indicates this same good news will be announced again... (Matt. 24:14). Although the news at the first advent was restricted to Israel, prior to the second advent it will be announced not only to Israel but to the whole world. This preaching... marks the beginning of the final step in the realization of the theocratic kingdom program” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 472] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 398). “The conclusion is that this time the kingdom offer will be accepted. This will lead to the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, which will be the final facet of the theocratic kingdom” (*ibid.*).

Angelic proclamations are made. Three angelic proclamations take place in Revelation chapter fourteen: 1. *An eternal gospel.* “And I saw another **angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth**, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters’” (Rev. 14:6-7). “One day God will use an angel to preach the gospel ‘to every nation, tribe, language and people’ (Rev. 14:6)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:464). 2. *The fall of Babylon the Great.* “And **another angel, a second one, followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great**, she who has

made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality” (Rev. 14:8) 3. *A warning against worshiping the Antichrist.* “And **another angel, a third one, followed them, saying** with a loud voice, ‘**If any-one worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God**, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’ Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev. 14:9-12).

Saved people are seen. “And **I saw**, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and **those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image** and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. And they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, ‘Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations. Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou alone art holy; For all the nations will come and worship before Thee, For Thy righteous acts have been revealed” (Rev. 15:2-4).

The marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven. “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband**, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin” (2 Cor. 11:2). “that He might **present to Himself the church in all her glory**, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless” (Eph. 5:27). “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**’ And it was given to her to **clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.** And he said to me, ‘Write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”’ And he said to me, “These are true words of God” (Rev. 19:6-9). “Notice that it does not say the ‘Marriage of the Bride,’ but the ‘Marriage of the LAMB.’ That grand event will be not so much the consummation of the hopes of the Bride, as it will be the consummation of the plan of God for His Son, arranged for before the foundation of the World. Eph. 1:4 [‘just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should

be holy and blameless before Him.}]” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 80). “There have been many long betrothals but Christ’s has been the longest on record” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 81). “...the church at present is a bride and in heaven will become the wife of Christ when she is presented a glorious church (Eph. 5:27)” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 245) “The marriage ceremony takes place in Heaven and involves the Church. That it must take place after the Judgment Seat of Messiah is evident from verse eight, for the Bride is viewed as being dressed in white linen, which is *the righteous acts of the saints*” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 161). “There will be no earthly marriage in heaven (cf. Matt. 22:30), but there will be something far better—the heavenly marriage of the Lamb” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:302). “There will be a great wedding as the church, Christ’s bride, is joined to her Husband and Head” (*ibid.*, p. 561). (See also our discussion of the (subsequent and earthly) marriage feast of the Lamb in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

The Seven Bowl Judgments

The seven bowl judgments result in unprecedented destruction on earth. “And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, **seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished**” (Rev. 15:1). “After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, and **the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple**, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their breasts with golden girdles. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels **seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God**, who lives forever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished” (Rev. 15:5-8). “And I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, **‘Go and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth’**” (Rev. 16:1). “...the vials of an insulted God. Notwithstanding all this so faithfully portrayed by inspiration, many men persistently close their minds and hearts to such warnings! Yea more, they make them even the subject of jest and scoffing! But jesting lips and scoffing hearts will tremble and quake with fear when the predicted vengeance comes. God has declared it, and we believe Him” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:700). “While the bowl judgments (Rev. 15-16) are on the same objects as the trumpets, they are later and more extensive. For example, while with the trumpets only one-third of the object is inflicted, with the bowls the entire object is inflicted; apparently, then, the same objects are later revisited with intensified judgment” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:607).

Bowl 1: Into the earth: Sores are inflicted upon those who have the mark of the beast. “And the **first** angel went and poured out his bowl **into the earth**; and it became **a loathsome and malignant sore upon the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image**” (Rev. 16:2). “This is a repetition of the ‘Sixth Egyptian Plague.’ Ex. 9:8-12. If that was literal why should not this be? The ‘literalness’ of these ‘Vial Judgments’ is the key to the literalness of the whole Book of Revelation” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 138). “And Jehovah said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. And it shall become small dust over all the land of Egypt, and shall be **a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast**, throughout all the land of Egypt. And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became **a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast**. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boils were upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians. And Jehovah hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as Jehovah had spoken unto Moses” (Ex. 9:8-12).

Bowl 2: Into the sea: The sea becomes blood; everything in the sea dies. “And the **second** angel poured out his bowl **into the sea**, and **it became blood** like that of a dead man; and **every living thing in the sea died**” (Rev. 16:3).

Bowl 3: Into the fresh water: The water becomes blood. “And the **third** angel poured out his bowl **into the rivers and the springs of waters**; and **they became blood**. And I heard the angel of the waters saying, ‘Righteous art Thou, who art and who wast, O Holy One, because Thou didst judge these things; for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink. They deserve it.’ And I heard the altar saying, ‘Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments’” (Rev. 16:4-7). “This is a repetition of the ‘First Egyptian Plague.’ Ex. 7:19-24” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 138). “And Jehovah said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the waters of Egypt, **over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their ponds of water, that they may become blood**; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone. And Moses and Aaron did so, as Jehovah commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and **all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood**. And the fish that were in the river died; and the river became foul, and the Egyp-

tians could not drink water from the river; and the blood was throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians of Egypt did in like manner with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as Jehovah had spoken. And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he lay even this to heart. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river" (Ex. 7:19–24).

Bowl 4: Upon the sun: Men are scorched with fire. "And the **fourth** angel poured out his bowl **upon the sun**; and it was given to it to **scorch men with fire**. And men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and **they did not repent**, so as to give Him glory" (Rev. 16:8-9). "This is the only plague for which there is no Egyptian parallel, and as the others are literal so must it be. The Prophet Malachi refers to it. Malachi 4:1" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 138). "For, behold, the day cometh, **it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up**, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1).

Bowl 5: Upon the throne of the Antichrist: His kingdom is darkened. "And the **fifth** angel poured out his bowl **upon the throne of the beast**; and **his kingdom became darkened**; and **they gnawed their tongues because of pain**, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and **they did not repent** of their deeds" (Rev. 16:10-11). "This will be a repetition of the 'Ninth Egyptian Plague.' Ex. 10:21-23" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 138). "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Stretch out thy hand toward heaven, that there may be **darkness over the land** of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days; they saw not one another, neither rose any one from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings" (Ex. 10:21–23). "The entire kingdom of the Beast will be darkened which, at this stage, will include the entire world with the exception of the three Transjordanian nations where light will still exist" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 276).

Bowl 6: Upon the Euphrates river: The river dries up, preparing the way for the kings from the east for the campaign of Armageddon. "And the **sixth** angel poured out his bowl **upon the great river, the Euphrates**; and **its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings from the east**. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false

prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are **spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.** (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.”) And **they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-magedon**” (Rev. 16:12-16).

Bowl 7: Upon the air: A massive earthquake occurs, the city splits, cities of the nations fall, Babylon the Great is remembered, islands and mountains disappear, and great hailstones fall. “And the **seventh** angel poured out his bowl **upon the air**; and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, ‘**It is done.**’ And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was **a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth,** so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. And **the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.** And huge **hailstones**, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and **men blasphemed God** because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe” (Rev. 16:17-21). “‘Great Hail’... a repetition of the ‘Seventh Egyptian Plague.’ Ex. 9:13-35... The Law required that the ‘blasphemer’ should be ‘stoned’ (Lev. 24:16), and the ‘Blasphemers’ of the ‘End Time’ shall be stoned from HEAVEN” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 138). “So there was **hail**, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation” (Ex. 9:24). “With the seventh Bowl Judgment ([Rev.] 16:17-21), there is a declaration: *It is finished*” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 695). “The conclusion of this study can be summarized using these very same words: *It is finished*, because with the eighth divine mystery having conquered the two satanic mysteries, all other mysteries come together: *First*, the satanic mysteries are now destroyed forever; *second*, the Messianic Kingdom is established, and the Son is enthroned upon the Throne of David; *third*, this means that the Mystery Kingdom period ends, replaced by the Messianic Kingdom; *fourth*, the Mystery Church then co-reigns with the Messiah over the Messianic Kingdom; and *fifth*, the mystery of the fullness of the Gentiles is complete, meaning that all Israel is saved, and all Israel is restored to the Land. Finally, with the declaration, *it is finished*, all of the mysteries come together, and it is finished, indeed. What

continues is the results of the divine mysteries. What is terminated are the satanic mysteries once and for all” (*ibid.*).

Israel survives. Regarding the remnant’s *protection*: “But thou, **Israel**, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend, thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee and not cast thee away; **Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that are incensed against thee shall be put to shame and confounded: they that strive with thee shall be as nothing, and shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contend with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I, Jehovah thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith Jehovah**, and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made thee to be a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in Jehovah, thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 41:8-16). “This is a promise to preserve the remnant in the midst of tremendous persecution during Satan’s campaign to destroy the Jews” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 779). “Now at that time **Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued**” (Dan. 12:1). “The fact that Israel will survive at all is due to the ministry of the Archangel and Chief Prince Michael” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 286) Regarding the remnant’s *provision*: “**The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I, Jehovah, will answer them, I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah hath done this, and the Holy**

One of Israel hath created it” (Isa. 41:17-20). “According to Isaiah 41:17-20, just as in the wilderness of Sinai God miraculously provided food and water for Israel, He will do so again in the Tribulation when the Jews flee to the wilderness” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 779). “Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth; shall ye not know it? **I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.** The beasts of the field shall honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; because **I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen**” (Isa. 43:19-20) “Thus saith Jehovah, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants’ sake, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me. But ye that forsake Jehovah, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but ye did that which was evil in mine eyes, and chose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, **my servants shall eat**, but ye shall be hungry; behold, **my servants shall drink**, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be put to shame; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall wail for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; and the Lord Jehovah will slay thee; and he will call his servants by another name: so that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes” (Isa. 65:8-16). “In... Isaiah 65:8-16, the prophet describes how on one hand God will supply for the Faithful Remnant, whereas He will withhold provisions from the apostates” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 780). “This passage makes clear that while the apostates will be allowed to suffer and die, the Faithful Remnant will be divinely protected and provided with food and water. By this means the Faithful Remnant will be able to survive the persecutions and devastations of the Great Tribulation” (*ibid.*). “And **the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent**” (Rev. 12:14). “These miraculous provisions will

cause them to reconsider their relationship to God” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 780). Regarding the remnant’s *survival*: “In that day shall the branch of Jehovah be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of **the land** shall be excellent and comely for **them that are escaped of Israel**. And it shall come to pass, that **he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem**, shall be called holy, even **every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem**; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of justice, and by the spirit of burning” (Isa. 4:2–4). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob**, shall no more again lean upon him that smote them, but shall lean upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. **A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return**: a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, make in the midst of all the earth” (Isa. 10:20–23). “And **the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah** shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For **out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall escape**. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 37:31–32). “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for **in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape**, as Jehovah hath said, and among **the remnant** those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:32). “But **in mount Zion there shall be those that escape**, and it shall be holy; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions” (Obadiah 1:17). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus **all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.’ ‘AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS’**” (Rom. 11:25–27).

Israel’s will is broken. “Then *I*, Daniel, looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on the brink of the river on this side, and the other on the brink of the river on that side. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto

heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when they have made an end of **breaking in pieces the power of the holy people**, all these things shall be finished” (Dan. 12:5-7). “This passage [Dan 12:5-7] then states a goal of the Tribulation: to break the power or the will of the Jewish nation. The Tribulation will continue and will not end until this happens. God intends to break the will of the holy people in order to bring about a national regeneration” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 768).

Israel's blindness is removed. “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant **the same veil** remains unlifted, because **it is removed in Christ**. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but **whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away**” (2 Cor. 3:13–16). “Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, pp. 301-304] emphasizes the removal of the blindness. He begins with a summary of what the New Testament teaches on this subject, which is that ‘the nation Israel is a blinded nation.’ They are blinded in two ways: first, ‘they are spiritually blind because they willfully rejected their Messiah’; and second, ‘a divine judgment has come upon them so that the nation is judicially blinded.’ What Isaiah 6:9-10 predicted would happen is quoted by the New Testament as having happened and Paul, in 2 Corinthians 3:14-15, stated that this blindness ‘was the continuing state of the people,’ though in verse 16 Paul also ‘anticipated that this condition shall change.’ The central passage on this issue is Romans 11:17-27, which teaches that ‘Israel has been set aside from the place of blessing so that the Gentiles might be brought into the place of blessing, from which Israel was cut off and to which they will be returned.’ In his exposition of this passage, Pentecost deduces five things. First, this ‘particular blindness is a *mystery*.’ This means it was unrevealed in the Old Testament, but is now revealed in the New. The very ‘fact that this blindness is a mystery shows that it is a kind of blindness hitherto unrevealed.’ For that reason, it cannot be a reference to ‘the spiritual blindness’ common to all men because they are ‘children of Adam,’ nor can it be a reference to ‘willful blindness’ also common among men, for both of these types of blindness were known in the Old Testament. Rather, this is ‘a new form of blindness, not hitherto experienced by men.’ This *mystery* blindness ‘was the divine visitation of Israel by God because of the

national sin of rejecting the Messiah.’ Second, the ‘*nature* of this blindness is revealed,’ in that the Greek term pictures it as ‘the thick impenetrable covering’ which is a result of ‘repeated rejection of the revelation that was given’ and by now ‘has become the settled condition.’ Third, ‘this blindness is “*in part*” which ‘reveals that this blindness is not universal.’ It is possible for Jewish individuals to be saved, ‘though the nation has been judicially blinded.’ What Pentecost fails to see is that this very fact allows for the Remnant of Israel to exist even today. Fourth, this blindness is destined to ‘be *removed* from the nation.’ The very word until ‘anticipates the removal of this blindness at some appointed time.’ Fifth, ‘the *time* of the *removal* of this blindness is stated,’ which is, ‘until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.’ Pentecost interprets this as speaking of ‘the rapture of the church when the time of Gentile privilege gives way to the time when Israel will be restored to the place of blessing.’ Pentecost then clarifies what the removal of the blindness will actually mean for Israel. It will not mean that all Jews will immediately have a clear understanding of spiritual truth, for they will still have the common human ‘blindness of his sin nature.’ It will render the truth understandable by all Jews who will now be restored ‘to a place alongside the Gentiles in the place of blessing again.’ It means that God will again be dealing with Israel as a nation, which He has not done ‘since their rejection of the Messiah.’ It will set the stage for ‘the final removal of blindness, ...the spiritual blindness, ...’ at the second coming. ‘The removal of the judicial blindness permits Israel to hear the good news of the kingdom... that is proclaimed in that day in order that they might be saved, both individually and nationally.’ It is the removal of the judicial blindness that ‘makes possible the setting aside of the 144,000, the calling out of the believing remnant, and Israel’s ministry to the nations during the tribulation period”’ (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 547). “Feinberg’s [in *Israel*, pp. 109, 116-117] view of [Rom.] 11:25 is that this verse is evidence that God has not cast away His people for the fact is that ‘the blindness of the Jews is only partial and temporary,’ and the hope of Israel will yet find fulfillment. That hope is the national salvation and restoration of Israel. Israel is destined to be ‘grafted into her own olive tree,’ and the Olive Tree is the ‘restoration to blessing.’ Among the blessings are: the second coming, salvation, regathering, the Holy Spirit, the New Covenant, a renovated earth, the land, the temple, and the Messianic Kingdom. The blindness of Romans 11:25 is a blindness of the heart, but this is the ‘outcome of repeated disobedience’ which in turn ‘renders men unapproachable with the truth.’ It is blindness that is a hardening ‘strictly a matter of the heart, which is the center of all spiritual life”’ (*ibid.*, p. 550). (See also our discussion of the fact that during

the postponement of the Kingdom Israel is blinded in the section *Consequences of the Postponement* of our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*.)

Israel recognizes Jesus as Messiah. “**And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born**” (Zech. 12:10). “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, **and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him**; and all the tribes of the earth **will mourn over Him**. Even so. Amen” (Rev. 1:7). “If there is a truth distinctly taught in the Bible, it is, that the Jewish nation will some time in the future recognize Him whom they have pierced as the Messiah, the one who is to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:330). “It is Jehovah, not man, who always must initiate the work of grace. ‘They shall look upon me,’ says Jehovah, ‘whom they have pierced’ ([Zech. 12] vs. 10). And the sudden realization that the great Deliverer in their hour of peril is none other than the historic Jesus of Nazareth will start the flood of tears” (McClain, *GK*, p. 197). “Israel, who rejected her Messiah at His first coming (John 1:10-11), will accept Him at His second, when ‘every eye will see him, even those who pierced him’ (Rev. 1:7) and a nation will be born in a day (Isa. 66:8)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:35).

Israel repents. “**And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me**, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land” (Lev. 26:40-42). “It should be noted that the word *iniquity* is in the singular and that it is specific. There is one specific iniquity which Israel must confess before she can begin to enjoy all of the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant. It was committed by their *fathers* or ancestors, but now must be confessed by a subsequent generation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 304). “**But from thence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and**

hearken unto his voice” (Deut. 4:29-30) “**And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul;** that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee” (Deut. 30:1-3). “**And Jehovah said unto me, Backsliding Israel hath showed herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith Jehovah; I will not look in anger upon you; for I am merciful, saith Jehovah, I will not keep anger for ever. Only **acknowledge thine iniquity**, that thou hast transgressed against Jehovah thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith Jehovah. Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers” (Jer. 3:11–18). “**All these blessings are conditioned by [Jer. 3] verse 13, where they must acknowledge or confess one specific iniquity which they committed against Jehovah their God**” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 305). “**to proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort **all that mourn**; to appoint unto **them that mourn in Zion**, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for **the spirit of heaviness**; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified**” (Isa. 61:3). “**Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of****

Achor for a door of hope; and **she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.** And **it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me Ishi [my husband], and shalt call me no more Baali [my owner].** For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And **I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah**” (Hos. 2:14-20). “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim: afterward **shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days**” (Hos. 3:4-5). “**I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly**” (Hos. 5:15). “There are certain presuppositions behind the understanding of this verse [Hos. 5:15]. Before anyone can go back to a place, he must first leave it. In this passage, God states that He is going to go back to His place. God’s place is Heaven. Before God can go back to Heaven, He must first leave it. The question is: When did God ever leave Heaven? God left Heaven at the incarnation in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. Then, because of one specific offense (the word is singular) committed against Him, He returned to Heaven at the ascension from the Mount of Olives. This verse further states that He will not come back to the earth until the offense that caused Him to return to Heaven is acknowledged or confessed. What is that Jewish national offense committed against the Person of Jesus? It is not, as so many people think, in killing Him. The actual killing of Jesus was done by Gentile, not Jewish, hands. He was condemned and sentenced by a Gentile judge. He was crucified by Gentile soldiers. But all this is ultimately irrelevant for, regardless of Jewish acceptance or Jewish rejection, Jesus would have had to die anyway to become the sacrifice for sin. The national offense of Israel was in the rejection of His Messiahship. According to this verse, only when this offense is acknowledged or confessed will Messiah return to the earth” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 306). “**Come, and let us return unto Jehovah;** for he hath torn,

and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him. And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth” (Hos. 6:1-3). “And Jehovah uttereth his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for **the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? ...Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the assembly, assemble the old men, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of Jehovah, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Jehovah, and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the peoples, Where is their God**” (Joel 2:11-17)? “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And **the land shall mourn, every family** apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness” (Zech. 12:10-13:1). “Zechariah 12, 13, and 14 are one prophetic revelation, a unit of thought that develops one theme. Chapter 13 speaks of the national cleansing of Israel from their sin. Chapter 14 describes the Second Coming and the establishment of the Kingdom. But the cleansing of Israel followed by the Second Coming and the Messianic Kingdom are all conditioned on Zechariah 12:10” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 305). “Before Israel will receive the cleansing of her sin and before Messiah will return to establish His Kingdom, Israel must first look *unto* (not *upon*, as in the KJV) the One Whom they have pierced and to plead for His return. Once they do this, then, and only then, will they receive their cleansing and begin to enjoy the blessings of the Messianic Age” (*ibid.*, p. 306). “And it

shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And **I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God**” (Zech. 13:8-9). “and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and **then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn**, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). “**Repent** therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, **in order that** times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that **He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you [Men of Israel, vs. 12], whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time**” (Acts 3:19-21). “...the future predicted repentance of the nation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:362) “...the nation, as a nation, will repent” (*ibid.*, 2:71) “The connection of this Kingdom with Jewish restoration necessitates the realization of their predicted repentance and conversion” (*ibid.*, p. 75). “...a remarkable feature pervading all the predictions is this: that God, although men may disallow it, will so order all things that when the period of fulfillment arrives, when the time that the realization of the Covenant comes, this very nation so long stubborn and unrepentant, so long the rejecters of the Messiah, shall be repentant and believing; that after protracted correction, it will again experience mercy, and always in the land from which it was driven” (*ibid.*, p. 80). “At the First Advent, as we showed in detail, the Kingdom was conditioned on repentance which the nation, as such, declined; at the Sec. Advent repentance is again presented as the requisite moral preparation, and it is accepted” (*ibid.*, p. 90). “The Old Testament scriptures clearly teach that the Messianic Kingdom cannot be set up until Israel as a nation Repents” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 86). “The existence of God’s Mediatorial Kingdom on earth has always been *conditioned*. It was received as a promise by Abraham through faith; it was established in history at Sinai subject to Israel’s willingness to obey God; it was terminated on earth because of Israel’s sin; its restoration on earth is foretold by the prophets in connection with Israel’s repentance; and the initial demand of its announcement in the gospel period was, ‘The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel’ (Mark 1:15)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 304). “Very little mention is made of repentance in the Epistles. Why? Because the covenants were not made with the church; they were made with Israel” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 122). “Israel will repent... when it sees Him at His Sec-

ond Coming” (Showers, *M*, p. 47) “...the repentance of Israel... For centuries Israel’s stiff-necked rebellion against God and His Messiah has been so stubborn and persistent that nothing short of the severest persecution in Israel’s history will break that rebellion and bring the nation to genuine repentance... backing Israel so tightly into a corner that it will have no means of escaping total annihilation unless it repents. At that darkest time in all its history, the nation will repent (Zech. 12:2, 10-13:1)” (*ibid.*, p. 108). “Zechariah... Mourning was an acknowledgement of sin” (*ibid.*, p. 313). “Using Zechariah 12:10-13:2 as a base, McClain [in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 197-198] points out six things about Israel’s repentance: first, the timing of it is ‘after the judgment upon the nations which come against Jerusalem.’ What McClain does not make clear is if this judgment is that of Armageddon or the judgment of the Gentiles following the second coming. Second, the cause will be God, who will pour out His grace upon the nation and a vision of the Messiah which will cause them to realize He is the One they had rejected. Third, this repentance ‘will be genuine, not superficial.’ Fourth, the repentance will begin with the Jews of Jerusalem and will spread to Jews throughout the land. It will include every family beginning with the House of David and ‘spreading to “all the families that remain.”’ Fifth, the results will be a national cleansing of the nation from ‘sin and uncleanness.’ Sixth, this repentance is ‘the preliminary condition for her spiritual ministry to all the nations of the earth’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 546). “The repentance that began in Jerusalem and spread to Jews throughout the land will also spread to the Jews still in the Dispersion” (*ibid.*, p. 559). “Feinberg added, ‘When the one who is greater than Joseph makes himself known to his brethren, they will be heartbroken with grief and contrition’ (Gen. 45:14-15)” [quoting C. L. Feinberg, ‘Zechariah,’ *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 909] (Horner, *FI*, p. 201)

Israel receives an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. “until **the Spirit be poured upon us from on high**, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest” (Isa. 32:15). “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground; **I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed**, and my blessing upon thine offspring” (Isa. 44:3) “neither will I hide my face any more from them; for **I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel**, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 39:29). “And **I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication**; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born” (Zech.

12:10). “And it shall come to pass afterward, that **I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh**; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will **I pour out my Spirit**. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:28–32). “...the outpouring of the Spirit, quoted in Acts 2:17-21, which occurred on the day of Pentecost but will have its complete fulfillment in the days prior to the second coming of Christ” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 21). “For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but **this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: “AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,” God says, “THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; EVEN UPON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT** And they shall prophesy. **AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE, AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BENEATH, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. AND IT SHALL BE, THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED”**” (Acts 2:15–21).

Israel is forgiven and regenerated (saved). “And **I will give them a heart to know me**, that I am Jehovah: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for **they shall return unto me with their whole heart**” (Jer. 24:7). “**In those days, and in that time**, saith Jehovah, the children of **Israel** shall come, they and the children of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping, and shall seek Jehovah their God. They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come ye, and **join yourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten**” (Jer. 50:4–5). “Jeremiah 50:4-5... the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 323) “Therefore by this **shall the iniquity of Jacob be forgiven, and this is all the fruit of taking away his sin**: that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that

are beaten in sunder, so that the Asherim and the sun-images shall rise no more” (Isa. 27:9). “Therefore thus saith Jehovah, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: **Jacob** shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, **the work of my hands**, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name; yea, they shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall stand in awe of the God of Israel. **They also that err in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmur shall receive instruction**” (Isa. 29:22-24). “But now thus saith Jehovah that created thee, **O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine**” (Isa. 43:1). “God is Israel’s Creator and so fully intends to redeem Israel ([Isa. 43] v. 1)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 824). “**I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins**” (Isa. 43:25). “Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth, Say ye to the daughter of **Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh**; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. And **they shall call them The holy people, The redeemed of Jehovah: and thou shalt be called Sought out, A city not forsaken**” (Isa. 62:11-12). “And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am Jehovah: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart” (Jer. 24:7). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with **the house of Israel** after those days, saith Jehovah: **I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.** Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of **Israel** also shall cease from **being a nation before me for ever.** Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be

measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:31-37). “Covenant Theology holds to the position that the New Covenant was made with the Church. Dispensationalists hold that the New Covenant was made with Israel. This is based on a literal understanding of Jeremiah 31:31-34 which clearly states that God was going to make the New Covenant *with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah*. Ladd, however, believes that the New Testament has ‘reinterpreted’ this passage as a reference to the Church” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 258). “There is no evidence that the Book of Hebrews has reinterpreted the meaning of Jeremiah” (*ibid.*, p. 259). “And I will bring **Israel** again to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. **In those days, and in that time, saith Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant**” (Jer. 50:19-20). “And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God” (Ezek. 11:19-20). “And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them” (Ezek. 36:25-27). “...the Holy Spirit will indwell the Jews” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 408) “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, **in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God**. And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up from the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel. Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah” (Hos. 1:10-2:1). “Come, and **let us return unto Jehovah**; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. **After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up**, and we shall live before him. And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: **his going forth** is sure as

the morning; and **he will come unto us** as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth” (Hos. 6:1-3). “The leaders of Israel will finally recognize the reason the Tribulation has fallen on them. Just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, they will now lead the nation to the acceptance of His messiahship by issuing the call of Hosea 6:1-3. The confession of Israel’s national sin will last for two days as the entire nation becomes regenerated and saved” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 784). **“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely;** for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found” (Hos. 14:4-8). “And it shall come to pass afterward, that **I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;** and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before the great and terrible day of Jehovah** cometh. And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered;** for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as **Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call**” (Joel 2:28-32). “Who is a **God** like unto thee, that **pardoneth iniquity**, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in lovingkindness. **He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.** Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the lovingkindness to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (Mic. 7:18-20). “For **then will I turn to the peoples of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent.** From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting ones, and **thou shalt no more be haughty in my**

holy mountain. But I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah. **The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;** for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. **Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments,** he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. **Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing**” (Zeph. 3:9-17). “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that **blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’ Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.**” (Rom. 11:25-29). “The issue is: Will there be a national salvation of Israel? Those who answer in the affirmative do not say that it will be a different *kind* of salvation, for when it does happen, it will be by grace through faith. Believing in a total restoration of Israel to the land does recognize a separate program, but not a separate salvation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 200). “He will return as a result of Israel’s national salvation” (*ibid.*, p. 541). “It is important to note that the national salvation of Israel precedes the second coming and is not subsequent to it” (*ibid.*, p. 555). “The national salvation is to extend to every individual Jewish person, and it is to be true through succeeding generations from the time that the initial regeneration of Israel occurs. Thus, during the kingdom, the unregenerate people will be among the Gentiles only. In the entire period of the kingdom there will be no unsaved Jews. That is the reason there will be no need for one Jew to say to another, *know the Lord*, for they shall all know Him” (*ibid.*, p. 586). “The national regeneration will come by means of the national confession of Isaiah 53:1-9. The nation as a nation will be saved” (*ibid.*, p. 784). **“Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed?** For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him,

there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But **he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and **Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.** He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that **he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?** And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth” (Isa. 53:1-9). “The leaders of Israel will finally recognize the reason why the Tribulation has fallen on them. Whether this will be done by the study of the Scriptures, or by the preaching of the 144,000, or via the Two Witnesses (the third sign of Jonah to which the Jews of Jerusalem had already responded), or by the ministry of Elijah, is not clearly stated. Most likely, it will be a combination of these things” (*ibid.*).

Israel is judged. “As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and **I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you,** saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me; but my holy name shall ye no more profane with your gifts, and with your idols. For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of

Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I sware to give unto your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 20:33-44). "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to **ten virgins**, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, "Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the prudent answered, saying, "No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves." And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, "Lord, lord, open up for us." But he answered and said, "Truly I say to you, I do not know you." Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour" (Matt. 25:1-13). It should be noted that many scholars believe the judgment of Israel will take place *after* the Tribulation, rather than *during* the Tribulation. For that reason, we will defer our detailed discussion of Israel's eschatological judgment to our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.

Israel is purged. "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your

fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and **I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel:** and ye shall know that I am Jehovah” (Ezek. 20:33-38). “For then will I turn to the peoples of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me; for **then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting ones, and thou shalt no more be haughty in my holy mountain. But I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people,** and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah. **The remnant of Israel** shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid” (Zeph. 3:9-13). “For there shall be the seed of peace; the vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and **I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things**” (Zech. 8:12). “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also **I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.** And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of Jehovah; and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been made a bondman from my youth. And one shall say unto him, **What are these wounds between thine arms?** Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (Zech. 13:2-6). “...the false prophets who have led Israel astray during the course of the Tribulation will be executed... Often the parents of the false prophets will themselves be the ones to carry out the execution (vv. 2-3)... the scars on their bodies, a symbol of their prophetic office” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 334) “And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, **two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the**

third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God” (Zech. 13:8-9). “In the Holocaust, under Hitler, one-third of the world Jewish population died. Under the fierce persecution of the Antichrist, controlled and energized by Satan, two-thirds of the Jewish population will die. This will be the largest and most intense persecution of the Jews ever known in Jewish history” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 774). “As Zechariah 13:8-9 has pointed out, two-thirds of the Jewish population will be destroyed in the persecutions of the Tribulation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 791). “Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and **the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple;** and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts. But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for **he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver;** and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years. And **I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against** the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts. For *I*, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed” (Mal. 3:1-6). “It is evident that the people are to come into divine judgments and many will be ‘purged out’ (Ezek. 20:37-38), and ‘so all Israel [that portion accepted of God] shall be saved’ (Rom 11:26-27)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:312). “Even today there are many Jewish people who care little or nothing about the ancient promises of Jehovah to Israel; as one wealthy Jew in southern California once expressed himself: ‘Los Angeles is good enough for me.’ Such members of the nation will be gathered out of the lands where they dwell and be dealt with judicially” (McClain, *GK*, p. 199). “Ezekiel [20:33-44] draws a simile with the Exodus and the Wilderness Wanderings. The judgment declared upon Israel at Kadesh Barnea was a period of forty years, during which time the rebels were purged out. By the same token, the Tribulation as a judgment is a period of time when once again the rebels are to be purged out. The judgment at Kadesh Barnea was in the wilderness; in the Tribulation, the Jews are in the wilderness again (Rev 12:6). This passage is better under-

stood as referring to the judgment of the Great Tribulation itself, which will be especially severe for Israel (Matt. 24:15-22), rather than a special judgment of Israel following the second coming” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 540).

Israel pleads for Christ's return. “And **they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me**, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land” (Lev. 26:40-42). “Something to notice is that the word *iniquity* is in the singular and that it is specific. There is one specific iniquity committed by the fathers and continued by them which Israel must confess before she can begin to enjoy all of the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 781). “**O God, the nations are come into thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.** The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be food unto the birds of the heavens, The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; And there was none to bury them. We are become a reproach to our neighbors, A scoffing and derision to them that are round about us. **How long, O Jehovah?** wilt thou be angry for ever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire? **Pour out thy wrath upon the nations that know thee not, And upon the kingdoms that call not upon thy name.** For they have devoured Jacob, And laid waste his habitation. Remember not against us the iniquities of our forefathers: Let thy tender mercies speedily meet us; For we are brought very low. **Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; And deliver us, and forgive our sins, for thy name's sake. Wherefore should the nations say, Where is their God? Let the avenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed Be known among the nations in our sight.** Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee: According to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to death; And **render unto our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom Their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.** So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture Will give thee thanks for ever: We will show forth thy praise to all generations” (Ps. 79:1-13). “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that sittest above the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up thy might, And **come**

to save us. Turn us again, O God; And cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved. O Jehovah God of hosts, How long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people? Thou hast fed them with the bread of tears, And given them tears to drink in large measure. Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbors; And our enemies laugh among themselves. **Turn us again, O God of hosts; And cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.** Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt: Thou didst drive out the nations, and plantedst it. Thou preparedst room before it, And it took deep root, and filled the land. The mountains were covered with the shadow of it, And the boughs thereof were like cedars of God. It sent out its branches unto the sea, And its shoots unto the River. Why hast thou broken down its walls, So that all they that pass by the way do pluck it? The boar out of the wood doth ravage it, And the wild beasts of the field feed on it. Turn again, **we beseech thee,** O God of hosts: Look down from heaven, and behold, and **visit this vine, And the stock which thy right hand planted,** And the branch that thou madest strong for thyself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down: They perish at the rebuke of thy countenance. **Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, Upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.** So shall we not go back from thee: Quicken thou us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Jehovah God of hosts; Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved” (Ps. 80:1–19). “The specific person they are pleading for is the One on God’s right hand (v. 17), referred to as the son of man. This is none other than Jesus the Messiah, Who has been sitting at the right hand of God the Father ever since the ascension from the Mount of Olives after He was rejected by Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 338). **“Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down,** that the mountains might quake at thy presence, as when fire kindleth the brushwood, and the fire causeth the waters to boil; **to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!** When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains quaked at thy presence. For from of old men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen a God besides thee, who worketh for him that waiteth for him. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou wast wroth, and we sinned: in them have we been of long time; and shall we be saved? For we are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy

face from us, and hast consumed us by means of our iniquities. But now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Jehovah, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, look, **we beseech thee**, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are become a wilderness, Zion is become a wilderness, **Jerusalem a desolation**. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned with fire; and all our pleasant places are laid waste. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Jehovah? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore” (Isa. 64:1-12)? “And Jehovah said unto me, Backsliding Israel hath showed herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith Jehovah; I will not look in anger upon you; for I am merciful, saith Jehovah, I will not keep anger for ever. Only **acknowledge thine iniquity**, that thou hast transgressed against Jehovah thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith Jehovah. Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. **At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart**. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers” (Jer. 3:11-18). “All of these blessings are conditioned by verse 13 where they must acknowledge or confess one specific iniquity which they committed against Jehovah their God” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 781). “**I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly**” (Hos. 5:15). “He returned to heaven at the ascension from the Mount of Olives. He will not come back to the earth until the offense that caused Him to return to heaven is acknowledged or confessed... According to this verse, only when this offense is acknowledged or confessed will Christ come back to the earth” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 782). “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and

your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh. And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape**, as Jehovah hath said, and among **the remnant** those whom Jehovah doth call” (Joel 2:28-32). “**And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.** In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness” (Zech. 12:10–13:1). “Before Israel will receive the cleansing of her sin, and before Christ will return to establish His kingdom, Israel must first look *unto* the One whom they have pierced and must plead for His return. Once they do this, then, and only then, will they receive their cleansing and begin to enjoy the blessings of the Messianic Age” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 782). “The pleading of the Jews for the Messiah to come and save them is the subject of much revelation. It is described in Zechariah 12:10-13:1” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 333). “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts: **smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered**; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. **They shall call on my name, and I will hear them:** I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God” (Zech. 13:7-9). “God’s Shepherd, the Messiah, was smitten and so His sheep, Israel, were scattered throughout the world” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 335). “O

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! **How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord”**” (Matt. 23:37–39)! “Speaking to the Jewish leadership, Christ reiterated His original desire to gather them if they would only accept Him (v. 37). Because of their rejection of His messiahship, in place of being gathered they are going to be scattered. *Their house*, the Jewish Temple, will be left desolate and will be destroyed with nothing remaining (v. 38). He then declares that they will not see Him again until they say, *Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord* (v.39). This is a quotation of a messianic Psalm, Psalm 118:26” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 783). **“Blessed be he that cometh in the name of Jehovah: We have blessed you out of the house of Jehovah”** (Ps. 118:26). “Because of their rejection of His Messiahship, instead of being gathered, they are going to be scattered. Their house, the Jewish Temple, will be left desolate and will be destroyed, with nothing remaining (v. 38)... *Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord*. This is a messianic greeting. It will mean their acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 307). “In [Matt. 23] verses 37-39, Jesus also laid down the precondition to the Second Coming, in that He will not return until the Jewish leaders ask Him to return” (*ibid.*, p. 621). **“Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you [Men of Israel, vs. 12], whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time”** (Acts 3:19-21). “He will not return until the leadership of Israel leads the nation to the acceptance of that Messiahship” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 764). “The second coming of Christ does have a major precondition that must be met before Christ will return to establish the Messianic Kingdom. What this condition is can be deduced from five passages of Scripture” [These five passages are included in the passages quoted above—*ed.*] (*ibid.*, p. 781). “Jesus will not come back to the earth until the Jews and the Jewish leaders ask Him to come back. Just as the Jewish leaders led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, they must some day lead the nation to the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus. This, then, is the twofold basis of the second coming of Christ: Israel must confess her national sin and then plead for Messiah to return, to *mourn for Him as one mourns for an*

only son. Until these two things happen, there will be no second coming” (*ibid.*, p. 783). “It has been pointed out previously when speaking of the basis of the second coming of Christ that there are two facets to this basis: first, there must be the confession of Israel’s national sin (Lev. 26:40-42; Jer. 3:11-18; Hos 5:15) and, second, a pleading for the Messiah to return (Zech. 12:10; Matt. 23:37-39)” (*ibid.*, p. 784). “It is this fact that explains Satan’s war against the Jews throughout history in general and during the Tribulation in particular... If Satan can succeed in destroying the Jews once and for all before they come to national repentance, then Jesus will not come back and Satan’s career is eternally safe... Anti-Semitism in any form, active or passive, whether it is racial, ethnic, national, economic, political, religious or theological, is all part of the satanic strategy to avoid the Second Coming” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 307). “This, then, is the two fold basis of the Second Coming: Israel must confess her national sin, and then plead for Messiah to return, to *mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son*” (*ibid.*). “The pleading of Israel for the Messiah to return will not be confined to the Jews of Bozrah, but will include the Jews still in Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 333). “In conclusion, during the fifth stage, Israel as a nation will be regenerated and saved after two days of national confession of sin. On the third day, they will plead for the Second Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 339).

All nations gather against Israel. “And now **many nations are assembled against thee**, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah, neither understand they his counsel; for he hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of **Zion**; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and **thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples**: and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. Now shalt thou gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek” (Mic. 4:11–5:1). “The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus saith Jehovah, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: behold, **I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about**, and upon Judah also shall it be in **the siege against Jerusalem**. And it shall come to pass in that day, that **I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it**. In that day, saith Jehovah, I will smite every horse with terror, and his rider with madness; and I will open mine eyes upon the house of

Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in Jehovah of hosts their God. In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem. Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah. In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy **all the nations that come against Jerusalem**" (Zech. 12:1-9). "Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For **I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity**, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city" (Zech. 14:1-2). "And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for **the kings from the east**. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to **the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty**. ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.") And **they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called HarMagedon**" (Rev. 16:12-16). "The capture of Jerusalem by the forces of the Antichrist will not come easily. God will greatly energize the Jews to withstand the attack to a great degree, causing heavy losses to the armies of the Antichrist" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 328). "Jewish women will be subjected to massive rapes (Zech. 14:2)" (*ibid.*, p. 330)

The campaign of Armageddon commences. "For I have sworn by myself, saith Jehovah, that **Bozrah** shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. I have heard tidings from Jehovah, and an ambassador is sent among **the nations**, saying, **Gather yourselves together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle**" (Jer. 49:13-14). "And the mul-

titide of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her stronghold, and that distress her, **shall be as a dream**, a vision of the night. And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: **so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion**” (Isa. 29:7-8) “Behold, the name of **Jehovah cometh from far, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is as a devouring fire; and his breath is as an overflowing stream, that reacheth even unto the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction:** and a bridle that causeth to err shall be in the jaws of the peoples” (Isa. 30:27-28). “Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. **After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him.** And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: **his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us** as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth” (Hos. 6:1-3). “With the armies of the Antichrist at the city of Bozrah, the Campaign of Armageddon will begin its last three days, according to Hosea 6:1-3” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 331). “**Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake:** but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel” (Joel 3:9-16). “**Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah,** because they have shed innocent blood in their land” (Joel 3:19). “The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus

saith Jehovah, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about, and upon Judah also shall it be in **the siege against Jerusalem**. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make **Jerusalem** a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and **all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it**. **In that day, saith Jehovah, I will smite every horse with terror, and his rider with madness; and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness**. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in Jehovah of hosts their God. In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and **they shall devour all the peoples round about**, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem. Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah. **In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem**” (Zech. 12:1-9). “Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For **I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle**; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations**, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and **Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee**. And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light; the bright ones shall withdraw themselves: but it shall be one day which is known unto Jehovah; not day, and not night; but

it shall come to pass, that at evening time there shall be light” (Zech. 14:1-7). “And this shall be the plague wherewith **Jehovah will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor**” (Zech. 14:12-14) “saying, ‘We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign. And **the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came**, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and **to destroy those who destroy the earth**” (Rev. 11:17-18). “And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for **the kings from the east**. And I saw coming **out of the mouth of the dragon** and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three **unclean spirits** like frogs; for they are **spirits of demons**, performing signs, which go out to **the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty**. (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.”) And **they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-magedon**” (Rev. 16:12-16). “Demons will be used to help gather the Gentile armies to war against the Jews in the Armageddon War (Rev 16:13-14)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 849). “If the question be raised as to why this fateful gathering should take place in the land of Palestine, the obvious answer is that, according to the record of chapters 6-19, the only area of successful open resistance to the beast remaining on earth appears in the 144,000 protected by the divine seal (7:1-8); and these are *Israelites*” (McClain, *GK*, p. 478). “Except for these [144,000], all other open opposition has been abolished by the beast. The two great witnesses have been killed (11:7). The apostate church has been utterly destroyed (17:16). What is left of the nation of Israel has been forced to take refuge in the wilderness (12:14). All others, whether Jew or Gentile, who rejected the mark of the beast have been martyred (13:15)... that land and city where down through the times of divine revelation most of the troubles of Satan have been centered” (*ibid.*, p. 479) “At the conclusion of that period [the

Tribulation], however, there will be a revolt against his [Antichrist's] authority and a coalition of nations referred to as 'the kings from the East' (Rev. 16:12) will move from east of the Euphrates River into the Middle East to seek to overthrow that ruler. Before the battle can be joined, these two great powers will be 'gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army' (19:19). Evidently the sign of the Son of Man, that will appear in the heavens (Matt. 24:30) and herald the second advent of Jesus Christ to the earth, will cause these two—who were preparing to fight for world supremacy—to ally their forces and try to prevent the Lord's return" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 310). "Revelation 16:12-16 says the armies of the nations will not even begin to gather in Israel for Armageddon until the sixth bowl is poured out" (Showers, *M*, p. 47) "...they will be gathered together to make war when Christ comes out of heaven... Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet... Apparently the presence of these three persons with supernatural powers will cause the kings and military men to react boldly in response to the cosmic disturbances after the sixth bowl and in contrast to their cowardly response to the cosmic disturbances of the sixth seal" (*ibid.*, p. 69). "While the term 'Battle of Armageddon' has been commonly used, it is really a misnomer, for more than one battle will be taking place. For this reason, many prophetic teachers have stopped employing that term and are using the term 'Campaign of Armageddon,' as in this chapter. But this, too, is a misnomer because there will be no fighting in Armageddon itself; all of the fighting will take place elsewhere. A more biblical name for this final conflict is found in the closing words of verse 14: *the war of the great day of God, the Almighty*. This is a more accurate description of the nature and extent of this final conflict" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 311). "What is known as the Valley of Armageddon in Christian circles is actually the biblical Valley of Jezreel. The term *Armageddon* is never applied to the valley itself, but only to the mount at the western end. Here, in this large valley of Lower Galilee, the armies of the world will gather for the purpose of destroying all the Jews still living" (*ibid.*, p. 312). "It should be noted that the passage says nothing of a battle in this valley, for no fighting will take place here. The Valley of Jezreel, guarded by the Mountain of Megiddo, will merely serve as the gathering ground for the armies of the Antichrist" (*ibid.*). "To summarize the study of the second stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, while the Antichrist will move his forces into the Valley of Jezreel, his enemies will take the opportunity to destroy the city of Babylon quickly and suddenly. According to Isaiah 13:3, they will be Gentile believers of the Tribulation. Just prior to this, however, the Jews will be warned to flee out of Babylon. This they will do, and will make their way to

Jerusalem to report to the Jews who are there. This sudden destruction of the world political and economic capital will cause great consternation on the earth, but not in Heaven. For when Babylon's destruction comes, it will signal that the Second Coming will occur soon, and along with it the regeneration and restoration of Israel" (*ibid.*, p. 327). "**The burden of Babylon**, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see. Set ye up an ensign upon the bare mountain, lift up the voice unto them, wave the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. I have commanded **my consecrated ones**, yea, I have called **my mighty men** for mine anger, even **my proudly exulting ones**" (Isa. 13:1-3). "...the main purpose of the Campaign of Armageddon is the annihilation of the Jews" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 330) "At the end of the Tribulation, at the battle of Armageddon and after it, the following will occur: (1) All nations of the earth will surround Jerusalem. (2) Jerusalem will be captured. (3) A remnant will flee through the valley created by an earthquake. (4) Christ will return to the Mount of Olives. (5) Christ will judge the nations. (6) Christ will restore the 'house of David.' (7) Christ will reign 'over the whole earth.'"... This entire event is described as the day of the Lord (2 Peter 3:10)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:609).

The city (political and economic) Babylon the Great falls. "**The burden of Babylon**, which the son of Amoz did see. Set ye up an ensign upon the bare mountain, lift up the voice unto them, wave the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. **I have commanded my consecrated ones, yea, I have called my mighty men for mine anger, even my proudly exulting ones. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, as of a great people! the noise of a tumult of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together! Jehovah of hosts is mustering the host for the battle. They come from a far country, from the uttermost part of heaven, even Jehovah, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land**" (Isa. 13:1-5). "Wail ye; for the day of Jehovah is at hand; as destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Therefore shall all hands be feeble, and every heart of man shall melt: and they shall be dismayed; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman in travail: they shall look in amazement one at another; their faces shall be faces of flame. Behold, **the day of Jehovah** cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. And **I will punish the world for their evil**, and the wicked for their iniquity: and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughti-

ness of the terrible. **I will make a man more rare than fine gold**, even a man than the pure gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall come to pass, that as the chased roe, and as sheep that no man gathereth, they shall turn every man to his own people, and shall flee every man to his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is taken shall fall by the sword. Their infants also shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be rifled, and their wives ravished. Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, who shall not regard silver, and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. And their bows shall dash the young men in pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And **Babylon**, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, **shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation:** neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged" (Isa. 13:6–22). "For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and **they shall take them captive whose captives they were;** and they shall rule over their oppressors" (Isa. 14:1–2). "For, lo, I will stir up and cause to come up **against Babylon a company of great nations from the north country;** and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of an expert mighty man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a prey: **all that prey upon her** shall be satisfied, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 50:9–10). "Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: slay and utterly destroy after them, saith Jehovah, and do according to all that I have commanded thee. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is **Babylon become a desolation among the nations!** I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven

against Jehovah. Jehovah hath opened his armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation; for the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, hath a work to do **in the land of the Chaldeans**. Come against her **from the utmost border**; open her store-houses; cast her up as heaps, and **destroy her utterly**; let nothing of her be left. Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation” (Jer. 50:21–27). “Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wolves shall dwell there, and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and **it shall be no more inhabited for ever**; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. **As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah** and the neighbor cities thereof, saith Jehovah, so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein” (Jer. 50:39–40). “Behold, **a people cometh from the north; and a great nation and many kings shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth**. They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, every one set in array, as a man to the battle, **against thee, O daughter of Babylon**” (Jer. 50:41–42). “Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he hath taken against **Babylon**; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against **the land of the Chaldeans**: Surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them. At the noise of **the taking of Babylon** the earth trembleth, and **the cry is heard among the nations**” (Jer. 50:45–46). “For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, of his God, of Jehovah of hosts; though their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel. **Flee out of the midst of Babylon**, and save every man his life; be not cut off in **her iniquity**: for it is **the time of Jehovah’s vengeance**; he will render unto her a recompense” (Jer. 51:5–6). “**Babylon** hath been a golden cup in Jehovah’s hand, that **made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine**; therefore the nations are mad. **Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed**: wail for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies” (Jer. 51:7–9). “**And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion** in your sight, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 51:24). “Behold, **I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith Jehovah, which destroyest all the earth**; and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for

foundations; but **thou shalt be desolate for ever**, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 51:25–26). “And the land trembleth and is in pain; for **the purposes of Jehovah against Babylon** do stand, **to make the land of Babylon a desolation, without inhabitant**” (Jer. 51:29). “The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon **Babylon**, shall the inhabitant of **Zion** say; and, My blood be upon the inhabitants of **Chaldea**, shall **Jerusalem** say. Therefore thus saith Jehovah: Behold, **I will** plead thy cause, and **take vengeance for thee**; and I will dry up her sea, and make her fountain dry” (Jer. 51:35–36). “**My people, go ye out of the midst of her**, and save yourselves every man from the fierce anger of Jehovah” (Jer. 51:45). “Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for joy over **Babylon**; for **the destroyers shall come unto her from the north**, saith Jehovah. **As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the land**” (Jer. 51:48–49). “Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their appearance in all the land and, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead; and this is **a woman** sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said, **This is Wickedness**: and he cast her down into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there came forth two women, and the wind was in their wings; now they had wings like the wings of a stork; and they lifted up the ephah between earth and heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, **To build her a house in the land of Shinar**: and when it is prepared, she shall be set there in her own place” (Zech. 5:5–11). “After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, **Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit**, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.’ And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people**, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much

for her. To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, "I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning." For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong. And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of **her burning**, standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, "Woe, woe, **the great city, Babylon, the strong city!** For in one hour your judgment has come." And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more; cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives. And the fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and men will no longer find them. The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, saying, **Woe, woe, the great city**, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste! And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, "**What city is like the great city?**" And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, "**Woe, woe, the great city**, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!" Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.' And a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "**Thus will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer.** And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all

the nations were deceived by your sorcery. And **in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth**” (Rev. 18:1-24). “Political Babylon (Second Half [of the Tribulation]) - [Rev.] 18:1-24” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 9) “Shinar, which is the same as Babylonia... Throughout the second half of the Tribulation, Babylon will be both the center of world economy and the world political center” (*ibid.*, p. 314). “Isaiah 13:1-5... The *ones* destroying Babylon are referred to as God’s *consecrated ones*. God will use Gentile believers to destroy Babylon” (*ibid.*). “Isaiah 13:6-14:23... This prophecy of Babylon’s destruction has never been fulfilled in the manner required by the text” (*ibid.*, p. 315). “The context of Isaiah 13:6-22 clearly puts the destruction of Babylon, announced in verses 1-5, within the scope and time of *the Day of Jehovah*, a reference to the Great Tribulation” (*ibid.*). “...it would appear that while the Antichrist is meeting his forces in the Valley of Jezreel, his enemies take the opportunity to gather and destroy his capital city” (*ibid.*, p. 321). “Prior to the sudden and great destruction of Babylon, the Jews will be given a warning to leave Babylon. They will succeed in their escape and will make their way to Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 322). “These prophecies of the destruction of Babylon have never been fulfilled in the manner required by the statements of Scripture. As Daniel 5-6 shows, the Medes and the Persians conquered Babylon intact with Belshazzar being the only casualty. Babylon as a city continued to exist and Daniel was even given a position of authority within the city. The Babylon of past history slowly died out and became a ghost town” (*ibid.*). “All these things point to the fact that the city of Babylon is to suffer a destruction at the time of Israel’s regeneration. This requires Babylon’s destruction to come during the Campaign of Armageddon. This in turn requires the city of Babylon to be rebuilt” (*ibid.*, p. 323). “...political and economic Babylon that will rule the world for 3 1/2 years” (*ibid.*) “[Rev.] 18:1-3:... *Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit...* This will be the place of demonic abode and confinement during the Messianic Age (vv. 1-2)... The reason for this severe judgment of Babylon will be the global political (*kings of the earth*) and economic (*merchants of the earth*) corruption originating in this city because of the Antichrist’s rule (v. 3)” (*ibid.*, p. 324). “Revelation 18:4-5:... a call to the Jews to flee the city prior to Babylon’s destruction: ... *Come forth, my people, out of her*” (*ibid.*) “[Rev.] 18:9-10:... *kings... standing afar off for the fear of her torment...* These are the seven kings who have co-reigned with the Antichrist and submitted their authority to the Antichrist, the king of Babylon. Whatever power or authority they held, was held by the grace of Babylon... They will be able to see the smoke

of Babylon *afar off*, for they will see it from the Valley of Jezreel in Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 325). “[Rev.] 18:11-17a... *merchants...* Babylon will become the economic center of the world, the center of business and world trade” (*ibid.*) “[Rev.] 18:17b-19:... *shipmaster...* 18:20: ... *Rejoice over her, you heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God has judged your judgment on her.* There will be lamenting on the earth by kings, merchants, and transporters. But in Heaven there will be three groups rejoicing: saints, apostles, and prophets. The destruction of Babylon will mark the soon return of the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 326). “[Rev.] 18:21-24:... *a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all...* Jeremiah commanded a scroll-wrapped stone to be thrown into the Euphrates River to symbolize the sinking of the city of Babylon. Now another person, an angel, also casts a stone, the size of a millstone, into the sea to depict how totally Babylon will disappear so as not to be found any more (v. 21). Babylon will cease to be the world center and capital (vv. 22-23) because she was guilty of the blood of the prophets (e.g. the Two Witnesses) and the slaughter of the Tribulation saints (v. 24)” (*ibid.*).

Chapter 23: The Second Coming of the King

The Second Coming of the King is the focal point of Bible prophecy. At Christ's Second Coming, Jesus and His bride will be spectacularly revealed to the world, Satan's kingdom will be defeated and the world will be prepared for the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. "The two Advents are the two main instrumentalities for accomplishing Redemption; each one has its appropriate sphere of action, and 'the glory' of the Second is the reward subsequent to obedience and suffering at the First" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:243). "The general theme concerning the return of Christ has the unique distinction of being the first prophecy uttered by man (Jude 1:14-15) and the last message from the ascended Christ as well as being the last word of the Bible (Rev 22:20-21). Likewise, the theme of the second coming of Christ is unique because of the fact that it occupies a larger part of the text of the Scriptures than any other doctrine, and it is the outstanding theme of prophecy in both the Old and New Testaments" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:306). "This the greatest theme of all prophecy" (*ibid.*, p. 389) "The consummation of Scripture as well as the consummation of God's divine plan is the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. viii).

The Fact of the Second Coming

The *fact* of the Second coming is evident from Scripture: from the Pentateuch, from the Hebrew prophets, from the gospels, from the Acts of the Apostles, from the epistles of Paul, Peter and John, and from the Revelation. "that then **Jehovah** thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and **will return** and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee" (Deut. 30:3). "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! The voice of thy watchmen! they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, **when Jehovah returneth to Zion**. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for Jehovah hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. **Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God**" (Isa. 52:7-10). "I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, **there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. **And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages**

should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13–14). “And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and **Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee**” (Zech. 14:5). “But who can endure **the day of His coming?** And who can stand **when He appears?** For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap” (Mal. 3:2). “For **the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels;** and will then recompense every man according to his deeds” (Matt. 16:27). “For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall **the coming of the Son of Man** be” (Matt 24:27). “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For **the coming of the Son of Man** will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall **the coming of the Son of Man** be” (Matt. 24:36–39). “Blessed is that slave whom his **master** finds so doing **when he comes**” (Matt. 24:46). “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then **all the tribes of the earth** will mourn, and **they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:30). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him,** then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:31–32) “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, **the Son of Man** will also be ashamed of him **when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels**” (Mark 8:38). “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will **the Son of Man** be ashamed **when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels**” (Luke 9:26). “And be like men who are waiting for their master **when he returns from the wedding feast,** so that they may immediately open the door to him **when he comes** and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert **when he comes;** truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them” (Luke 12:36–37). “Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps alight. And be like men who are waiting for their **master when he returns from the**

wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him **when he comes** and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert **when he comes**; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. Whether **he comes** in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. And be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. You too, be ready; for **the Son of Man is coming** at an hour that you do not expect” (Luke 12:35–40). “And then **they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory**” (Luke 21:27). “and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven**’” (Acts 1:11). “and that He may send **Jesus**, the Christ appointed for you, **whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things** about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time” (Acts 3:20–21). “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of **our Lord Jesus at His coming**” (1 Thes. 2:19)? “And then that lawless one will be revealed whom **the Lord** will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of **His coming**” (2 Thes. 2:8) “**when He comes** to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed — for our testimony to you was believed” (2 Thes. 1:10). “that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until **the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time** — He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:14-15) “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of **Christ Jesus**, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by **His appearing** and His kingdom” (2 Tim. 4:1) “looking for the blessed hope and **the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**” (Titus 2:13) “Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages **He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself**. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so **Christ** also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin**, to those who eagerly await Him” (Heb. 9:26-28). “and saying, ‘Where is the promise of **His coming**? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation’” (2 Pet. 3:4). “For yet in a very

little while, **He who is coming will come**, and will not delay” (Heb. 10:37). “Behold, **He is coming with the clouds**, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen” (Rev 1:7). “(‘Behold, **I am coming** like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.’)” (Rev. 16:15) “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, **a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.** And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called **The Word of God.** And **the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.** And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so **that** with it **He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron;** and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’ And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, ‘Come, assemble for the great supper of God; in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.’ And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to **make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army.** And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And **the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse**, and all the birds were filled with their flesh” (Rev. 19:11–21). “And he said to me, ‘These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place. And behold, **I am coming** quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:6-7). “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, **I am coming** quickly.’ **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.** The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen” (Rev. 22:20-21).

The Necessity and Importance of the Second Coming

The Second Coming of the King is a *necessary* and *important* event in the overall Kingdom program. “Van Oosterzee (*Ch. Dog.*, vol. 2, p. 580), speaking of the reasonableness of the Second visible Coming of Jesus, remarks: ‘History and experience even, give every reason to doubt whether without such a personal appearing and intervention of the King, the Kingdom of God could indeed ever arrive at the complete development and triumph, to which it is designed to come’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:182). “...the Second Advent... the great event that towers above every other” (*ibid.*, p. 329) “The Pre-Millennial view is the only one that can receive this prominence and nearness of the Advent, fully adopt it, and make it an essential element. It has no definite intervening period to neutralize its force, and no substitution for this Advent (as e.g. death) to destroy its redemptive preciousness” (*ibid.*, p. 384). “The prevailing idea of many writers is to make the incarnation the greatest event in history (as e.g. by Dr. Nevin in *Mercersburg Theology*, Dr. Turnbull in *Christ in History*, etc.), and this certainly cannot be eulogized too highly, seeing that through it the means are provided for the fulfillment of the covenants. But even this should not be allowed to overshadow the glorious manifestation of this humanity in the future, and the Kingdom resulting therefrom” (*ibid.*, p. 438). “It is clear then that Christ’s ‘First Coming,’ important as it was, is not the ‘doctrinal centre’ of the Scriptures, that is, Christ’s First Coming was not the centre of a circle that contains all doctrine, but was one of the foci of an ellipse of which the other is the ‘Second Coming’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 8). “The First Coming was for the salvation of my ‘SOUL;’ the Second is for the salvation of my ‘Body,’ for there can be no resurrection of the body until Christ comes back” (*ibid.*, p. 9). “There are 20 times as many references in the Old Testament to Christ’s Second Coming as to His First Coming” (*ibid.*). “No event, unless it be the cross, is more emphasized in Scripture than the personal return of Christ to this earth. This truth occupies at least one verse in twenty of the New Testament, and is not only the subject of the last words of Jesus to His own in the world, but is the subject of the closing words and promise of the Bible itself” (Chafer, *KHP*, 74%). “The most important aspect of the prophetic context of the millennium is the personal return of Jesus Christ to the earth... the glorious appearance of the Lord in the heavens accompanied by the saints and the holy angels... It constitutes the most tremendous intervention of divine power in the entire course of human history” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 264). “Just as Scripture concerning the rapture of the church is climactic and determinative in truth revealed about the church, so the second coming is determinative in tracing the future course of Gentiles and Israel

in the world, the resurrection of the righteous, and the fulfillment of prophecies concerning the kingdom of God on earth” (*ibid.*). “One out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament refers either to the rapture of the church or to Christ’s coming to reign over the world” (*ibid.*, p. 268).

The Person of the Second Coming

The *Person* of the Second Coming is *the very same Jesus who came the first time*. “The Jews, in order to reconcile the statements of the prophets respecting the Messiah, resort (see articles ‘Messiah,’ ‘Jews,’ etc., in our encyclopedias, etc.) to a twofold Messiah, one in a state of poverty and suffering, the other in a state of splendor and glory. They thus make two persons and two Messiahs, whereas the Old Test, speaks only of one Messiah, as covenanted and predicted, viz., that glorious David’s Son who shall restore the Theocracy. How are these Scriptures to be reconciled? By arbitrarily and violently making two Messiahs, or by making two Advents, the one in humiliation, etc., and the other in triumph and glory” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:414)? For a full description of this Person, see our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.

Titles of the King at His Second Coming

Certain *titles* of the King are particularly applicable to Him at His Second Coming. These titles include the bridegroom, the Son of Man and the Son of David. (For a detailed discussion of all the King’s titles see the section *Titles of the King* of our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.)

As the (already married) *bridegroom*, Jesus is husband of the bride (the church). “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet **the bridegroom**. And five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while **the bridegroom** was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, “**Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.**” Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the prudent answered, saying, “No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they were going away to make the purchase, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, “Lord, lord, open up for us.” But he answered and said, “Truly I say to**

you, I do not know you.” Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Matt. 25:1-13). “Since the Lord is returning to the earth to the marriage feast as a Bridegroom, He must be accompanied by the bride. Therefore, those waiting on the earth could not be the bride” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 283). “In the parable not only the wise but the unwise, who were appointed unto wrath, went to meet the Bridegroom. This could not picture the rapture, for no unsaved go out to meet Him at that time” (*ibid.*).

As the *Son of Man*, Jesus is the “last Adam,” the new head of the human race. “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a **son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him**: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14). “For **just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt 24:27). “and then **the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky**, and then **all the tribes of the earth** will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:30). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:31-32) “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter **you shall see the Son of Man** sitting at the right hand of Power, and **coming on the clouds of heaven**” (Matt. 26:63-64). “And Jesus said, ‘I am; and **you shall see the Son of Man** sitting at the right hand of Power, and **coming with the clouds of heaven**” (Mark 14:62). “For **just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day**” (Luke 17:24). “And then they will see the **Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**” (Mark 13:26). “And then they will see the **Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**” (Luke 21:27). “So also it is written, ‘The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.’ **The last Adam** became a life-giving spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45). “For **He did not subject to angels the world to come**, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘WHAT IS MAN, THAT

THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR **THE SON OF MAN**, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; **THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.** For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (Heb. 2:5–9).

As the *Son of David* (and as *the Messiah, the Christ, the Lion of Judah, the King of the Jews* and *the King of Kings*), Jesus is the rightful heir to David’s throne. “The record of the genealogy of **Jesus the Messiah, the son of David**, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1) “All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, ‘This man cannot be **the Son of David**, can he?’” (Matt. 12:23)? “The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, ‘**Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest**’” (Matt. 21:9)! “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:31–33). “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, **who has the key of David**, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this” (Rev. 3:7) “and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals” (Rev. 5:5). “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **I am the root and the descendant of David**, the bright morning star” (Rev. 22:16). “The Apocalypse... the covenant relationship of Jesus requires, as confirmatory and essential, just such references (Rev. 3:7, and 5:5, and 22:16), because as the predicted Seed of David He inherits David’s throne and Kingdom, and hence his personality, as covenanted, must be distinctively observed. It is, therefore, both reasonable and requisite to find them in such a book” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:351).

Purposes of the Second Coming

The *purposes* of the Second Coming are numerous, with each purpose being related to the Kingdom in some way. “The Sec. Advent must be contemplated as a means toward a foretold end” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:529).

Individually these purposes are:

To reveal Christ, the angels and the King's bride (the church) to humankind. “For **the Son of Man is going to come in the glory** of His Father **with His angels**; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds” (Matt. 16:27). “**When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory**” (Col. 3:4). “*When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, that is, the Second Coming, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.* Thus, just as the mystery was glory manifested, so shall believers be manifested to the world in glory, meaning in their glorified state when believers return with Him” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 674). “For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well **when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire**, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, **when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at** among all who have believed — for our testimony to you was believed” (2 Thes. 1:6-10). “And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘**Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones**, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (Jude 1:14-15). “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called **The Word of God**. And **the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses**. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:11-16). “The personal Coming shall occur when ‘the mystery of God is finished.’ ...the finishing of the mystery includes the open revelation of Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:182) “If the mystery is indeed finished, then the King has come and the Kingdom is established” (*ibid.*). “Christ will be followed by His glorified saints, who will be spectators of the immediate victo-

ry of their Lord” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 165). “When He returns, Messiah will be followed by armies [Rev. 19] (v. 14). The word is in the plural number, meaning that at least two separate armies will return with Him. One army is known as hosts of the Lord, or the angelic army. Matthew 16:27 states: *For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels*” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 345) “Another army that will return with Jesus is the army of the Church saints who had been raptured previously, before the Tribulation. Jude 14-15 describes the events as follows:... *Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones*” (*ibid.*, p. 346) “However, Isaiah 63:1-6 made it clear that although the armies of saints and angels will return with Him, they will not participate in the fighting” (*ibid.*). “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? **I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me:** yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and **there was none to help;** and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth” (Isa. 63:1-6).

To save Israel. (See our discussions of Israel’s survival in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* of our previous chapter *The Great Tribulation*. See also our discussions of Israel’s regathering and judgment in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

To defend Israel and to end her persecution. “**In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem:** and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. And it shall come to pass **in that day,** that **I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem**” (Zech. 12:8-9). “Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For **I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;** and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those na-**

tions, as when he fought in the day of battle. **And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives**, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Zechariah 14:1-4). “for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. **And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short**” (Matt. 24:21-22). “His first action on earth will be the defense of Jerusalem: ‘In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem’ (Zech. 12:8)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 193). “...for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened’ (Matt. 24:21-22). And the elect here are those of the nation of Israel, for whom this will be the ‘time of Jacob’s trouble’ (Jer. 30:7)” (*ibid.*, p. 461) “Only then will the Gentile nations realize that God did not cast off His people forever. Israel’s judgment and dispersion was due to sin, primarily the sin of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus... The nations will recognize at the Second Coming that God is still Israel’s God and He will avenge their affliction of Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 348). (See also our paragraph *To dash the nations to pieces* below.)

To conquer the Antichrist. “And it shall come to pass in the day that Jehovah shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this parable against **the king of Babylon**, and say, **How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers;** that smote the peoples in wrath with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in anger, with a persecution that none restrained. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid low, no hewer is come up against us. **Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall answer and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and worms cover thee**” (Isa. 14:3-11). “At the time of the redemption of Israel, the Jews whom the king of Babylon sought to destroy will taunt him with a new parable ([Isa. 14] vv. 3-4) commemorating the greater strength of the power of God (v.5). The An-

tichrist ruled the nations of the world (v. 6), but then the whole world will rejoice over his demise (vv. 7-8). As the spirit of the Antichrist enters into the gates of Hell, the previous great ones of the earth already there will suddenly rise up off their thrones (vs. 9) in utter shock that he, too, has entered the abode of Hell (v. 10). Yet it will be so, and all the pomp of his worldwide reign will suffer the demise of Hell (v. 11)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 352). **“They that see thee shall gaze at thee, they shall consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;** that made the world as a wilderness, and overthrew the cities thereof; that let not loose his prisoners to their home? All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast forth away from thy sepulchre like an abominable branch, clothed with the slain, that are thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as **a dead body trodden under foot. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial,** because thou hast destroyed thy land, thou hast slain thy people; the seed of evil-doers shall not be named for ever. Prepare ye slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers, that they rise not up, and possess the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities” (Isa. 14:16–21). “Many will be able to view the body of the Antichrist and will stare in utter disbelief that he died so suddenly and easily, considering he had shaken the kingdoms of the world and the earth trembled in his presence ([Isa. 14] vv. 16-17)... the Antichrist, whose body will be trampled by the fleeing feet of his own armies (v. 19)... his body will never be buried at all (v. 20)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 353) “Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, For the salvation of thine anointed; **Thou woundest the head out of the house of the wicked man,** Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck. Selah” (Hab. 3:13). “And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet **he shall come to his end, and none shall help him**” (Dan. 11:45) “And then **that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan,** with all power and signs and false wonders” (2 Thes. 2:8–9) “And I saw **the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army. And the beast was seized,** and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with

the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh” (Rev. 19:19–21). “Bh. Horsley (*Letter on Isa. 18*) says: ‘I have an unfashionable partiality for the opinions of antiquity. I think there is ground in the prophecies for the notion of the early Fathers, that Palestine is the stage on which Antichrist, in the height of his impiety, will perish’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:657). “God is going to ultimately and violently overthrow this satanic masterpiece of delusion and imitation” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 307). “For the second time, the Antichrist will die” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 352). “The next portion of [Second Thessalonians] verse eight states that by Messiah’s simple declaration—just one word—the Antichrist will fall dead at His feet: Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth” (*ibid.*, p. 691). We’ll cover Antichrist’s resurrection and casting into the lake of fire in the section *Events in Preparation For the Millennial Kingdom* in our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.

To conquer Antichrist’s army. “For I have sworn by myself, saith Jehovah, that **Bozrah shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.** I have heard tidings from Jehovah, and an ambassador is sent among **the nations**, saying, **Gather yourselves together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle**” (Jer. 49:13–14). “Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he hath taken **against Edom**; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of **Teman**: Surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them. The earth trembleth at the noise of their fall; there is a cry, the noise whereof is heard **in the Red Sea**. Behold, **he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread out his wings against Bozrah**: and the heart of the mighty men of Edom at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs” (Jer. 49:20–22). “In the context (see [Jer. 49] vv. 13-14), this passage is dealing with the Campaign of Armageddon. The massive blood-letting that begins at Bozrah begins moving south down the Arabah until it empties in the Red Sea at the present-day cities of Eliat and Akaba. The distance from there to Jerusalem is about two hundred miles. The level of blood is to be about four feet high. Exactly how this will be fulfilled remains to be seen. It may not be totally human blood, but also things turned into blood by divine judgment” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 354). “And **this shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.** And it shall

come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as that plague” (Zech. 14:12–15). “Zechariah 14:12–15:... The nations that have gathered against the Jews (3:9-11) will now find themselves being trodden by the King of the Jews” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 353). “And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of **the wrath of God**. And **the winepress are trodden without the city**, and **there came out blood from the winepress**, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as **a thousand and six hundred furlongs**” (Rev. 14:19–20). “The blood stretches for 1,600 furlongs, which is approximately two hundred miles. The two hundred miles may refer to the entire area from the Valley of Armageddon to Bozrah, which is about two hundred miles. Another possible explanation is that it refers to the round trip distance between Jerusalem and Bozrah. The fighting will begin at Jerusalem and move to Bozrah (100 miles), and with the Second Coming, will return back from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (another 100 miles). But the best explanation is based on Jeremiah 49:20-22 [See above in this paragraph—*ed.*]” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 354)

To dash the nations to pieces. “Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? **The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed**, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us. **He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision**. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure: **Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion**. I will tell of the decree: **Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel**” (Ps. 2:1-9). “The Mighty One, God, Jehovah, hath spoken, And called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. **Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth. Our God cometh, and doth not keep silence: A fire devoureth before him,**

And it is very tempestuous round about him. He calleth to the heavens above, And to the earth, that he may judge his people: Gather my saints together unto me, Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice” (Ps. 50:1-5). “A Psalm of David. **Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.** Thy people offer themselves willingly In the day of thy power, in holy array: Out of the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. **The Lord at thy right hand Will strike through kings in the day of his wrath.** He will judge among the nations, **He will fill the places with dead bodies; He will strike through the head in many countries.** He will drink of the brook in the way: Therefore will he lift up the head” (Ps. 110:0-7). “**And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse,** and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and **he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked**” (Isa. 11:1-4). “**For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted**” (Isa. 60:12). “**Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?** this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? **I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment.** For **the day of vengeance was in my heart,** and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And **I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth**” (Isa. 63:1-6). “For, behold, **Jehovah will come with fire, and his chariots shall be like the whirlwind; to render his anger with fierceness, and**

his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will Jehovah execute judgment, and by his sword, upon all flesh; and the slain of Jehovah shall be many” (Isa. 66:15-16). “And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. 2:44-45). “Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel” (Joel 3:9-16). “Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land” (Joel 3:19). “And now many nations are assembled against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah, neither understand they his counsel; for he hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples: and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth” (Mic. 4:11-13). “And I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations which hearkened not” (Mic. 5:15). “A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, set to Shigionoth. O Jehovah, I have heard

the report of thee, and am afraid: **O Jehovah, revive thy work** in the midst of the years; In the midst of the years make it known; **In wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman,** And the Holy One **from mount Paran.** Selah. **His glory covered the heavens,** And the earth was full of his praise. And **his brightness was as the light; He had rays coming forth from his hand;** And there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, And **fiery bolts went forth at his feet.** He stood, and measured the earth; **He beheld, and drove asunder the nations;** And the eternal mountains were scattered; The everlasting hills did bow; His goings were as of old. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. Was Jehovah displeased with the rivers? Was thine anger against the rivers, Or thy wrath against the sea, That thou didst ride upon thy horses, Upon thy chariots of salvation? Thy bow was made quite bare; The oaths to the tribes were a sure word. Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and were afraid; The tempest of waters passed by; The deep uttered its voice, And lifted up its hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation, At the light of thine arrows as they went, At the shining of thy glittering spear. **Thou didst march though the land in indignation; Thou didst thresh the nations in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,** For the salvation of thine anointed; Thou woundest the head out of the house of **the wicked man,** Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck. Selah. Thou didst pierce with his own staves the head of **his warriors:** They came as a whirlwind to scatter me; Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly. **Thou didst tread the sea with thy horses, The heap of mighty waters.** I heard, and my body trembled, My lips quivered at the voice; Rottenness entereth into my bones, and I tremble in my place; Because I must wait quietly for the day of trouble, For the coming up of the people that invadeth us. For though the fig-tree shall not flourish, Neither shall fruit be in the vines; The labor of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall yield no food; The flock shall be cut off from the fold, And there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength; And he maketh my feet like hinds' feet, And will make me to walk upon my high places" (Hab. 3:1-19). "In answer to the Remnant's request, God is viewed as coming from Edom with all His shining glory ([Hab. 3] vv. 3-4)... Nature will also be greatly affected by the Second Coming (vv. 8-10), as will the terrestrial heavenly sphere (v. 11)" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 349). "**But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my**

presence” (Luke 19:27). “See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, **‘YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN.’** And this expression, ‘Yet once more,’ denotes **the removing of those things which can be shaken**, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since **we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken**, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our **God is a consuming fire**” (Heb. 12:25–29). “Paul most delicately (to avoid exciting unduly the hostility of the Roman Empire, under which the believers then lived) and yet effectively declares the result of this shaking, just as Daniel and all the prophets portray it, viz., ‘the removing of those things that are (marg. may be) shaken’ (i.e. those Kingdoms, ‘as of things that are made’ (i.e. temporarily allowed, or created), ‘that those things which cannot be shaken may remain’ (i.e. the covenanted and oath-bound promises respecting the Kingdom now to be realized in the restored Theocratic arrangement under David’s Son), ‘wherefore, we receiving a Kingdom’ (the same that is thus covenanted and which saints inherit), ‘which cannot be moved’ (i.e. will never be thus shaken and destroyed like the others), ‘let us,’ etc. It is hard to say which excites our greatest surprise and admiration, the remarkable nicety of Paul’s language, thus avoiding the prejudice (cruel and persecuting) of Gentile rulers, without in the least sacrificing truth or the exceeding harmony, even in the minutest particulars, between him and men who spoke many centuries before him” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:497). “For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations;** and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Hag. 2:5–7). “...what heavens and earth are shaken and removed (viz., the Gentile Kingdoms and their upholders)” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 499) “Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. And **he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father;** and I will give him the morning star” (Rev. 2:25-28). “And the ten horns which you saw are **ten kings**, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose and

they give their power and authority to the beast. **These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them**, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful” (Rev. 17:12-14). “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, **a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war**. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And **He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood**; and His name is called **The Word of God**. And **the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses**. And from His mouth comes **a sharp sword**, so that **with it He may smite the nations**; and **He will rule them with a rod of iron**; and **He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty**. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, **‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS’**” (Rev. 19:11-16). “His garments are stained with blood, just as in Isaiah 63:1-6” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 345) “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying **to all the birds** which fly in midheaven, **‘Come, assemble for the great supper of God**; in order that you may **eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men**, both free men and slaves, and small and great” (Rev. 19:17-18). “And I saw **the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army**. And **the beast** was seized, and with him **the false prophet** who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; **these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire** which burns with brimstone. And **the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh**” (Rev. 19:19-21). “...the predicted overthrow and destruction of states and kingdoms at the end of this dispensation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:652) “Dr. Fausset... *Com.* (Dan. 7:44) he remarks: “There must be a “regeneration” of the world, as of the individual, a death previous to a resurrection, a destruction of the world-kingdoms before they arise anew as the kingdoms of Christ” (*ibid.*, 2:478) “...no nation... will be willing to give up its own government and submit to the incoming Theocracy under the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 743). “Infidels of every age, with a show of piety and mercy somewhat remarkable, and a love for humanity truly astonishing,

have denounced the cruelty, enormity of vengeance, etc., of Moses' commands, of some of the Psalms, and of this portrayal of the future, so that (as Bolingbroke) they declare the man 'as worse even than an Atheist, who could impute it to the Supreme Being.'... Now all such objections and apologies are conjectured to be in place in order to show, on the one hand, that the God represented in the Old Test. is not the God of the New Test., and, on the other hand, to reconcile the God of the Old Test. to the supposed softening portraiture of the God of the New Test. Both are mistaken, the same God of vengeance exists in the New Test. that existed under the Old, and while mercy and forbearance is now shown, we are abundantly cautioned that the day of vengeance and wrath will again, when iniquity is full, come" (*ibid.*, p. 771). "...the Song of Moses is only realized by supernatural intervention and vengeance... the ease with which Omnipotence smites" (*ibid.*, p. 772) "...the Divine Plan, will especially be unwelcome to the kings of the earth and to nearly all who are in power, ecclesiastical or civil. This, too, will evidently be one cause of that deep hatred against Christ, and result in the widespread confederation and gathering of the nations against Him. The kings and mighty men of the earth (Rev. 19:19, etc.) will be unwilling to yield up (Ps. 2:2, 3) their power and submit to the rule that must be imposed for the good of man" (*ibid.*, p. 775). **"The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us"** (Ps. 2:2-3). "God does not delight in employing violence, but force, terrible and destructive, must be used... It has been observed that the Bible presents the history of great nations that figure so prominently in secular history, only in so far as they stand related to the development of the Theocratic idea in its preparatory stages and final realization... The omission must be found in the Theocratic idea, viz., that God regards only one form of government, and the people who are to be incorporated with it, as deserving of His particular continued and detailed notice" (*ibid.*, p. 776). "...unbelief, owing to the rejoicing over vengeance and the overthrow of enemies, regards as inconsistent with piety... vengeance (now also forbidden to the saints as something belonging only to God, and to be exerted under His authority and direction)... 'the wrath of the Lamb;' thus showing how the same Saviour, who loved us even to a shameful and cruel death, will ultimately at His coming manifest His anger against those who willfully and malignantly reject Him. If we consider what God intends to perform, viz., to set up the fallen Davidic Kingdom in the glorious manner covenanted and predicted, and then what opposition God's Purpose will meet with at the time when it

is to be accomplished, we have the key to the proper understanding of a host of passages” (*ibid.*, 3:391) “It cannot be denied that the charge given by God was to utterly root out and exterminate the nations of Canaan, and the reason actuating the King of the Theocracy is plainly given, in that the retention of those nations and kingdoms with their wickedness was in direct conflict with His own government, and would necessarily result in leading His own subjects astray and in open rebellion... Indeed, the history of the nation proves that the violation of this very feature weakened, and ultimately proved disastrous to, the Theocratic ordering... This gives us the key to those terrible predictions relating to the future, in which it is positively asserted that the kings and their armies shall be overthrown, and the kingdoms of the earth shall be utterly broken, etc... in the establishment of such a Kingdom it must necessarily lead to this result, because its nature forbids its allowing the existence of governments that would, if permitted to survive, be a constant invitation to His subjects to withdraw from their allegiance, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 598) “A Theocracy, in the very nature of the case, must thus mete out, in defence of its fundamental idea, these temporal punishments, and it will do it again until the world is brought into complete subjection” (*ibid.*). “He clearly declares elsewhere that force will be used when He comes to establish His Kingdom on earth (Luke 19:27). But the force then will be that of divine omnipotence, not that of sinful men” (McClain, *GK*, p. 287). “As the Messianic King our Lord would need none of the conventional weapons of this cosmos in order to rule the nations with a rod of iron. He needs only to speak, and the thing will be done” (*ibid.*, p. 347). “In that remarkable vision of the coming of the King from heaven to establish His Kingdom on the earth, John says that ‘the armies which are in heaven followed him’ (Rev. 19:11-14, ASV). Strange armies they are, bearing no weapons and striking no blows. For it is the ‘sharp sword’ of the King Himself which strikes the enemy and wins the victory— ‘which sword proceeded out of his mouth’ (19:21)” (*ibid.*, p. 382). “One remarkable feature of the final conflict is that the heavenly ‘armies’ of our Lord bear no weapons and strike no blows. In all that vast assembly, only its regal Leader bears a sword. His vesture alone, not theirs, is stained with blood. Thus, we are told, the opposing armies ‘were slain by the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth’ (Rev. 19:21)” (*ibid.*, p. 480). “If it is argued that such a holocaust of physical destruction as that pictured in Revelation 19 is wholly out of character for ‘the meek and lowly Jesus,’ the answer is that this same Jesus is none other than the Incarnation of that God whose destroying hand was made bare again and again in Old Testament history” (*ibid.*, p. 481). “When He returns He will smite the

nations and ‘rule them with an iron scepter’ and ‘dash them to pieces like pottery’ (Ps. 2:9)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 249). “...the end of the Tribulation, when all earthly kingdoms crumble (Rev. 11:15)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:650).

To bind Satan. (See our discussion of the binding of Satan in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom.*)

To crush iniquity. “...as Dr. Morehead (art. 4, *Chris. Instructor*, March 13th, 1879) pertinently observes: ‘...the Advent itself is designed to crush the culmination of iniquity’” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:215).

To regather Israel to her land. “that then **Jehovah** thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and **will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee**” (Deut. 30:3). “But immediately after the tribulation of those days **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL** from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other**” (Matt. 24:29–31). (See our discussion of the regathering of Israel to the land in belief in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom.*)

To judge Israel. (See our discussion of Israel’s judgment in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom.*)

To judge the nations. (See our discussion of the Gentile nations’ judgment in the section *Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom* of our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom.*)

To purge all unrepentant sinners from the world. “A Psalm of David. Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: **Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.** Thy people offer themselves willingly In the day of thy power, in holy array: Out of the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. **The Lord at thy right hand Will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill the places with dead bodies; He will strike through the head in many coun-**

tries. He will drink of the brook in the way: Therefore will he lift up the head” (Ps. 110:0-7). “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but **if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.** How is the faithful city become a harlot! she that was full of justice! righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth bribes, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, **I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies; and I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy tin;** and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called The city of righteousness, a faithful town. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her converts with righteousness. But **the destruction of transgressors and sinners shall be together, and they that forsake Jehovah shall be consumed.** For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. And the strong shall be as tow, and his work as a spark; and **they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them**” (Isa. 1:19-31). “Behold, **Jehovah maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste,** and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. **The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste;** for Jehovah hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the lofty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore **the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.** The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying in the

streets because of the wine; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. For **thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done**” (Isa. 24:1-13). “Isaiah 24:1-13... The decimation of populations is beyond comprehension: ‘few men left’ (vs. 6); the situation is compared with the few olives and grapes left after the harvest (vs. 13)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 182). “But **ye that forsake Jehovah**, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; **I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but ye did that which was evil in mine eyes, and chose that wherein I delighted not.** Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be put to shame; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall wail for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; and **the Lord Jehovah will slay thee;** and he will call his servants by another name: so that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes” (Isa. 65:11-16). “For, behold, Jehovah will come with fire, and his chariots shall be like the whirlwind; to render his anger with fierceness, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For **by fire will Jehovah execute judgment, and by his sword, upon all flesh; and the slain of Jehovah shall be many.** They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves to go unto the gardens, behind one in the midst, eating swine’s flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, they shall come to an end together, saith Jehovah. For I know their works and their thoughts: the time cometh, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see my glory” (Isa. 66:15-18). “And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink ye, and be drunken, and spew, and **fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.** And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thy hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Ye shall surely drink. For, lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name; and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished; for **I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Jehovah of hosts.** Therefore prophesy thou against them all these

words, and say unto them, Jehovah will roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he will mightily roar against his fold; he will give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, **against all the inhabitants of the earth.** A noise shall come even **to the end of the earth;** for **Jehovah hath a controversy with the nations; he will enter into judgment with all flesh: as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword, saith Jehovah.** Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. And **the slain of Jehovah shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the face of the ground**” (Jer. 25:27-33). “In the 25th chapter of Jeremiah... The devastating effects are pictured in verse 33: even the proper burial of the dead will finally become a task beyond the power of the living. As all this is related to man’s failure to recognize and obey the true God, who therefore ‘hath a controversy with the nations’ (vs. 31)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 182). “Behold, **the tempest of Jehovah, even his wrath, is gone forth, a sweeping tempest: it shall burst upon the head of the wicked. The fierce anger of Jehovah shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall understand it**” (Jer. 30:23-24). “Fear not thou, O **Jacob** my servant, saith Jehovah; for I am with thee: for **I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee;** but I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished” (Jer. 46:28). “**But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord Jehovah**” (Ezek. 11:21). “As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and **I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me;** I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and

ye shall know that I am Jehovah... And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 20:33-44). "Let thy hand be lifted up above thine adversaries, and **let all thine enemies be cut off**. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and will destroy thy chariots: and **I will cut off the cities** of thy land, and will throw down all thy strongholds. And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: and I will cut off thy graven images and thy pillars out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thy hands; and I will pluck up thine Asherim out of the midst of thee; and **I will destroy thy cities**. And **I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations which hearkened not**" (Mic. 5:9-15). "**I will utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the face of the ground, saith Jehovah**" (Zeph. 1:2-3). "**The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty man crieth there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung**. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for **he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land**" (Zeph. 1:14-18). "**I have cut off nations; their battlements are desolate; I have made their streets waste, so that none passeth by; their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, so that there is no inhabitant**. I said, Only fear thou me; receive correction; so her dwelling shall not be cut off, according to all that I have appointed concerning her: but they rose early and corrupted all their doings. Therefore wait ye for me, saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for **my determination is to gather the nations, that I may**

assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy” (Zeph. 3:6-8). “And it shall come to pass, that **in all the land**, saith Jehovah, **two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein**. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God” (Zech. 13:8-9). “But who can abide **the day of his coming?** and who shall stand **when he appeareth?** for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and **I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts**. For *I*, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not **consumed**” (Mal. 3:2-6). “Then they that feared Jehovah spake one with another; and Jehovah hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared Jehovah, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith Jehovah of hosts, even mine own possession, in the day that I make; and **I will spare** them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then **shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not**” (Mal. 3:16-18). “For, behold, **the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of hosts**, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch” (Mal. 4:1). “He presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, “Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?” And he said to them, “An enemy has done this!” And the slaves said to him, “Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?” But he said, “No; lest while you are gathering up

the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and **in the time of the harvest** I will say to the reapers, ‘First **gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up**; but gather the wheat into my barn’” (Matt. 13:24-31). “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good fish into containers, but **the bad they threw away**. So it will be **at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire**; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 13:47-50). “And **as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man**. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and **took them all away**; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Then shall two man be in the field; one is **taken**, and one is left” (Matt. 24:37-40) “The illustrated parallel indicates that those ‘taken’ were not taken in the Rapture, but rather, like those ‘taken’ in the Flood, at the end of the Tribulation, taken in judgment. This is further supported by the parallel passage, where those ‘taken’ were brought to a place of judgment. The disciples asked where they would go, and Jesus replied, ‘Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather’ (Luke 17:37). Those ‘left’ to go into the Millennium after the judgment of the Tribulation were the ones saved” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:625). “Then there shall be two men in the field; **one will be taken**, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; **one will be taken**, and one will be left” (Matt. 24:40-41). “Two men will be in the field; one will be taken [away in judgment] and the other left [to go into the kingdom]. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken [away in judgment] and the other left [to go into Messiah’s kingdom]’ (24:40-41)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 240). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him**, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And **all the nations will be gathered before Him**; and **He will separate them from one another**, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you

came to Me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?” And the King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.” Then **He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;** for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.” Then they themselves also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?” Then He will answer them, saying, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.” And **these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life”** (Matt. 25:31-46). “The suggestion that some ‘goats’ (unsaved) will enter the Millennium is without any textual support” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:620). “**And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man:** they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and **destroyed them all.** It was **the same as happened in the days of Lot:** they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and **destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.** On that day, let not the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house go down to take them away; and likewise let not the one who is in the field turn back. Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever seeks to keep his life shall lose it, and whoever loses his life shall preserve it. I tell you, on that night there will be two men in one bed; **one will be taken,** and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; **one will be taken,** and the other will be left. [Two men will be in the field; **one will be taken** and the other will be left.”] And answering they said to Him, ‘**Where, Lord?**’ And He said to them, ‘**Where the body is, there also will the vultures be gathered”** (Luke 17:26–37). “For after all **it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,** and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well **when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed**

from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed — for our testimony to you was believed” (2 Thes. 1:6-10). “And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, **‘Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.’** And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.’ And **the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden outside the city,** and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles” (Rev. 14:14-20). “Scripture makes it very clear that all sinners will be cut off before the institution of the Kingdom (Isa. 1:19-31; 65:11-16; 66:15-18; Jer. 25:27-33; 30:23-24; Ezek. 11:21; 20:33-44; Mic. 5:9-15; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2-6; 3:18; 4:3). In the record of the judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:35) it is revealed that only the saved enter the kingdom. In the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:30-31) and in the parable of the good and bad fish (Matt. 13:49-50) it is shown that only the saved go into the kingdom” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 504). “...no unsaved person would enter the promised kingdom” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 238). “His return will terminate the opportunity for people to prepare themselves to enter the millennial kingdom, and only the prepared will be accepted. No unsaved (unprepared) person will be admitted into Christ’s millennial kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 258).

To save the world. “And **unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short**” (Matt. 24:22). “And **unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect whom He chose, He shortened the days**” (Mark

13:20). “so **Christ** also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him**” (Heb. 9:28). “King Jesus comes the second time unto Salvation (Heb. 9:28)” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:396) “Following His rejection by Israel all New Testament Scripture agrees in setting the goal, not in the present world order, but in the future at His second coming” (McClain, *GK*, p. 335). (See also our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Kingdom is to save mankind in the section *A Kingdom is Needed To Accomplish God’s Plan* of our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*.)

To end the times of the Gentiles. “and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and **Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). “Gentile domination ceases... it simply ceases because the new order or dominion introduced is immensely its superior in securing the happiness and glory of the Gentile nations” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:775). “‘Times of the Gentiles’... The visible Sovereignty of this world only becomes the Sovereignty of our Lord at the expiration of a pre-determined period, and for that we must patiently wait” (*ibid.*, 3:12). “...‘the times of the Gentiles’ ends upon Christ’s return to the earth” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 284). “The second coming will also mark the end of the Times of the Gentiles which will permit the dominant role that Israel will have in the Messianic Kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 541). (See also our discussion of the fact that the times of the Gentiles are terminated by Christ’s Second Advent in the section *The Times of the Gentiles* of our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*.)

To rule the world. “**God** be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us; Selah That thy way may be known **upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations.** Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee. Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For **thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, And govern the nations upon earth.** Selah Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee. The earth hath yielded its increase: God, even our own God, will bless us. God will bless us; And **all the ends of the earth shall fear him**” (Ps. 67:1-7). “Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song; For he hath done marvellous things: His right hand, and his holy arm, hath wrought salvation for him. Jehovah hath made known his salvation: His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of **the nations.** He hath remembered his lovingkindness and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel: **All the ends of the earth** have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, **all the earth:** Break forth and sing for joy,

yea, sing praises. Sing praises unto Jehovah with the harp; With the harp and the voice of melody. With trumpets and sound of cornet Make a joyful noise before **the King, Jehovah**. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; **The world, and they that dwell therein**; Let the floods clap their hands; Let the hills sing for joy together Before **Jehovah**; For **he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with equity**" (Ps. 98:1-9). "A Psalm of David. Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool. **Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies**. Thy people offer themselves willingly In the day of thy power, in holy array: Out of the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand Will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. **He will judge among the nations**, He will fill the places with dead bodies; He will strike through the head in many countries. He will drink of the brook in the way: Therefore will he lift up the head" (Ps. 110:0-7). "For unto us a child is born, unto us **a son** is given; and **the government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this**" (Isa. 9:6-7). "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for **Jehovah of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem**; and before his elders shall be glory" (Isa. 24:23). "And **in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever**" (Dan. 2:44). "I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, **there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed**" (Dan. 7:13-14). "For **He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet**" (1 Cor. 15:25). "John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from **Him** who is and who was and

who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; and from **Jesus Christ**, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and **the ruler of the kings of the earth**. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood” (Rev. 1:4-5) “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever’**” (Rev. 11:15). “And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne” (Rev. 12:5). “And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called **Faithful and True**; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and **upon His head are many diadems**; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called **The Word of God**. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite **the nations**; and **He will rule them with a rod of iron**; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, **‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS’**” (Rev. 19:11-16). “...diadem crowns, indicating His natural royalty” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 345). “The time is surely coming when all governments will be overthrown, making place for the universal Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:773). “A Theocracy embracing a pure Infallibility, administered through righteous and glorified agents, is to possess the rule over the earth. Fallible Imperialism, with its weakness and vices, will be crushed under its force; Constitutional Monarchy, with its utter inability to meet the clashing interests of classes and Republicanism which suffers from the suffrage of self-interest and ignorance being made the basis of its ordering, all forms of government, unable to remove the evils under which their subjects are groaning, must be subverted and give place to this one, which in itself honors God and blesses humanity with a perfect government that fully performs, yea immensely more, what others promise. This is clearly taught. All that oppose this coming Kingdom and its august Ruler shall be destroyed. Kings and nobles, high and low, rich and poor, who resist, shall fall beneath its invincible power—a power which will settle all difficulties between nation and nation, aristocracy and commoner, capital and labor, man and man” (*ibid.*, p. 780). “The importance of this grand event cannot be overemphasized. For the arrival of the divine King from heaven to take over the kingdoms of the world will

mark the most crucial turning point in human history since Calvary. From this point onward nothing will ever be the same again. The deep darkness of man's 'day' will now pass into the glorious light of God's 'Day'" (McClain, *GK*, p. 192). "Best of all, the change from darkness into light will be irreversible, leaving no room for any point of return back to the dismal failures of man's attempts to govern himself" (*ibid.*). "After judging the nations as righteous Judge, He is to rule as King, with a rod of iron. These nations will gather and attempt to destroy the Jews in order to abolish God's rule over them (Ps. 2:1-6). However, they will partake of the wrath of God at the Second Coming and He will rule over them. Hence, Jesus will indeed be the *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 346). (See also our detailed discussion of the government of the Millennial Kingdom in the section *Description of the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

To restore the Theocratic Kingdom. "**In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old**" (Amos 9:11) "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**" (Luke 1:32-33). "Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and **that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time**" (Acts 3:19-21). "**"AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT"**" (Acts 15:16) "If, as a punishment, and for purposes of mercy, God can so minutely foretell and historically overrule the overthrow of the Theocracy and Theocratic people, He can as readily predict and bring to pass the restoration of the same and the overthrow of the Gentile powers" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:773). "When Jesus so plainly predicts its postponement to the Sec. Advent, it is pure assumption in men to profess to found a Theocratic Kingdom, in this or that form, before that Advent" (*ibid.*, 3:546). "...restore His theocratic kingdom rule on the earth" (Showers, *M*, p. 112) (See also our discussion of the promise of eventual restoration of the Theocracy in our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom* and our discussion of the restoration of Israel in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

To inaugurate the Millennial Kingdom. "...the second advent itself. The amillenarian holds that it is the event beginning the eternal state while the premillenarian holds it begins the millennial kingdom on earth" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 109). (See our detailed discussion of the inauguration of the Kingdom in our next chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

To achieve world peace. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and **the government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**" (Isa. 9:6). "All the earnest efforts of sincere men to bring in a permanent condition of world peace without the presence of the 'Prince of peace' will come to nothing. The world must learn its lesson: 'Without me ye can do nothing' (John 15:5); a lesson that even the people of God are sometimes in danger of forgetting, when dealing with mundane problems" (McClain, *GK*, p. 183). (See our discussion of the fact that peace will be one of the characteristics of life in the Millennial Kingdom in the section *Description of the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

To complete the work that Christ initiated at His First Coming. "The next day he saw **Jesus** coming to him, and said, 'Behold, **the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**'" (John 1:29)! "**who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1:4) "**so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him**" (Heb. 9:28). "The prophets give place to a very small space in describing the humiliation, sufferings, and death of the Messiah, when compared with the larger one appropriated in portraying the realization of salvation under His Theocratic rule. The former, indispensable, was a sad, mournful subject, the latter a triumphant one; the former, exceedingly precious, was a means to secure a glorious end, the latter a description of the splendid results attained by it. We would not for worlds detract from the glory of the cross, but while surveying it with love and reverence, it would be weakness and lack of wisdom if we did not look with hope and joy at the sublime end which it is intended to subserve. We are too apt by confining ourselves to the sacrifice on the cross, to limit the range of Scripture passages. The intent and scope that the Spirit had in view, is marred by our not constantly keeping in view the entire Divine Plan which the blessed sacrifice so vitally subserves. Thus e.g. John 1:29; Gal. 1:4, etc. receive deeper significancy when we contemplate redemption perfected, and then consider by whom it is perfected, and by what a costly and

necessary sacrifice its ultimate completion and realization are secured. The full meaning of Jesus being the propitiation of our sins and of the world, will be only seen and appreciated when covenants and prophecy are amply fulfilled” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:453).

To fulfill the covenants and prophecies. **“Thus saith Jehovah: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers”** (Jer. 33:20–21). **“As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto them marvellous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; like crawling things of the earth they shall come trembling out of their close places; they shall come with fear unto Jehovah our God, and shall be afraid because of thee. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in lovingkindness. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the lovingkindness to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old”** (Mic. 7:15-20). **“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished”** (Matt. 5:17-18). **“He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end”** (Luke 1:32-33). **“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He [Jesus] who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this”** (Rev. 3:7) **“and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals”** (Rev. 5:5). **“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star”** (Rev. 22:16). **“...our subject... we only have to do with the course of events down to the re-establishment of the Davidic Kingdom, and to the fulfillment of the covenants and the promises**

based upon them... God knows the future and makes no statements concerning it that shall not come to pass” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:711). “An essential part of the work of Christ, is to fulfill the covenants and the prophets. This He has done to a certain extent, and is now performing in the Church and world, but the most remarkable and desirable portion is still unfulfilled. The sealing of the covenant with His own precious blood, etc., is exceedingly precious, but the fulfillment of the covenant in actual realization is described as blessed beyond description. Indeed, if we but stop to reflect, that the prophets scarcely dwell upon the intermediate, intercalary state but hasten on to describe, under every variety of expressive language, the astounding work that the Lord shall perform in the day when the Covenanted Kingdom and its attendant blessings shall be experienced, then we have evidence, afforded by the Spirit, how much of the utmost value is still related to the future” (*ibid.*, 3:453). “Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne’ (Jer. 33:20-21)... ‘In that day,’ saith the LORD, ‘will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen... and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old’ (Amos 9:11)... The rule of Messiah, while something wholly new and without parallel in all human history, will nevertheless display and maintain an unbroken historic connection with a kingdom which once existed ‘in the days of old.’ This is a Biblical fact beyond dispute which must be taken into account as a guiding principle in all attempts to understand the Kingdom set forth in Old Testament prophecy” (McClain, *GK*, p. 148). (See also our chapters *Covenants of the Kingdom* and *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*, and our discussion of the fulfillment of Israel’s covenants in the section *Description of the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

And, to fulfill God’s purposes for the earth and for man. “Apart from the reign of Christ in a Davidic kingdom here on earth, God’s promises and God’s covenants would have failed. And apart from this rule, God’s purpose for man would never be brought to conclusion. God’s purpose for the earth would be unrealized and the problem generated by Satan’s rebellion would never be resolved. Thus the physical, literal reign of Christ on the earth is a *theological and biblical necessity*—unless Satan is victorious over God” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 316). (See our discussions of the facts that the purposes of the Kingdom include the restoration of creation, making the world worth having been created and accomplishing God’s original purpose in creating

man in the section *A Kingdom is Needed To Accomplish God's Plan* of our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*.)

Characteristics of the Second Coming

Because the Second Coming is an entirely supernatural event, the *characteristics* of the Second Coming are those of an event far beyond the scope and capabilities of mortal man.

Specifically, the Second Coming of the King is:

Designed by God. "It is utterly beyond the capacity of 'ignorant and unlearned' men to introduce and develop so perfect and majestic an adaptation to an end which purposes the most glorious and desirable redemption" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:529).

Possible. "And looking upon them Jesus said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but **with God all things are possible**'" (Matt. 19:26). While admittedly far beyond the capabilities of natural man, Jesus' return in glory is no more impossible than His creation of the world, or the virgin birth, or the transfiguration, or His resurrection. If the latter events are within the realm of possibility for an omniscient, omniscient and omnipotent God, then reasonably so is the former.

Necessary. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, **the things which must shortly take place**; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John" (Rev. 1:1) "The writer may be allowed to add: the great defect of systems of Theology for centuries has been the following: they have laid too much stress on provisional redemption and not on redemption itself as realized at the Sec. Advent in 'the day of Christ.' Thus the mysterious sacrifice, exceedingly precious by which redemption is procured and assured is deemed the only great and central point in Theology, while the completion of redemption is merely secondary to that of the means. This blemish in many works which reflects upon the Christship of Jesus ought to be removed. A little reflection teaches this: if that sacrifice alone is sufficient to secure our salvation, how comes it that it does not save from temporal death, from temporal evil, corruption, etc., and that it becomes absolutely necessary for Jesus the Christ to come again to salvation in behalf of those who honor His sacrifice. Something then additional to that sacrifice is needed, viz., the personal interference of the Saviour in our behalf. The sacrifice made by Him enables Him to do this, constituting Him, in view of its acceptance by the Father, a perfect Redeemer, and enabling Him in accord with right, because of its acceptance by us, to exert His power and Christship in our interests. If this be so that something must be superadded, when the time arrives, to the sacri-

fice to secure what faith and hope in the sacrifice sees and desires, why refuse to recognize distinctly, as the Bible does, that the Redeemer to perfect His own work must come again ‘the second time unto salvation’? The prevailing view makes that Second Coming a minor point, a comparative insignificant matter (alas! some even who profess to be ministers of ‘the Christ’ proclaim it ‘an exploded doctrine’), exalts the means, the preparatory work above ‘the Christship’ of the future, and painfully evidences its lack of faith in salvation obtained under Theocratic auspices” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:529).

Certain. “How then shall **the Scriptures be fulfilled**, that it **must happen** this way” (Matt. 26:54)? “If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and **the Scripture cannot be broken**” (John 10:35) “For yet **in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay**” (Heb. 10:37). “I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord God, ‘who is and who was and **who is to come, the Almighty**” (Rev. 1:8). “And he said to me, **These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place. And behold, I am coming quickly.** Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:6-7). “He who testifies to these things says, **Yes, I am coming quickly.** Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen” (Rev. 22:20-21). “The results of the First Advent, the accurate fulfillment down to the present day, the personal appropriation of the truths relating to it, impress us with a deep and abiding sense of the reality of that foreknowledge of the future which promises so much connected with a Second coming of the same Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:249).

Desired. “What if **God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known**, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction” (Rom. 9:22)? “in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have **loved His appearing**” (2 Tim. 4:8). “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat” (2 Pet. 3:10-12)! “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I

am coming quickly.’ **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus**” (Rev. 22:20). “His Second Coming... is the most desirable event that can occur. It is an event desirable to Christ (only delayed through motives of mercy and grace), because then He obtains His inheritance, and His glory is revealed” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:314) “Every one who truly loves the Saviour will (2 Tim. 4:8) ‘love His appearing’” (*ibid.*, p. 315) “Barnes says (*Com.* 1 Thess. 1; Rom. 9)... ‘It should be always the characteristic of our piety, as it was that of John, to say, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”’ Commenting on 2 Tim. 4:8, he says: ‘To believe in the Sec. Advent of the Lord Jesus to judge the world, and to desire His return, became a kind of a criterion by which Christians were known. No others but true Christians were supposed to believe in that, and no others truly desired it. It is so now. It is one of the characteristics of a true Christian that he sincerely desires the return of his Saviour, and would welcome His appearing in the clouds of heaven.’ On 2 Pet. 3:13 he remarks (explaining the ‘halting unto’ to denote ‘to await with desire’): ‘The true Christian does not dread the Coming of that day. He looks forward to it as the period of His redemption, and would welcome, at any time, the return of his Lord and Saviour. While he is willing to wait as long as it shall please God for the Advent of His Redeemer, yet to Him the brightest prospect in the future is that hour when He shall come to take him to Himself’” (*ibid.*). “So Bullinger said: ‘All the godly, with sighs unspeakable, wish for the Coming of the Judge in glory;’ so Luther, Melancthon, Tyndale, Latimer, Bradford, Bunyan, Piscator, Ridley and a host of others” (*ibid.*, p. 317). “It is delightful to think of the time when in glorified social converse we shall hear from the quickened lips of an Irenaeus, or Justin, or Luther, or Calvin, or Zwingli, and many others, how they, amid trial and darkness, loved ‘the Appearing’ of Jesus—how this hope sustained them, etc.” (*ibid.*) (See also our discussion of the proper attitude of the Christian toward the Rapture of the church in the section *Attitudes Toward the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Swift. “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather **all nations**, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and **I will execute judgment upon them** there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land, and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. Yea, and what are ye to me, O Tyre, and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? will ye render me a recompense? and if ye recompense me, **swiftly and speedily** will I return your recompense upon your own head” (Joel 3:1-4). “He who testifies to these

things says, ‘Yes, **I am coming quickly.**’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20). “There is a current and popular idea that the coming of the Kingdom of God to earth is a process, long and gradual... Such a notion has no foundation in the writings of the Old Testament prophets... In the case of those Gentile nations which have contemptuously scattered and afflicted the chosen nation of Israel, there will come divine retribution ‘swiftly and speedily’ (Joel 3:1-4)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 174).

Personal. “The allusion to false Christs is indicative of their personal coming; now the speaking of His own Coming in connection with such, without any discrimination as to the manner of coming (i.e. as to personality), shows that a personal Coming is denoted” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:191). “Every dispensation in the historical development of Redemption is preceded by a personal manifestation of God, as the Adamic, Mosaic, the present; and as the Millennial differs from this one also, introducing a new era, and promises in glowing terms a special manifestation, we cannot see why it should form an exception” (*ibid.*, p. 195). “Those to whom Paul wrote were looking for *the personal* Advent of Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 209). “The Jews, impelled by the prophecies, looked for *a personal Coming* of the Messiah to destroy the wicked one” (*ibid.*, p. 210). “The word Parousia is used in the New Test. twenty-four times, Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23, and 16:17; 2 Cor. 7:6, 7, and 10:10; Phil. 1:26, and 2:3 [2:12]; 1 Thess. 2:19, and 3:13, and 4:15, and 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8, 9; James 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16, and 3:4, 12, and 1 John 2:18. In all places where applied to persons it denotes, as all admit, a personal presence or arrival” (*ibid.*, p. 211). Note: Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that in relation to Jesus’ Second Coming, the Greek word *parousia* signifies an *invisible* presence (they believe that Jesus has been *invisibly present* since his taking Kingdom power in the year 1914). However, an examination of the twenty-four occurrences of *parousia* in the New Testament does not support this idea of an *invisible* presence, but rather of a personal (as per George Peters’ comment immediately above) and *visible* one: “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be **the sign of Your coming**, and of the end of the age’” (Matt. 24:3)? “**For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt. 24:27). “**For the coming of the Son of Man** will be just like the days of Noah” (Matt. 24:37). “and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall **the coming of the Son of Man** be” (Matt. 24:39). “But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are **Christ’s at His coming**” (1 Cor. 15:23) “And I rejoice over **the coming**

of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus; because they have supplied what was lacking on your part” (1 Cor. 16:17). “But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by **the coming of Titus**; and not only by **his coming**, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more” (2 Cor. 7:6–7). “For they say, ‘His letters are weighty and strong, but **his [Paul’s] personal presence** is unimpressive, and his speech contemptible” (2 Cor. 10:10). “so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through **my coming to you again**” (Phil. 1:26). “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in **my presence** only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12) “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in **the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming**” (1 Thes. 2:19)? “so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at **the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints**” (1 Thes. 3:13). “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord**, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep” (1 Thes. 4:15). “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Thes. 5:23). “Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him**” (2 Thes. 2:1) “And **then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming**” (2 Thes. 2:8) “that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders**” (2 Thes. 2:9) “**Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord**. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for **the coming of the Lord is at hand**” (James 5:7–8). “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you **the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, but we were **eyewitnesses of His majesty**” (2 Pet. 1:16). “and saying, ‘**Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation**” (2 Pet. 3:4). “**looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat” (2 Pet. 3:12)! “Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that **antichrist is coming**,

even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour" (1 John. 2:18).

Literal. "The simple fact that they are thus spoken of together, without an effort at discrimination; that the Second is far more definitely and minutely described than the First; that they both (the First as preparative) stand related to the Millennium—this should influence us to believe that as one was literal, so the other will be the same" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:184). "When reading Martensen, one wonders how he would have spiritualized the promises relating to the First Advent, had he lived before its realization" (*ibid.*, p. 284). "We affirm (1) that the prophecies relating to the First Advent brought a literal Coming of the Messiah, and not a spiritual one; and (2) that the predictions relating to the Second Advent, being given in the same intended sense (for no discrimination is made), will also bring us a literal, personal Coming of the Messiah. Simple consistency demands such a faith" (*ibid.*, p. 350).

Bodily. "And **in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south**" (Zech. 14:4). "The Spirit, as if purposely to meet the anticipated unbelief, even condescends to tell us, that 'His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mt. of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the East,' Zech. 14:4" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:178). "And if **I go** and prepare a place for you, **I will come again**, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3). "If I go... I will come again"... If His departure was in bodily form, so also must be His return" (McClain, *GK*, p. 374). "And after He had said these things, **He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing**, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.** Then they returned to Jerusalem from **the mount called Olivet**, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away" (Acts 1:9–12). "Dr. Nast's remark (*Art. in West. Ch. Advocate*, Aug. 6th, 1879) is eminently true; 'We must hold fast to this, that the phrase "the Son of man cometh" has the definite signification of a "Coming in person" (Parousia), concerning which Bh. Merrill (an opponent) says, "If Christ does not come in person as the Son of man, He does not come at all." Twenty-nine times the Saviour applies His Davidic

title, “Son of man,” as “coming,” “come,” “came,” to His personal visible appearing on earth, either at the First or Second Advent” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:167). “This should also be a caution to a certain class of believers who, with an evident desire to honor ‘the Christ’ unconsciously and with a Gnostic element of opposition to matter, strip Jesus, the Messiah, of all humanity by a process of spiritualizing, so that when He comes again, it is not as the Son of Man, but as a purely spiritual being stripped of all human relationship. The Messiah that they present is not recognizable by covenant or prediction. While not denying His coming, they do deny the personality—as covenanted and predicted—of the Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 700). “According to Jesus, this coming will be both bodily and visible. Christ’s feet shall touch the Mount of Olives as predicted in Zechariah 14:4, and He will return in the same manner that He ascended into heaven (Acts 1:11)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 254).

Visible. “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, **there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man**, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13–14). “and **the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together**; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 40:5). “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! The voice of thy watchmen! they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for **they shall see eye to eye, when Jehovah returneth to Zion**. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for Jehovah hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. **Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God**” (Isa. 52:7–10). “And **in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east**; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south” (Zech. 14:4). “For I say to you, from now on you shall not **see Me** until you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord”” (Matt. 23:39)! “For **just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt 24:27). “and then **the sign of the Son of Man will appear in**

the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him,** then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:31-32) “**But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven’**” (Matt. 26:63-64). “**And Jesus said, ‘I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven’**” (Mark 14:62). “**For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day**” (Luke 17:24). “**And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**” (Mark 13:26). “**And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**” (Luke 21:27). “**and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven’**” (Acts 1:11). “**The angels did not prophesy that Jesus would return to the same place, but rather in the same manner in which He had left. Jesus left in the clouds of Heaven and, according to Matthew 24:30, He will return in the clouds of Heaven**” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 343). “**that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time — He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords**” (1 Tim. 6:14-15) “**I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom**” (2 Tim. 4:1) “**in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing**” (2 Tim. 4:8). “**Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation with-**

out reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him” (Heb. 9:26-28). “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and **every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.** Even so. Amen” (Rev 1:7). “Still others contend that Christ, in some way unexplained had come or was to come in and through them, either spiritually or by the conference of power, etc.” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:473) “Some declare for a present Kingdom in the church, and also for a future one here on earth at the Sec. Advent, but incorporate with the latter mystical conceptions or spiritualizing deductions (which detract from the early view), as e.g. making the reign of the Messiah invisible, retaining the Son of Man during this period in the third heaven, etc., thus violating the express terms of the covenant and promises” (*ibid.*, p. 524). “He comes not as the invisible God, who may be present unseen and unknown, but as Man, the Son of Man, the Man ordained, and one too, as will be shown hereafter, to be seen and recognized” (*ibid.*, 2:167). “Dr. Gleig (*His Bible*, vol. 2 p. 190) incidentally remarks: ‘There was a tradition current in Judea that the Messiah would come direct from the clouds of heaven.’ Hence, some writers say, the Messiah was named ‘the Son of Clouds.’ Such an expectation was evidently based on the prophecy of Daniel, and this indicates: (1) that Jesus in His address to Caiaphas indorses this view; (2) that He places His Kingdom after that period as they understood it; (3) that Daniel must have been inspired when he passes over this dispensation—the First Advent—and locates the Coming of the Kingdom in the future, at the Sec. Advent” (*ibid.*, p. 187). “This coming dispensation is not dependent on human instrumentality; it is directly inaugurated by Jesus Himself, and in so marked a manner—by the works performed, the results attained, etc.—that no one can fail to see it” (*ibid.*, p. 408). “If the spiritualizers had their way consistently, then the second coming of Christ would have to be a spiritual coming instead of a literal one. Is that not precisely the conclusion and predicament of the liberals” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 49)? “It is well known that liberals interpret the second coming in a spiritualizing manner as an ever-present one” (*ibid.*, p. 53). “Christ has come once literally, and He will again break into the stream of history with no less literality” (McClain, *GK*, p. 137). “In the day of the coming Kingdom, it will not be necessary to write endless volumes on Christian ‘evidences’ and ‘apologetics.’ Debates on the existence of God will become absurd and obsolete, suited only to be classed with arguments over the existence of sunlight. Eschatological systems which define the Kingdom of God wholly in terms of the invisible will need to be revised. For the supernatural evidences of the existence of God, and of His Christ, and of His Kingdom, will be open to all men. “The glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it' (Isa. 40:5). In that day it can be said truly that "The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God' (Isa. 52:7-10)" (*ibid.*, p. 176). "...unlike His First Coming, the Second Coming will not be in secret. When the Messiah returns the second time, all men will see it, for it will be like a flash of lightning surrounding the world" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 634). "...*his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives...*" (Zech. 14:4)... Again, when the literal sense makes good sense, seeking other sense results in nonsense... 'Men of Galilee,' they said, 'why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, *will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven*' (Acts 1:11)... Since they saw Him go visibly, physically, and gloriously, He will return visibly, physically and gloriously" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:468). "The spiritual kingdom is what He established while He was on earth the first time; at this juncture (His return) there is a major and radical transformation from a purely invisible kingdom to a visible one, from the early mystery form of the kingdom to the messianic form, from the spiritual to the political dimension of Christ's reign (cf. 1 Cor. 15:24-27)" (*ibid.*, p. 491). "then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, **when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.** The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, 'All things are put in subjection,' it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him" (1 Cor. 15:24-27). (See also our discussion of Jesus' *visible parousia* in our paragraph *Personal* above.)

Glorious. "There went up a **smoke** out of his nostrils, And **fire** out of his mouth devoured: **Coals** were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down; And thick **darkness** was under his feet. And **he rode upon a cherub, and did fly**; Yea, he soared upon the wings of the wind. He made **darkness** his hiding-place, his pavilion round about him, **Darkness** of waters, thick **clouds** of the skies. **At the brightness before him his thick clouds passed, Hailstones** and **coals of fire.** Jehovah also thundered in the heavens, And the Most High uttered his voice, **Hailstones** and **coals of fire.** And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; Yea, **lightnings** manifold, and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters appeared, And the foundations of the world were laid bare, At thy rebuke, O Jehovah, At the blast of the breath of thy nostrils. He sent from on high, he took me; He drew me out of many waters" (Ps. 18:8-16). "At His Second Coming, He will come with the wrath of God ([Ps. 18] vv. 8-9), rid-

ing upon a cherub (v. 10), which will have horse-like features, according to Revelation 19:11. There will be convulsions throughout nature at the Second Coming (vv. 11-15) as the entire world is illuminated by the brightness of His glorious return” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 350). “and **the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together**; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 40:5). “**For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels**; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds” (Matt. 16:27). “**For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt 24:27). “and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:30). “Throughout the Old Testament, clouds and the *Shechinah* Glory are interrelated. In this New Testament passage, the interrelationship can be seen again” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 343). “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:31-32) “**For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day**” (Luke 17:24). “**And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**” (Mark 13:26). “**And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**” (Luke 21:27). “This Sec. Advent will be the greatest and grandest event that the world has ever yet witnessed... To this Coming the Scriptures especially turns the eye of faith and speaks of it in the most lofty and exultant strain; and we may rest assured that what God thus describes, and to which He directs the hope of prophets, Apostles, and believers, must be inconceivably magnificent. It is an honor to aid in upholding and directing attention to it” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:197). “While thus visibly manifesting Himself, it is also true that this very majesty may be veiled to some extent from mortals, and that the glorified saints are alone capable to behold His *full* glory” (*ibid.*, p. 351). “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels’ (Matt. 16:27). Here we have for the first time in the gospel narrative an explicit reference to the *second* advent” (McClain, *GK*, p. 335). “Darkness will envelope the earth throughout the latter part of the Tribulation, as the sun, moon, and stars will fail to give their normal light (Rev. 8:12). This darkness will suddenly be illuminated by the shining of the brightness of the

glory that belongs to Jesus Christ. This revealed glory will identify the true Messiah” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 254). “Christ foresaw physical darkness as well as moral and spiritual darkness, and indicated that it will be against this darkness that ‘the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky’ (Matt. 24:30)” (*ibid.*). “All through the Old Testament, God revealed His presence among His people by the shining of light” (*ibid.*). “The transfiguration of Christ was a premature disclosure of the glory to be revealed at the second advent of Christ” (*ibid.*). “Every description of the second coming would indicate that it is the most spectacular and glorious event ever to take place on the earth” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 270). “...His [Jesus’] transfiguration (Matt. 17), which prefigured His second coming” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:638).

Supernatural. “What is done in that coming day will be the work of God alone, in which human effort will have no place” (McClain, *GK*, p. 176). “Although tangible to men, no human or natural means have any part in the ushering in of this Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 177).

Forceful. “The ‘rod of iron,’ the ‘treading of the wine-press,’ the ‘wrath of the Lamb,’ etc., which precedes the Millennial era are widely different from Neander’s ‘meekness.’ The prophets are far from predicting the introduction of the Kingdom by such means for they unite in telling us that men will learn righteousness when God’s judgments are in the world. The ‘meekness’ or ‘gentleness’ of the saints finds its culmination in martyrdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:187).

Efficacious. “Our likes or dislikes have nothing to do with it; the question is whether such an Advent, as incorporated in the Plan, is eminently adapted and even necessary to produce the result foretold” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:528).

And, *unexpected by most people.* “**But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be**” (Matt. 24:36-39). “Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps alight. And be like men who are waiting for their master **when he returns from the wedding feast**, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. Whether he comes in the sec-

ond watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. And be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. You too, be ready; for **the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect**” (Luke 12:35–40). “And Peter said, ‘Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?’ And the Lord said, ‘Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if **that slave says in his heart, “My master will be a long time in coming,”** and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; **the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him, and at an hour he does not know,** and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers” (Luke 12:40–46). “**And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all**” (Luke 17:26-27). “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. However, **when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth**” (Luke 18:8)? “Know this first of all, that **in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation**” (2 Pet. 3:3-4). “(‘Behold, **I am coming like a thief.** Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame’)” (Rev. 16:15). “And he said to me, ‘These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants **the things which must shortly take place.** And **behold, I am coming quickly.** Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:6-7). “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, **I am coming quickly.**’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen” (Rev. 22:20-21). “Is there not a danger in all this of saying, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming’” (Chafer, *KHP*, 64%)? (See also our discussion of the attitudes of Christians toward the Rapture of the church in the section *Attitudes Toward the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Timing of the Second Coming

As of this writing, the *timing* of the Second Coming is, in light of our discussion above, *yet future*. “We cannot possibly receive the notion entertained by a small party of Separatists, under the leadership of Barbour and Russell, viz., that Jesus is already present” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:163).

It is to occur:

In the last days. “And it shall come to pass **in the latter days** [**‘last days,’ NASB**], that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it” (Isa. 2:2). “The anger of Jehovah shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: **in the latter days** [**‘last days,’ NASB**] ye shall understand it perfectly” (Jer. 23:20). “and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass **in the latter days** [**‘last days,’ NASB**], that I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes” (Ezek. 38:16). “afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness **in the latter days** [**‘last days,’ NASB**]” (Hos. 3:5). “But **in the latter days** [**‘last days,’ NASB**] it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it” (Mic. 4:1). “But realize this, that **in the last days difficult times will come**” (2 Tim. 3:1). “Know this first of all, that **in the last days mockers will come** with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of **His coming**? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation’” (2 Pet. 3:3–4). “The phrase ‘last days,’ derived from Gen. 49:1; Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1, was applied by the Jews to that closing period of time, when under the auspices of the Messiah a new era or age would be inaugurated, and thence were allied with the coming and reign of David’s Son... most of the references direct our attention to the future, the closing period of the dispensation, for an astounding outbreak of wickedness and an open display of Divine power, to be followed by a glorious age” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:423).

At the end of the age. “But as for you, go your way to the end; then **you [Daniel] will enter into rest and rise again** for your allotted portion **at the end of the age**” (Dan. 12:1, NASB). “and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and **the harvest is the end of the age**; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be **at the end of the age**” (Matt. 13:39–40). “So it will be **at the**

end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous” (Matt. 13:49) “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of **Your coming**, and of **the end of the age**” (Matt. 24:3)? “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always, even to the end of the age**” (Matt. 28:20). “...the proper meaning of ‘aion’ is (as Barnes, Heb. 1:2), ‘age, duration,’... the very selection of such a word in addressing Jews is in itself exceedingly significant... Lederer (Nathaniel, Sept. 1868), gives quotations from Jewish prayer-books, etc., showing their belief in the Son of David restoring the Davidic throne and Kingdom, and among the prayers, used in thanksgiving after meal, is the following: ‘May He who is most merciful grant us life and make us worthy to draw near and to behold the days of the Messiah, the building of the sanctuary, and the life in the age to come’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:421). “Matt. 13:39, 40, 49, ‘the harvest is the end of the world,’ ‘so shall it be at the end of this world,’... Jesus, thus adopting the Jewish phraseology, points unerringly to a future age to be introduced, after this one is closed, connecting with it the Kingdom of the Son of man precisely as the Jews were accustomed to regard the matter” (*ibid.*).

Before the millennium. “**And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.** And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called **The Word of God.** **And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.** And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may **smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron;** and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’ And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, ‘Come, assemble for the great supper of God; in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.’ And I saw the beast and **the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse,** and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by

which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And **the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse**, and all the birds were filled with their flesh. And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and **Satan**, and **bound him for a thousand years**, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, **so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed**; after these things he must be released for a short time. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded** because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they **came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**" (Rev. 19:11–20:6). "in the New Test. so little is said of the Mill. age and so much of the Sec. Advent and its imminency, implies that the Mill. follows that Advent" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:187). "...Advent is necessarily Pre-Millennial. For, it is utterly impossible to reconcile the existence of Antichrist with the state delineated in the Millennium" (*ibid.*, p. 217) "Dr. Morehead in the *Christian Instructor* (Chicago, March and April, 1879), in a series of articles controverts the Whitbyan view, and in the close of the second article, after referring to the primitive expectation (quoting Scripture, Olshausen, Calvin, etc.) of the constant imminency of the Sec. Advent, deduces: '(1) The Apostolic Christians waited for Christ. They knew not how long he might tarry; they knew not how soon He might appear. They might fall asleep, but death itself could not destroy their "blessed hope" (2) They waited for Christ. Therefore, their hope was not the reformation of mankind, nor the civilization of the race, nor the elevation of society, nor the education of the masses, nor, the conversion of the world. (3) They waited for Christ. Therefore, they did not look for the overthrow of the world-spirit of evil through the instrumentality of the Gospel which they preached. Their heroic endeavor was to save souls from the curse and condemnation of the world. (4) They waited for Christ. Therefore, they did not wait for an effusion of the Holy Spirit for the world's conver-

sion. The Spirit had been poured out upon them, according to the promise of the Saviour, and to have waited for His Coming would have been a practical denial of His presence in the Church. (5) They waited for Christ. Therefore, they did not look for the world's subjugation first. Where in all the New Test. is the Church put in the posture of expectancy as to the conversion of the world? Let one passage be cited that she waited for that—was so taught to wait. (6) They waited for Christ. Therefore, they could not have waited for a Millennium, brought about by the agencies even then at work, to be had and enjoyed before Christ's Coming, for if so, how, in all human reason, could they have waited for the Saviour? They waited. We, on the contrary, having succeeded to our satisfaction in putting off His Coming to a far, far distant future, naturally enough concern ourselves very little about it, and have taken to make the best of the present evil world” (*ibid.*, 3:180).

And, *immediately after the Tribulation*. “But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:29–30). “According to Christ's own teaching in Matthew 24:29-30, the Second Advent will ‘immediately’ follow the Tribulation” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 45).

Regarding the possibility of *knowing the time* of the Second Coming:

The day will be known once the Tribulation begins. “And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out **the saints** of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and **they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time**” (Dan. 7:25). “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, **to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy**, and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. And **he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of**

abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:24–27). “And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for **a time, times, and half a time**; and **as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed**” (Dan. 12:7). “And there were given to **the woman** the two wings of the great eagle, **that she might fly into the wilderness** unto her place, **where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time**, from the face of the serpent” (Rev. 12:13–14). “...the Second Coming of the Messiah... It will occur exactly seven years after the signing of the seven-year covenant and 3 1/2 years (42 months or 1,260 days) after the Abomination of Desolation” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 641).

However, the hour will not be not known until it arrives. “But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known **at what time of the night** the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you be ready too; for **the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will**” (Matt. 24:43–44). “Take heed, keep on the alert; for **you do not know when the appointed time is**. It is like a man, away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. Therefore, be on the alert — for **you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrowing, or in the morning** — lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all, “Be on the alert”” (Mark 13:33–37)! “Although the day of the Second Coming will be known once the Tribulation starts, the *time* of the day is not” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 643).

Location and Destination of the Second Coming

The *location* of the Second Coming is *Bozrah*. “Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye peoples: let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all things that come forth from it. For **Jehovah hath indignation against all the nations, and wrath against all their host: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter**. Their slain also shall be cast out, and the stench of their dead bodies shall come up; and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall

be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fadeth from off the vine, and as a fading leaf from the fig-tree. For **my sword** hath drunk its fill in heaven: behold, **it shall come down upon Edom**, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of Jehovah is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for Jehovah hath **a sacrifice in Bozrah**, and **a great slaughter in the land of Edom**. And the wild-oxen shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls: and their land shall be drunken with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness” (Isa. 34:1–7). “**Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? I have trodden the winepress alone**; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and **their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments**, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth” (Isa. 63:1–6). “[Isaiah] 63:1... Only one man can answer, *I that speak in righteousness*. Only one man has the power that is *mighty to save*. It is the Person of Jesus the Messiah marching toward Israel from the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 340). “[Isaiah] 63:3-6:... He fought all alone and there were none to help Him (vv. 5-6)... The main point to learn from this passage is that the battle is initiated in the land of Edom and at the city of Bozrah. By the time Messiah reaches Israel, His garments are already stained with blood from the slaughter of the enemy” (*ibid.*, p. 341). “**I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah**, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. **The breaker is gone up before them**: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat; and **their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them**” (Mic. 2:12–13). “The *breaker*, the *king*, and *Jehovah* are all the same Person in this verse” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 342). “**God came from Teman**, And the Holy One from **mount Paran**. Selah. **His glory covered the heav-**

ens, And the earth was full of his praise” (Hab. 3:3). “Teman and Mount Paran are both in the vicinity of Bozrah and are located in the same mountain range of Mount Seir” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 342). “**Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah**” (Zech. 12:7). “At the sixth stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, Jesus will return at the request of Israel and enter into battle with the Antichrist and his armies. With His return to the Remnant of Israel in Bozrah, He will indeed *save the tents of Judah first*, before saving the Jews of Jerusalem, as Zechariah 12:7 predicted” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 350). “The term *tents* points to temporary abodes rather than permanent dwellings. The fact that Judah is living in *tents* shows that Judah is not home *in* Judah, but is temporarily elsewhere. That elsewhere is Bozrah. Since the Messiah will *save the tents of Judah first*, this, too, shows that the initial place of His return will be Bozrah and not the Mount of Olives” (*ibid.*, p. 351). “...the first onset of Christ and his army is upon a large mass of the confederation in Idumea, thus corresponding with other passages” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:762). “...the slaughter in Idumea and that in Palestine” (*ibid.*) “...the hints seem to convey the idea that part of the enemy are met on the way to Jerusalem from Mount Sinai, the Antichrist and another portion at Jerusalem or near it, and that other portions are attacked and defeated by the Jews” (*ibid.*, p. 767) “...crushed one portion on the road to Palestine from Sinai, and another in Palestine itself” (*ibid.*, p. 768). “...the approach of Jesus and His saints will follow the route of the Israelites, and hence the coming to Jerusalem will be literally from the East... It is the very route taken in the triumphal entry of the Gospels, and indicative of this future triumphal entry” (*ibid.*, 3:27). “The initial place of His return will not be the Mount of Olives, as is commonly taught, but the place known as Bozrah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 339). “The exact place is known as *Bozrah* (in Hebrew) or *Petra* (in Greek). That is where the ‘body’ will be (Mic. 2:12-13); that is where the ‘vultures’ will be gathered to come against them (Is. 34:1-7; 63:1-6); and that will be the place of the Second Coming (Hab. 3:3)” (*ibid.*, p. 634).

The *destination* of the Second Coming is *Israel/Jerusalem*. “that then **Jehovah** thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and **will return and gather thee from all the peoples**, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee” (Deut. 30:3). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king** and deal wisely, and **shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and**

Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness” (Jer. 23:5-6). “and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and **Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever**” (Mic. 4:7). “**Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great**” (Joel 3:12-13). “While the battle between Messiah and the Antichrist will begin at Bozrah, it will apparently continue all the way back to the eastern walls of Jerusalem, which overlook a section of the Kidron Valley, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The key passage is Joel 3:12-13” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 351). “**And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem;** and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but **Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel**” (Joel 3:16). “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of **Zion**; for, lo, **I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah.** And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and **I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee. And Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem**” (Zech. 2:10-12). “and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, **the man whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both**” (Zech. 6:12-13). “**And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born**” (Zech. 12:10). “**Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem** on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Zech. 14:3-4). “Zech. 14:3-4. In view of the fact that the Mount of

Olives nowhere in Scripture is given a spiritualized interpretation, it seems clear that this refers to the physical Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 320). For example: “And David went up by the ascent of **the mount of Olives**, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered, and went barefoot: and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up” (2 Sam. 15:30). “And when they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, to **the Mount of Olives**, then Jesus sent two disciples” (Matt. 21:1) “And as He was sitting on **the Mount of Olives**, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’” (Matt. 24:3)? “And after singing a hymn, they went out to **the Mount of Olives**” (Matt. 26:30). “And as they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near **the Mount of Olives**, He sent two of His disciples” (Mark 11:1) “And as He was sitting on **the Mount of Olives** opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately” (Mark 13:3) “And after singing a hymn, they went out to **the Mount of Olives**” (Mark 14:26). “And it came about that when He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near **the mount that is called Olivet**, He sent two of the disciples” (Luke 19:29) “And as He was now approaching, near the descent of **the Mount of Olives**, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen” (Luke 19:37) “Now during the day He was teaching in the temple, but at evening He would go out and spend the night on **the mount that is called Olivet**” (Luke 21:37). “And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to **the Mount of Olives**; and the disciples also followed Him” (Luke 22:39). “But Jesus went to **the Mount of Olives**” (John 8:1). “And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.**’ Then they returned to Jerusalem from **the mount called Olivet**, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away” (Acts 1:9–13) “...a return to the very place from which our Lord ascended, and it shall be marked by the dividing asunder of the Mount of Olives” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 267). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve**

thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28). **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord””** (Matt. 23:37-39)! **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord””** (Luke 13:34-35)! **“For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, **There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer**; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob”** (Rom. 11:25-26) **“...the Fathers... universally held to the idea that Antichrist would fight the last battle and perish in Palestine”** (Peters, *TTK*, 2:761). **“Messiah-Jehovah saves Jerusalem”** (*ibid.*, p. 769)

Events of the Second Coming

The *events* of the Second Coming include:

The Father gives the Kingdom to Christ. **“Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against **Jehovah**, and against **his anointed**, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure: Yet **I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion**. I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art **my son**; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and **I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession**. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him”** (Ps. 2:1-12). **“A Psalm of David. **Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy foot-****

stool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people offer themselves willingly In the day of thy power, in holy array: Out of the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand Will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill the places with dead bodies; He will strike through the head in many countries. He will drink of the brook in the way: Therefore will he lift up the head” (Ps. 110:0-7). “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto **a son of man**, and **he came even to the ancient of days**, and they brought him near before him. And **there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom**, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14). “and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in **the kingdom of their Father**. He who has ears, let him hear” (Matt. 13:39-43). “But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in **My Father’s kingdom**” (Matt. 26:29). “He will be great, and will be called **the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David**” (Luke 1:32) “And it came about that **when he returned, after receiving the kingdom**, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done” (Luke 19:15). “I saw in the right hand of **Him who sat on the throne** a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, **the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.**’ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns

and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And **He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.** When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be **a kingdom** and priests to our God; and they will reign **upon the earth**’” (Rev. 5:1-10). “Daniel (7:14) says that ‘there was given unto Him (the Son of man) dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom’... Luke (1:32): ‘the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David,’... (comp. Ps. 2 and 110, etc.)... (Luke 19:15), ‘that when he was returned, having received the Kingdom,’... we have ‘the Ancient of Days’ (in Dan.) interpreted as the Father... the Father bestowing this Kingdom upon the Son of David, it is sometimes called (Matt. 26:29) the ‘Father’s Kingdom’ (Matt. 13:39-43)” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:577) “...the Father subdues the enemies of Christ and puts them under His feet.’ The simple fact is, that the Father does this in and through Christ Himself, Christ acting as the agent, and hence Christ is frequently represented in the Scriptures as the One coming in wrath, in vengeance to perform this work” (*ibid.*, p. 578). “...Mark (13:32), that the Son did not know the day or hour. Now let it be noticed that this Kingdom is given by the Father to ‘the Son of man’ at the Sec. Advent; hence it follows, (1) that Jesus speaks of this future period as ‘the Son of man,’ i.e. as David’s Son; (2) that the Father retaining the prerogative of bestowing the Kingdom, the time of the Advent connected with the same is also thus retained as intimately associated with it. Consequently the Divine, the Father in Christ, could not reveal what exclusively belonged to the Father—what pertained to the Divine prerogative—and, therefore, while the descendant of David is inseparably connected with the Divine, yet the Divine in such a matter (for ‘My Father is greater than I’) may deny to the humanity—David’s Son—the precise knowledge of the day and hour, for the reason assigned. For David’s Son takes the things belonging to the Father, and shows those that are allowed, the human being subservient to the will of the Father and to the knowledge imparted. Tillotson, *Ser. on Mark* 13:32, 33, attributes this not knowing to the human nature of Christ, referring to Luke 2:52, etc., showing that the human nature did not necessarily, by virtue of its union with the Divine, know all things, or otherwise he could not, as man, be said to grow in wisdom, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 580) “...the Father will not allow this Plan to fail” (*ibid.*, p. 581)

Cataclysmic events occur. “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. **The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.** And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and **the heavens and the earth shall shake:** but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more” (Joel 3:14–17). “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and **the mount of Olives shall be cleft** in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and **half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.** And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee” (Zech. 14:4–5). “**But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken**” (Matt. 24:29) “**And the seventh angel poured out his bowl** upon the air; and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, ‘**It is done.**’ And **there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell.** And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. And **every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men;** and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe” (Rev. 16:17–21). “Along with this victory ascent upon the Mount of Olives, a number of cataclysmic events will occur as the Great Tribulation comes to an end. These cataclysmic events will be a result of the seventh Bowl Judgment, described in Revelation 16:17-21” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 355). “With the seventh bowl, a voice cries out, *It is done*, because the seventh bowl brings the Tribulation to a definite end ([Rev. 16] v. 17). This declaration will be followed by convulsions of nature, including the greatest earthquake ever to occur in the history of the earth (v. 18). This will cause the City of Jerusalem to be split

into three divisions, while the city of Babylon will suffer the full wrath of God (v. 19). Many geographical changes will take place (v. 20) and hail weighing 120 pounds will fall (v. 21)” (*ibid.*, p. 356). “Not only will Jerusalem be split into three divisions, but the Mount of Olives will be split into two parts, creating a valley running east and west. This newly-formed valley will provide a way of escape for the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem from the earthquake that will destroy the city. In this way the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be rescued following the deliverance of the other Jews in Bozrah” (*ibid.*). “With the multitudes defeated in the closing Day of Jehovah in the Valley of Jehoshaphat ([Joel 3] v. 14), the blackout will occur (v. 15), as well as the great earthquake (v. 16a). But a refuge will be provided for the Jews from these cataclysmic events (vv. 16b-17) by means of the valley cutting through the Mount of Olives spoken of by Zechariah. The Great Tribulation and the Campaign of Armageddon will come to an end with these cataclysmic events” (*ibid.*, p. 357).

All the angels worship the first-born. “**Jehovah reigneth**; Let the earth rejoice; Let the multitude of isles be glad. Clouds and darkness are round about him: Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. A **fire goeth before him, And burneth up his adversaries round about.** His **lightnings** lightened the world: The earth saw, and trembled. **The mountains melted** like wax at **the presence of Jehovah**, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, And **all the peoples have seen his glory.** Let all them be put to shame that serve graven images, That boast themselves of idols: **Worship him, all ye gods [angels, LXX].** Zion heard and was glad, And the daughters of Judah rejoiced, Because of thy judgments, O Jehovah. For thou, Jehovah, art most high above all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods. O ye that love Jehovah, hate evil: He preserveth the souls of his saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, And gladness for the upright in heart. Be glad in Jehovah, ye righteous; And give thanks to his holy memorial name” (Ps. 97:1–12). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him**, then He will sit on His glorious throne” (Matt. 25:31). “And **when He again [note “again”—ed.] brings the first-born into the world, He says, ‘AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM’**” (Heb. 1:6).

The sign of the Son of Man appears. “But **immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and **then the sign of the Son of Man will ap-**

pear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:29–30). “According to this passage [Matt. 24:29-30], just prior to the Second Coming, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heavens, and that sign will certainly be the *Shechinah* Glory, for the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 615). “At this point, Matthew states that the sign of the Son of man will appear ([Matt. 24] v. 30a). As this sign is coupled with God’s glory, it is obviously the *Shechinah* Glory light that will signal the Second Coming of the Messiah. The answer to the second question, ‘What will be the sign of the Second Coming?’ is: the *Shechinah* Glory. But *immediately after the tribulation of those days*, there will be a total black-out with no light penetrating at all, followed by a sudden, glorious, tremendous light that will disperse the blackness. This *Shechinah* light will be the sign of the Second Coming of the Messiah. The light will be followed by the return of the Messiah Himself (v. 30b)” (*ibid.*, p. 635).

Christ appears in the sky. “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then **all the tribes of the earth** will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**” (Matt. 24:29-30). “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. And then **they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**” (Mark 13:24–26). “And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then **they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**” (Luke 21:25–27). “Behold, **He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him**, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen” (Rev 1:7).

Christ defeats Antichrist and his army. He defeats Antichrist’s army at Bozrah. (See our discussion of the fact that the *location* of the Second Coming is *Bozrah* in our section *Location and Destination of the Second Coming* above.) *He then defeats Antichrist’s army in Israel.* (See our discussion of the fact that the *destination* of the Second Coming is *Israel*/

Jerusalem in our section *Location and Destination of the Second Coming* above. See also our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Second Coming is to defeat Antichrist in our section *Purposes of the Second Coming* above.)

And, Christ sets foot upon the mount of Olives. “Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And **his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem** on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Zech. 14:3–4). (See our discussion of the fact that the *destination* of the Second Coming is (the mount of Olives in) *Israel/Jerusalem* in our section *Location and Destination of the Second Coming* above.)

Attitudes Toward the Second Coming

The church, the Tribulation saints and lost mankind will have differing *attitudes toward the Second Coming*.

For *the church*, the (pretribulational) Rapture is her blessed hope (Titus 2:12-13). Therefore, the Scriptures admonish her to be primarily expectant of her imminent Rapture, as distinct from the subsequent Second Coming. (See our discussion of the proper attitude of the Christian toward the Rapture in the section *Attitudes Toward the Rapture* in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.) She will be revealed later *with* Christ at His Second Coming. “**When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory**” (Col. 3:4).

For *the Tribulation saints* the Second Coming will mean the end of tribulation and persecution and the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. Therefore, the Tribulation saint should be *ready* and expectantly *on the alert* for that day. “**Behold**, I have told you in advance” (Matt. 24:2). “Therefore **be on the alert**, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming” (Matt. 24:42). “For this reason **you be ready** too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will” (Matt. 24:44). “But **take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance**” (Mark 13:23). “**Take heed, keep on the alert**; for you do not know when the appointed time is” (Mark 13:33). “Therefore, **be on the alert** — for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrowing, or in the morning —” (Mark 13:35) “And **what I say to you I say to all, “Be on the alert”**” (Mark 13:37)! “Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find **on the alert** when

he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them” (Luke 12:37). “You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not **analyze this present time**” (Luke 12:56)?

For *lost mankind*, the Second Coming will be an unexpected day of terror, judgment and defeat. (See our discussion of the fact that the Second Coming will be unexpected for most people in the section *Characteristics of the Second Coming* above.)

Chapter 24: Inauguration of the Kingdom

Between the Second Coming of the King and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, several events will transpire in preparation for the Kingdom. These events include Antichrist's resurrection and casting into the lake of fire, the binding of Satan, Israel's regathering to the land in belief, the gathering and judging of the Tribulation survivors, Israel's possession of the land, the first resurrection and the marriage feast of the Lamb. Since this chapter deals with the resurrection of the dead (at least the *first* resurrection, which *precedes* the Millennial Kingdom; we'll cover the *second* resurrection, which *follows* the Millennial Kingdom later in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*), we will also cover in this chapter the intermediate state of the dead: the temporary state that intervenes between death and resurrection.

Events in Preparation for the Millennial Kingdom

As the dust settles from the horrific Tribulation period and the glorious Second Coming, earth's new rulers and subjects will be preparing for the Millennial Kingdom. "Obviously, there is going to be a great confluence of all the elect at the beginning of the Millennium—all views agree on this" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 178).

Regarding the *duration* of this preparatory period, *seventy-five days transpire between Christ's return and the commencement of the Millennial Kingdom*. "And from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be **1,290 days**. How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the **1,335 days**" (Dan. 12:11-12)! "Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**" (Rev. 12:6). "The second half of the Tribulation is declared to be 42 months or 1,260 days long, which is the same as saying 3 1/2 years. Daniel 12:7 refers to it as *a time, times, and a half*. Daniel 12:11 states that there will be a total of 1,290 days during which time the Temple will be desecrated. In other words, the Temple's desecration will extend 30 days beyond the 3 1/2 year period. However, in Daniel 12:12 those who manage to make it to the 1,335th day (an additional 45 days) are promised a unique blessing which could hardly be anything else but the Millennium. That many will not make it to this day is clear from other Scriptures, since they are killed in the interlude. But the interlude is limited to 75 days" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 120) "A special blessing is pronounced on those who will make it to the 1,335th day. The blessing is that those who

survive until the 75th day of the interval will enter the Messianic Kingdom... There will be many who will fail and die before the 1,335th day comes, although they did survive past the 1,260th day” (*ibid.*, p. 361). “A number of events will transpire during the seventy-five day interval, but it is impossible to determine the chronological sequence of these events” (*ibid.*, p. 362). Regarding the first thirty days, “**And from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.** How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days” (Dan. 12:11-12)! “The desecration of the Temple is allowed to remain for thirty days beyond the end of the Tribulation. Then it will be destroyed, bringing the Abomination of Desolation to an end” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 362). Regarding the final forty-five days, “Once the judgment determining who can enter the kingdom has been concluded, it may take another 45 days to form the governmental structure necessary to operate the kingdom” (Showers, *M*, p. 58).

Events in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom include:

Antichrist is resurrected and cast into the lake of fire. “**Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial**, because thou hast destroyed thy land, thou hast slain thy people; the seed of evil-doers shall not be named for ever” (Isa. 14:20). “**And the beast** was taken, and with him **the false prophet** that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: **they two were cast alive into the lake of fire** that burneth with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20) “...the Antichrist be resurrected at this time and then be cast alive into the Lake of Fire. It is for this reason that Isaiah 14:20 declared that the body of the Antichrist will never see burial” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 363). “The term the second resurrection applies to the resurrection of all the damned, and this, too, will come in stages. Jesus was the firstfruits of the first resurrection. The irony to be found here is that he who would be the counterfeit son will be allowed to act out the counterfeit role to completion by becoming the firstfruits of the second resurrection. But the result of his resurrection will be the Lake of Fire” (*ibid.*). “For the first thousand years that the Lake of Fire will be inhabited, the Antichrist and the False Prophet will be there all by themselves” (*ibid.*).

Satan is bound. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high**, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And **they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days shall they be visited**” (Isa. 24:21-22). “And I saw **an angel** coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a

great chain in his hand. And **he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time**" (Rev. 20:1-3). "The prophet Isaiah speaks of certain rebels among 'the high ones that are on high' (angelic beings) and 'the kings of the earth' (24:21). The next verse (22) says, 'And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited [punished].' The 'many days' here correspond to the 'thousand years' of Revelation 20" (McClain, *GK*, p. 215). "[John 17] verse 15, 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one' (ASV)... *Now* the disciples are kept from the evil one; *then* the evil one will be kept from them, and also from the whole world of nations for the duration of His Messianic reign (Rev. 20:1-6)" (*ibid.*, p. 378). "...the Abyss, the temporary place of confinement for fallen angels" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 364). "...the *Abyss*... it is never associated with human beings; it is always associated with fallen angels with the exception of the Antichrist [i.e. Rev. 11:7, 17:8—*ed.*]. Since the Antichrist will be conceived by the power of Satan, he is connected with angelic beings and therefore also with the *Abyss*... the *Abyss* is that section of Sheol or Hades which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels... it is always a temporary place of confinement. Satan will be confined in the *Abyss*, but even for him it is temporary, for one thousand years' duration (Rev. 20:3)" (*ibid.*, p. 741).

Israel is regathered to the land in belief. "And ye shall not wrong one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for **I am Jehovah your God.** Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep mine ordinances and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety... And the land shall not be sold **in perpetuity**; for **the land is mine**: for ye are strangers and sojourners with me" (Lev. 25:17-24) "And **it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from**

thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And **Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.** And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee. And **thou shalt return** and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And Jehovah thy God will make thee plentiful in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for **Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers;** if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul” (Deut. 30:1-10). “There is no more important Scripture relating to Israel than this, and every word of this prophecy covering the time to the present hour has been literally fulfilled. Shall it not be so to the end? Shall they not be regathered as actually as they have been scattered? And that in relation to, and by virtue of, a ‘return,’ or second coming ([Deut.] 30:3) of the divine Person to the earth? Is there any other explanation of the miraculous preservation of that nation than that Jehovah’s oath cannot be broken” (Chafer, *KHP*, 14%)? “Following the regeneration of Israel will be the regathering from all over the world ([Deut.] 30:3) so that even if Jews should be found in the uttermost parts of the heavens, they will nevertheless be returned (30:4) and brought back into the Promised Land (30:5). This regathering will occur only after the regeneration of Israel (30:6), at which time the punishments previously applied to Israel will now be applied to the Gentiles (30:7). Although curses may fall on the Gentiles, there will only be blessings for Israel (30:8-9) because they will totally return to the Lord (30:10)” (Fruchtbaum, *I*, p. 796). “The second facet of the final restoration of Israel is the regathering of Israel from all over the world. This is based on the Land Covenant of Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20. Traditionally, this covenant has been known as the Palestinian Covenant, for it largely concerns the Land that for centuries was called *Palestine*. It was an appropriate term at the time it was coined, and even Jews called the Land ‘Palestine.’ This is now an unfortunate term for two reasons. *First*: it was a name given to the Land by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the second Jewish revolt under Bar Cochba (A.D. 132-135) for the purpose of erasing any Jewish remembrance

of the Land as part of his policy to 'de-judaize' the Land. *Second*: due to the historical events in the Middle East in the twentieth century, the name is associated more with Arabs than with Jews. For these reasons (and others), the author prefers to call it 'the Land Covenant'" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 411). "This regathering will occur only after the regeneration of Israel (v. 6)" (*ibid.*, p. 413). "And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that **the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious**. And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that **the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people**, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and **will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth**" (Isa. 11:10-12). "In Isaiah 11:11-12:6, the final regathering is described as the second of the world-wide regatherings of Israel. The first regathering is the one in unbelief prior to the Great Tribulation in preparation for judgment. The regathering described in this passage is the second one (v. 11a), in faith and in preparation for the millennial blessings" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 797). "Although many commentators identify the first regathering as the return from the Babylonian Captivity, that could hardly be described as a worldwide regathering. The first regathering is the one in unbelief prior to the Great Tribulation, and this has been happening since 1948. The first gathering is in unbelief in preparation for judgment. The regathering described in this passage is the second one (v. 11a), in faith in preparation for the millennial blessings" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 414). "And **Jehovah** will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his scorching wind **will he wave his hand over the River, and will smite it into seven streams, and cause men to march over dryshod. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria; like as there was for Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt**" (Isa. 11:15-16). "For **Jehovah** will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And **the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place**; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors" (Isa. 14:1-2). "As Israel is being regathered, not only will this be accomplished with the help

of angels, but the Gentiles will be conducting the Jews back into the Land ([Isaiah 14] v.2b)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 439). **“In days to come shall Jacob take root; Israel shall blossom and bud; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit”** (Isa. 27:6). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem” (Isa. 27:12-13). “In Isaiah 27:12-13, the prophet emphasized the totality of the regathering, for every Jew one-by-one will be brought back into the Land of Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 797). “...the *totality* of the regathering... As in the previous Isaiah [11:11-12:6] passage, the key locality of the regathering will be from the Middle East nations since, as a result of the fall of Israel in the middle of the Tribulation, the majority of the Jews will be located in this vicinity and it is here that they will have suffered the most. And so the Jews will be taken one by one out of Egypt and Assyria (modern Iraq). Jews are still to be found in various Arab countries suffering tremendous persecutions. But in the regathering they will be rescued from the land of their enemies. The regathering will be from all over the world, but with special emphasis on the Middle East nations” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 415). “and **the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion**; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:10). “Fear not; for I am with thee: **I will bring thy [Israel’s, vs. 1] seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth; every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made**” (Isa. 43:5-7). “The magnitude of the final regathering of Israel is described in Isaiah 43:5-7. As far as locality is concerned, the regathering will be worldwide and, to emphasize the fact, all four points of the compass are mentioned (vv. 5-6). The magnitude is then illustrated by the usage of three words: created, formed, and made (v. 7). These three words are used interchangeably in the creation account of Genesis 1-2. Hence, from God’s perspective, the final regathering will be on the magnitude of the original creation” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 797). “And **the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion**;

and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 51:11). “And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: they all gather themselves together, they come to thee; **thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms**” (Isa. 60:3-4). “Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to **bring thy sons from far**, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee” (Isa. 60:9). “**And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there**” (Isa. 65:9). “**And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem**, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah” (Isa. 66:20). “Therefore, behold, **the days come, saith Jehovah, that it shall no more be said, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them. And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers**” (Jer. 16:14-15). “The comparative magnitude of the final regathering with previous works of God is something Jeremiah also pointed out. In Jeremiah 16:14-15 it is compared with the Exodus. Throughout Jewish history, the Exodus has been considered the high point of Jewish history, but after the final regathering this will change (v.14). In the future it will be the final regathering of the Jews that will become the high point of Jewish history (v. 15)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 797). “**And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and multiply. And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking**, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 23:3-4). “Therefore, behold, **the days come, saith Jehovah, that they shall no more say, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land**” (Jer. 23:7-8). “For thus saith Jehovah,

Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout for the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Jehovah, save thy people, **the remnant of Israel**. Behold, **I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth**, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: **a great company shall they return hither. They shall come** with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born. Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, **He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as shepherd doth his flock**" (Jer. 31:7-10). "And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel, all of them, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from Jehovah; unto us is this land given for a possession. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Whereas I have removed them far off among the nations, and whereas I have scattered them among the countries, yet** will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the countries where they are come. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither**, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence" (Ezek. 11:14-18). "As a sweet savor will I accept you, **when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered**; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, **when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I sware to give unto your fathers**. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 20:41-44). "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell securely therein**; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely, when I

have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God” (Ezek. 28:25–26). **“For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I myself, even I, will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture; and upon the mountains of the height of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie down in a good fold; and on fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord Jehovah. I will seek that which was lost, and will bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but the fat and the strong I will destroy; I will feed them in justice”** (Ezek. 34:11-16). **“For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land”** (Ezek. 36:24). “The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, And thou, son of man, take thee **one stick**, and write upon it, For **Judah**, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take **another stick**, and write upon it, For **Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them** for thee one to another into one stick, that they may become one in thy hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us **what thou meanest by these?** say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his companions; and I will put them with it, even with the stick of Judah, and **make them one stick**, and they shall be one in my hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thy hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, **I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with**

their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And **they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever:** and David my servant shall be their prince for ever" (Ezek. 37:15-25). "Ezek. 37... one stick represents 'Judah and the children of Israel his companions'... the other stick represents 'Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and all the house of Israel, his companions' (i.e. all the ten tribes, not a few)... This feature answers with irresistible force the Babylonian return theory, for history testifies that no such a return of the twelve tribes was ever witnessed" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:89). "Ezekiel 37:21-25... Given that this prophecy was given after the Babylonian captivity, and given that Israel had a king neither then nor since, literal fulfillment awaits the future. Also, David cannot be a part of it until after he is resurrected in the first resurrection, just before the Millennium (Rev. 20:4-6)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:507). "And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that **I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there**" (Ezek. 39:28) "God will leave not a single Israelite in the lands of the Gentiles after the regathering (Ezek. 39:28)" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 181). "For **the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days**" (Hos. 3:4-5). "As to this people's identity there can be no question: 'For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king... Afterward shall the children of Israel return... in the latter days' (Hos. 3:4-5). It is the Israel of history" (McClain, *GK*, p. 284). "They shall walk after **Jehovah, who will roar like a lion; for he will roar, and the children shall come trembling from the west. They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah**" (Hos. 11:10-11). "For, behold, **in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem**" (Joel 3:1) "behold, **I will stir them up out of the place whither ye**

have sold them, and will return your recompense upon your own head” (Joel 3:7) “**And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God**” (Amos 9:14-15). “**In that day, saith Jehovah, will I assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, yea, the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem**” (Mic. 4:6-8). “**But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth: then the residue of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God: and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be our peace**” (Mic. 5:2-5). “**Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thy heritage, which dwell solitarily, in the forest in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old. As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto them marvellous things.** The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; like crawling things of the earth they shall come trembling out of their close places; they shall come with fear unto Jehovah our God, and shall be afraid because of thee” (Mic. 7:14-17). “Israel is to be regathered in order to possess the Land ([Mic.] v. 14), and this regathering will be accompanied by miracles (v. 15)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 441). “**I will gather them** that sorrow for the solemn assembly, who were of thee; to whom the burden upon her was a reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee; and **I will** save that which is lame, and **gather that which was driven away**; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth. **At that time I will bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make**

you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah” (Zeph. 3:18-20). “Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Behold, **I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;** and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness” (Zech. 8:7-8). “And I will strengthen **the house of Judah,** and I will save **the house of Joseph,** and **I will bring them back;** for I have mercy upon them; and **they shall be as though I had not cast them off:** for I am Jehovah their God, and I will hear them. And they of **Ephraim** shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine; yea, their children shall see it, and rejoice; their heart shall be glad in Jehovah. **I will hiss for them, and gather them;** for I have redeemed them; and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the peoples; and they shall remember me in far countries; and **they** shall live with their children, and **shall return.** I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and **I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon;** and place shall not be found for them. And he will pass through the sea of affliction, and will smite the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart. And I will strengthen them in Jehovah; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith Jehovah” (Zech. 10:6-12). “As Zechariah portrayed the final regathering, he saw it in terms of hissing which is the call of a shepherd for his scattered sheep ([Zech. 10] v. 8a)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 798). “O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem,** that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! **how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings,** and ye would not” (Matt. 23:37)! “He would oft have gathered them (as He will yet do according to Mt. 24:31); but they would not” (Chafer, *KHP*, 80%). ““And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other**” (Matt. 24:30-31). “**If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee**” (Deut. 30:4) “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the

brook of Egypt; and ye shall **be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel**. And it shall come to pass in that day, that **a great trumpet shall be blown**; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem” (Isa. 27:12-13). “Matt. 24:31, is a gathering of... saints after the tribulation... members of the still elect Jewish nation, which, as many prophecies predict, shall at this very time be again gathered to Palestine” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:330). “Following Messiah’s second advent to the earth (Matt. 24:30), angels will regather living Israel from the four corners of the earth where they will be scattered during the Tribulation (v. 31)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 238). “Since His entire discourse had been devoted to the prophetic program for Israel, the reference to ‘His elect’ (v. 31) could not possibly refer to the church. Instead, it must refer to the nation God had chosen (Ex. 19:5-6)” (*ibid.*, p. 255). “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then **ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples**: for all the earth is mine: and **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Ex. 19:5-6). “During the Tribulation Israel will be scattered out of the land by military invasions (Rev. 12:14-16), and the Israelites will flee and find refuge among the Gentile nations. Supernaturally God will bring the people back to the land through the instrumentality of angels, which will be the final restoration anticipated in the Old Testament (Deut. 30:1-8)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 255). “Jesus indicated that the gathering of His elect from the four directions of the world will take place in conjunction with ‘a great trumpet’ (literal translation of the Greek text of Mt. 24:31), so Isaiah 27:13 teaches that the scattered children of Israel will be gathered to their homeland in conjunction with the blowing of ‘a great trumpet’ (literal translation of the Hebrew)... Isaiah 27:13, which foretells this future regathering of Israel, is the only specific reference in the Old Testament to a ‘great’ trumpet” (Showers, *M*, p. 183). “The Matthew passage is based on Isaiah 27:12-13 and the Mark [13:27] passage is based on Deuteronomy 30:4. Its purpose was to make clear that the world-wide regathering predicted by the prophets will be fulfilled only after the second coming” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 799). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that **a great trumpet shall be blown**; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at

Jerusalem” (Isa. 27:12-13). “**And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth, to the farthest end of heaven**” (Mark 13:27). “And it shall come to pass... If any of thine outcasts be in **the uttermost parts of heaven**, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers... And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day” (Deut. 30:1-8). “With the additional background of Deuteronomy 30:3-4, Jesus added that the regathering will be from the uttermost part of the earth (living Israel) and the uttermost part of Heaven (resurrected Israel)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 420). “The background to the Mark passage is Deuteronomy 30:4, which also emphasizes that the final restoration will come from two localities: earth and Heaven. Those who are gathered from *the uttermost parts of the earth* will be living in Israel, the one-third Remnant that survives the Tribulation. Those who are gathered from *the uttermost part of heaven* will be the resurrected Old Testament saints” (*ibid.*, p. 636). “The gathering of the nation as predicted by the prophets... such a gathering can only take place after the period of the tribulation has run its allotted course” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:412). “...the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom... it involves, fully embraces, its restoration to Palestine” (*ibid.*, 2:49). “...this, like the deliverance from Egypt, will be accompanied by an extraordinary manifestation of the supernatural” (*ibid.*, p. 64). “The manifestation of divine power demonstrated in the placing of Israel in her land the last time will far exceed the manifestation of power which accompanied their removal from Egypt and placing in the land under Joshua” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:319). “If the ‘casting away’ of Israel is a literal fact, why should it be thought a thing incredible that God shall restore them again to His favor” (*ibid.*, 5:332)? “At this point, all three dispersions have occurred and two of the three regatherings” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 417). “Chafer [in *Systematic Theology*, 7:123-126] then goes on to enumerate the three dispersions and restorations. The first was the ‘dispersion into Egypt’ which ‘bondage was predicted centuries before’ in the Abrahamic Covenant. The first restoration came with the Exodus under Moses and Aaron. The second dispersion was ‘the Captivities.’ The northern kingdom of Israel went into the Assyrian Captivity and the southern kingdom of Judah went into the Babylonian Captivity. The second restoration came in initially under Zerubbabel and Joshua and then under Ezra and Nehemiah. The third dispersion came in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the tem-

ple and it 'exceeds the other two in part of duration and in the manner in which Israel is now scattered among all the nations of the earth.' The present scattering, according to Chafer, 'must continue until the Church be removed from the world.' The third restoration will be the final one for the Messianic Kingdom. This 'final return to the land is one of the major themes of Old Testament prophecy concerning the Jew,' and it 'is one of the Bible's most positive predictions.' According to Chafer, the final restoration is the subject of more than fifty biblical passages 'which yields to no fanciful notions for its interpretations.' Looking at these passages, they 'must either be accepted in its literal form or ignored completely.' As Chafer remarks, "Too often the latter is done" (*ibid.*, p. 418). "There is a restoration now, but there will be one more forced exile from the land in the middle of the Great Tribulation, the one spoken of in Matthew 24:15-28 and Revelation 12:6-14. After the second coming, Israel will experience her final restoration. For some, this would be called the fourth, while for others it would be the completion of the third" (*ibid.*). "This regathering will surpass the miracle of the Exodus and will be accomplished with the aid of angels" (*ibid.*, p. 553). "The dating of the regathering of Israel is after the second coming. Just as Israel was dispersed because of disobedience, they will some day be regathered because they will be obedient" (*ibid.*, p. 555).

Survivors of the Tribulation are Gathered and Judged

Before the Millennial Kingdom begins, *survivors of the Tribulation must be gathered and judged*, to produce the inaugural subjects of the Kingdom and also to ensure that only saved individuals enter the Kingdom. "The reign of the saints cannot be consistently explained without including the perpetuation of the race" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:545). "The redeemed multitude from the nations of the earth together with the redeemed remnant in Israel will constitute a kingdom over which Messiah will rule at His return" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 313). "...unsaved people left to enter the Millennium, a concept that many Scriptures seem to contradict" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 190). "It is because the premillenarians insist on literal interpretation of the details as well as the event that they find the various judgments differing as to time, place and subjects" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 110). "Taking in view all the divine judgments that pertain to this sequence of events, it may be concluded that as the millennium begins all the righteous are judged in one way or another and that the wicked are put to death and declared unworthy to enter the millennial kingdom" (*ibid.*, p. 291). "The subjects of the millennial rule of Christ at the beginning of the millennium will consist in those who survive the searching judgments of both Israel and Gentiles as the millennial

reign of Christ begins” (*ibid.*, p. 302). “When the Kingdom begins, all natural men, both Jews and Gentiles, will be believers. The Jews in their entirety will be saved just prior to the Second Coming of the Messiah. All unbelieving Gentiles (goats) will be killed during the seventy-five day interval between the Tribulation and the Millennium, and only believing Gentiles (sheep) will be able to enter the Kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 383). (See also our discussions of the facts that Tribulation survivors are needed to participate in the post-Tribulation judgments on earth and Tribulation survivors are needed to populate the earth after the Tribulation in the section *The timing of the Rapture: Not Post-Tribulation* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Jewish Survivors are Gathered and Judged

Jewish survivors of the Tribulation are to be judged prior to the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. While Dr. Fruchtenbaum sees Israel’s judgment being completed *during* the Tribulation itself, others, including Drs. Chafer, Pentecost, Walvoord and Ryrie, see a judgment for Israel *following* the Tribulation, as placed in the chronological sequence of this chapter. But regardless of the *timing* of the judgment, all of these scholars are in agreement regarding the *fact* of the judgment. “As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and **I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered**, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and **I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel:** and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me; but my holy name shall ye no more profane with your gifts, and with your idols. For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when

I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I swear to give unto your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 20:33-44). "The regathering process completed, a judgment of Israel is described in Ezekiel 20:34-38" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 88). "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to **ten virgins**, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. And **five of them were foolish, and five were prudent**. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, "Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the prudent answered, saying, "No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves." And while they were going away to make the purchase, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, "Lord, lord, open up for us." But he answered and said, "Truly I say to you, I do not know you.**" Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour" (Matt. 25:1-13). "...the Bride being omitted in the Parable of the Ten Virgins" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:47) "The Saviour does not censure them for being asleep, a natural result of long waiting, but for the lack of previous preparation, so that they were not ready when the bridegroom, whom they all anticipated, came" (*ibid.*, p. 304) "Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13)... We need to understand here that the virgins in the Oriental wedding refer to the guests at the banquet, in contrast to the bride who appears with the bridegroom... the wedding banquet, which is the Lord's literary figure for the Davidic, millennial kingdom" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 238). "In this parable Christ taught that living Israel would be brought back to the land of judgment to determine who is prepared and who is unprepared. Those who are prepared will be accepted into the Messiah's millennial kingdom, but the unprepared will be excluded" (*ibid.*, p. 239). "...the

parable of the ten virgins ([Matt.] 25:1-13), which teaches that the faithful will be watching for His return... Many dispensationalists believe this refers to the faithful (five prepared) and unfaithful (five unprepared) Jews at the end of the tribulation” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:485) “The foolish (unprepared) virgins don’t symbolize Christians, but rather unbelieving Jews during the Tribulation” (*ibid.*). “There is to be a future judgment of Israel, besides that of the Great Tribulation, in which there will also be Gentiles and professing Christendom. The subjects of that judgment will be all Israel who will be living on the earth at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus. He will take them alone, for Israel shall not be numbered among the nations, from all the countries where they have been scattered, and will bring them into the wilderness of the peoples, where He will plead with them face to face (Ezek. 20:33-38). They will be judged as to whether they will truly turn to God and accept His King. The result will be a purging of the nation, with many entering into the land to enjoy the long-awaited kingdom of the Son of David” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 361). “The nation Israel must be judged, and it is reasonable to believe that this judgment will include all of that nation who in past dispensations have lived under the covenants and promises. Therefore a resurrection of those generations of Israel is called for and must precede their judgment” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:406). “The judgment consists in putting to death all the rebels or unbelievers, leaving only the believers to enter the Promised Land” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 88). “Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, pp. 413-415] is correct that ‘the future judgment program will begin with a judgment upon the nation Israel,’ and that ‘before the [Messianic] kingdom can be instituted... there must be a judgment on Israel to determine those that will enter into the kingdom.’ However, this can all be accomplished if the Tribulation itself is that very judgment” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 544). “...a special or specific judgment after the second coming. It is at this very point that there is a contradiction in Pentecost’s view and others who hold this view. Chafer, Ryrie, Walvoord, and Pentecost all affirm that before or at the second coming, *all Israel shall be saved*. If this is true, and all these men believe it to be true, then there is no need for a special judgment of Israel following the second coming to separate the saved from the unsaved, for *all Israel* at this point is saved” (*ibid.*, p. 545). (See also our discussions of Israel’s survival and judgment in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Gentile Survivors are Gathered and Judged

Gentile survivors of the Tribulation must also be judged as to their fitness for entry into the Millennial Kingdom. “**God** be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us; Selah That thy way may be

known **upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations.** Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee. Oh let **the nations** be glad and sing for joy; For **thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, And govern the nations upon earth.** Selah Let the peoples praise thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise thee. The earth hath yielded its increase: God, even our own God, will bless us. God will bless us; And **all the ends of the earth shall fear him**" (Ps. 67:1-7). "**Say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth:** The world also is established that it cannot be moved: **He will judge the peoples with equity.** Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; Let the field exult, and all that is therein; Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy Before Jehovah; For **he cometh, For he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with his truth**" (Ps. 96:10-13). "Before **Jehovah; For he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with equity**" (Ps. 98:9). "A Psalm of David. Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people offer themselves willingly In the day of thy power, in holy array: Out of the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth. **Jehovah** hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. **The Lord at thy right hand** Will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. **He will judge among the nations,** He will fill the places with dead bodies; He will strike through the head in many countries. He will drink of the brook in the way: Therefore will he lift up the head" (Ps. 110:0-7). "And **there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse,** and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and **he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;** and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isa. 11:1-4). "Behold, **my servant,** whom I uphold; **my chosen,** in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; **he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.** He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: **he will bring forth justice** in truth. **He will not fail nor be**

discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law” (Isa. 42:1-4). **“For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted”** (Isa. 60:12). “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, **I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land, and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine,** that they may drink... Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and **come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about.** Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel” (Joel 3:1-16). “The grounds for this judgment will be anti-Semitism or pro-Semitism ([Joel 3] vv. 2b-3)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 790). **“For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds”** (Matt. 16:27). **“For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.** For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until **the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left”** (Matt. 24:37-41). “pretribulationists... see the one taken in Matthew 24 as one taken for the gathering mentioned in Matthew 25, the ultimate end of which is judgment. In other words, Matthew 24:40-41 is a preliminary phase to Matthew 25:31-46” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 190). “For it is just like a

man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves, and entrusted his possessions to them. And to one he gave five **talents**, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who received the one talent went away and dug in the ground, and hid his master's money. Now **after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.** And the one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, "Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I have gained five more talents." His master said to him, "**Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.**" The one also who had received the two talents came up and said, "Master, you entrusted to me two talents; see, I have gained two more talents." His master said to him, "**Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.**" And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground; see, you have what is yours." But his master answered and said to him, "**You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I scattered no seed. "Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. "Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents."** For **to everyone who has shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. And cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"** (Matt. 25:14-30). "In the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30), our Lord revealed that there will be a judgment prior to the millennial kingdom to test one's faithfulness" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 239). "**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed of My Fa-**

ther, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?” And the King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**” Then He will also say to those on His left, “**Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;** for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.” Then they themselves also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?” Then He will answer them, saying, “Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**” And **these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life**” (Matt. 25:31-46). “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, **I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land, and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink... Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about.** Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:1-14). “But thou, **Beth-lehem** Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, **out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel... his brethren... this man shall be our peace**” (Mic. 5:2-5). “For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, **my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites,** to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the

covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and **from whom is the Christ according to the flesh**, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen” (Rom. 9:3–5). “...this fire is ‘prepared for the devil and his angels.’ At this Advent of the King, the fire is only ‘prepared’ for them, and while some others are cast in, they (the devil and his angels) are not then cast into it. This extremely and intentionally guarded expression of the Saviour most fully corroborates our Pre-Mill. application, since in Rev. 20:10 Satan is cast into this very fire (thus ‘prepared’ for Him)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:377) “At this advent, ‘before Him shall be gathered all nations.’... We add, for the consideration of the advanced student, that the Spirit purposely here gives the word applicable to ‘Gentile’ nations, because these are the very nations arrayed against the Jews and against the Christ just previous to the Mill. era” (*ibid.*, pp. 374, 376). “Russell (*Our Lord’s Return*, p. 27) locates the judgment of Matt. 25:31-46 in and during the Millennium, but this is an erroneous innovation upon ancient and modern exegesis. While it is true—as we advocate in detail—that judging involves frequently more than mere judicial action, yet the scene and action here described are utterly opposed to his idea, as seen (1) in the gathering of the nations, which is Pre-Mill.; (2) in the inheriting of the Kingdom, which is the same; (3) in the location of the fire and the judgment pronounced, which also is the same; (4) in the test applied, which is sustained by the condition of the Church [rather, the Jews?—*ed.*] at that period” (*ibid.*, p. 383). “Finally, when He sits on the throne of His glory, the nations will be brought before Him to be judged as to the treatment of His brethren, the remnant of Israel, during the Great Tribulation (Matt. 25:31-46)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 165). “The judgment of the nations is also clearly revealed in Scripture. In that judgment all the nations will be brought before the Lord Jesus when He returns in glory (cf. Matt. 25:31-46). He will sit on the throne of His glory. The nations will be judged as to their treatment of the Jewish remnant during the Tribulation period, which will be an indication of the general heart attitude of the individual toward God and His purposes. The outcome of the judgment will be the entrance of the sheep nations into the kingdom, later to be granted to enter into eternal life, while the goat nations will be denied participation in the kingdom and will go away into everlasting punishment” (*ibid.*, p. 361). “According to the Book of Revelation God will seal a believing remnant, the 144,000, at the beginning of the tribulation period. They will be a witnessing remnant for that entire period and the fruits of their ministry are described in Revelation 7:9-17, where a great multitude is seen to have been redeemed. The ‘brethren’ are evidently these same believing witnesses of the tribulation

period” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 418). “In the Parable of the Sheep and Goats (Matt. 25:31-46), Jesus revealed that Gentiles will also be gathered to judgment... The term brothers (v. 40) seems to make reference to either the nation of Israel as a whole, or to the chosen ones from among Israel (Rev. 7) who will proclaim the Gospel during the Tribulation. These will not be accepted because of their works, for no man is saved by works; rather, their works will prove the genuineness of their faith” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 239). “...their faithfulness will validate their faith” (*ibid.*, p. 257). “The reference to ‘these brothers’ indicates there will be a third group there in the presence of Christ. That phrase may refer to those who are Christ’s brothers after the flesh, that is the nation Israel; or it may refer to those chosen messengers, the 144,000 of Revelation 7, who will bear witness of Him during the Tribulation. These 144,000 will be under a death sentence by the beast. They will refuse to carry the beast’s mark, and so they will not be able to buy and sell. Consequently, they will have to depend on those to whom they minister for hospitality, food, and support. Only those who receive the message will jeopardize their lives by extending hospitality to the messengers. Therefore, what is done for them will be an evidence of their faith in Christ, that is, what is done for them will be done for Christ. These will not be accepted because of their works, since no man is ever saved by works. But their works will demonstrate their faith in the person of Christ, which renders them acceptable to Him” (*ibid.*, p. 260). “...the Sheep and the Goats. After judging living Israel, Christ will gather together living Gentiles. This is not a judgment on nations as nations, but rather is a judgment on individual Gentiles... The ‘brethren’ may be understood as a reference to the nation of Israel as a whole that had undergone attacks of Satan during the tribulation period, or it may refer to the 144,000 who are appointed as God’s servants to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth—the Gentiles—during the Tribulation period. Either group, because of their refusal to submit to the economic system of the beast, will be dependent on others for food, for shelter, for clothing, for protection” (*ibid.*, p. 314). “For a Gentile to befriend a Jew under those circumstances would be most unusual and would indicate his recognition of the Jewish people as the chosen people and would be a by-product of his understanding of God’s plan and purpose for the Jew in the Millennium. Accordingly, while kindness to the Jews in most dispensations would not be too significant, in the context of the Great Tribulation, it becomes an unmistakable mark of a person who is a Christian” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 191). “It will follow, however, that if the Gentiles are those who are non-Jews, those referred to as ‘my brethren’ (Matt. 25:40) would be the Jews, specifically the Jews of the tribulation time who

were the objects of fearful persecution. Under such circumstances, befriending a Jew by clothing him or visiting him in prison, when according to governmental edict they were to be hounded to the death, would inevitably reveal a confidence in the Scriptures and in God. While the appeal is to the 'works,' it seems clear that their works as such reveal faith in Christ and in the Word of God and are therefore the fruit or evidence of salvation. This is the basic reason why they are ushered into the millennial kingdom and called 'the righteous'" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 288). "Such a judgment would in fact be absolutely necessary before the righteous kingdom of Christ could be inaugurated. It had formerly been indicated in Matthew 13 in the parable of the wheat and tares as well as the parable of the good and bad fish that the end of the age would have a judgment resulting in only the saved entering the kingdom. This, then, is confirmed by the specific revelation of Matthew 25" (*ibid.*). "In this judgment, all the Gentiles will be divided into two camps: the pro-Semitic *sheep* camp and the anti-Semitic *goat* camp (v. 33). Verses 34-40 concern the pro-Semitic sheep. The pro-Semites are those who will provide help for Christ's *brethren*, the Jews, during the Great Tribulation, at a time when it will be very dangerous to do so" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 790). "This is an individual judgment on the basis of anti-Semitism or pro-Semitism" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 365) "The Jews who will have to flee into the wilderness without anything with them will often be provided with food, clothing and shelter by the sheep Gentiles" (*ibid.*, p. 366). "It is the sheep Gentiles who will be involved in the destruction of Babylon (Is. 13:1-5). They will attain the 1,335th day and will be the ones who will populate Gentile nations in the Messianic Kingdom" (*ibid.*). "The *place* of the judgment is not given in this passage, but it is given in a parallel passage found in Joel 3:1-3. This is a judgment that will take place just outside the City of Jerusalem in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which lies between the city and the Mount of Olives" (*ibid.*, p. 648). "...the Messiah's *brethren*, namely, the Jewish people during the Tribulation (vv. 34-35)... If the *brethren* are saints in general, then who are the *sheep*, since they, too, have eternal life? It would be very confusing to make both the *sheep* and the *brethren* as saint of the same caliber... the parallel passage of Joel 3:1-3 makes it certain that these *brethren* are the Jewish people of the Tribulation" (*ibid.*). "Because these Gentiles are already believers in the Lord Jesus the Messiah, they will refuse to join the policy of the Antichrist in his attempt to destroy the Jews... Their works toward the Messiah's *brethren* will prove their faith. In this manner, they are the ones who will be watching, ready, and laboring in accordance with the admonitions of the five parables" (*ibid.*, p. 649). "And while they were listening to these things, He went

on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, **‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.** And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.” But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.” And it came about that **when he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done.** And the first appeared, saying, “Master, your mina has made ten minas more.” And he said to him, “Well done, good slave, because **you have been faithful** in a very little thing, **be in authority over ten cities.**” And the second came, saying, “Your mina, master, has made five minas.” And he said to him also, “And **you are to be over five cities.**” And another came, saying, “Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.” He said to him, “By your own words **I will judge you,** you worthless slave. Did you know that **I am an exacting man,** taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? “Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?” And he said to the bystanders, “**Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.**” And they said to him, “Master, he has ten minas already.” I tell you, that **to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.** But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence” (Luke 19:11–27). “because **He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed,** having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). “Paul tells us, Acts 17:31, that when Christ comes to judge, He comes as the ‘Man ordained’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:180). “Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but **wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God**” (1 Cor. 4:5). “I charge thee in the sight of God, and of **Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom**” (2 Tim. 4:1) “And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, proph-

esied, saying, **‘Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him’** (Jude 1:14-15). **“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done”** (Rev. 22:12). “The purpose of the return of Jesus is to render to each man according to his works. His coming at the Rapture is to reward the saints for the works done in their bodies since salvation. The purpose of the Second Coming is to render judgment for the works of unrighteousness” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 537). “Both Advents, the First and the Second, are represented as finding the people arrayed against the Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:377). “The parousia introduces the judgment and many other things, including the Kingdom, and is never called the judgment, as Popish and some Protestant theology take for granted” (*ibid.*, 2:366). “That sympathy for and assistance tendered to the Jews when also suffering, shall likewise be remembered and rewarded, is clearly taught in other places” (*ibid.*, p. 380) “God, in deference to His own rights, His own inheritance, His own Kingdom, His own saints, His own honor and glory, is compelled in consistency to arise and take vengeance on that humanity which is so impious, merciless, and cruel” (*ibid.*, p. 772) “The opposing nations are, at the time of their judgment, dismissed to the lake of fire” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:380). “Unlike other judgments which reach backward to include past generations, this judgment falls only upon the then existing generation of Gentiles upon the earth” (*ibid.*, p. 410). “When at the judgment of the nations some are dismissed to the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 25:41), it need not be implied that they are thus doomed solely because of their treatment of Israel in the tribulation; it is rather that they, like all Christ-rejecting peoples, are consigned to the lake of fire. The time of that consignment is probably at the close of the millennium and among all others at the great white throne (cf. Rev. 20:11-15; Matt 13:30)” (*ibid.*). “There is no mere accident in the fact that the two words blessed and cursed appear in the Abrahamic covenant respecting the attitude of Gentiles toward Abraham’s seed according to the flesh (Gen. 12:1-3), and that these words appear again when Gentiles are being brought into judgment respecting their treatment of God’s elect people” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:139). “The Millennium begins with only redeemed; those who have not experienced a resurrection (as the church and Old Testament saints) will live normal lives and bear children; they will not be born redeemed; and from among them will come the rebellious ones, the Gog and Magog of Revelation 20” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 337). “It

is also God's purpose to populate the millennium with a multitude of saved Gentiles, who are redeemed through the preaching of the believing remnant. This is accomplished in the multitude from 'all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues' (Rev. 7:9) and in the 'sheep' (Matt. 25:31-46) that enter the millennial age. God's purpose, then, is to populate the millennial kingdom by bringing a host from among Israel and the Gentile nations to Himself" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 238). "Since the kingdom to follow is a reign of righteousness, this judgment must be viewed as another step in the progress of God's program in dealing with sin so that the Messiah may reign. This program of judgment on sinners constitutes the second great purpose of the tribulation period" (*ibid.*, p. 239). "After Israel has been judged, 'All nations will be gathered before Him' (Matt. 25:32). This will not be a judgment of nations as national entities, but of individuals from the nations. If this were a judgment of national entities, it is obvious that some unsaved would be included in an accepted nation and some saved would be excluded because they were in a rejected nation. Therefore, we must conclude that this will be a judgment of individuals, not of nations" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 259). "It is not to some impersonal organization, but to the 'King,' that the judgments of God will be committed (Ps. 72:1)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 161). "Give **the king thy judgments**, O God, And thy righteousness unto the king's son" (Ps. 72:1) "The plurality of 'thrones' in Daniel 7:9 certainly suggests the *presence of associate judges* in the judgments which are about to proceed from the celestial court. The occupants of these thrones are not named, but they cannot be angels as Keil [in C. F. Keil, *Commentary on Daniel*, p. 229] wrongly insists. Only the saints of God are ever thus associated with the divine judgment of the world. Angels are but servants who stand before the throne of God (Dan. 7:10). Only when we come over into the New Testament do we find a clear identification of the occupants of these thrones (cf. 1 Cor. 6:1-3). And even the most careless reader could hardly miss the striking parallel between Daniel 7:9-10 and the scene pictured in Revelation 4 and 5" (McClain, *GK*, p. 180). "I beheld till **thrones were placed**, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: **thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened**" (Dan. 7:9-10). "Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or know ye not that **the saints shall judge the world?** and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to

judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more, things that pertain to this life” (1 Cor. 6:1-3)? **“Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting,** clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads” (Rev. 4:4). “It must be observed that this is not a general judgment of all men, but only of *living Gentile nations* on earth at the beginning of the Mediatorial Kingdom. There is no resurrection of the dead, as would be required in any such an alleged general judgment. But for the living men involved, as well as for existing governments it will be a *final* judgment. At the inauguration of the Kingdom on earth the judgment of God will make an absolute and final separation between the righteous and the unrighteous, between those who rebel and those who submit to the King. Rebellious governments will be abolished; rebellious men will be destroyed. ‘For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish’ (Isa. 60:12). In this respect the Millennial Kingdom will begin with a clean slate” (McClain, *GK*, p. 205). **“For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted”** (Isa. 60:12). “When the Kingdom has been established on earth, He will ‘sit upon the throne of his glory,’ judging ‘all nations,’ admitting some and excluding others from that Kingdom (Matt. 25:31-46). As a reward for faithful service, some servants will be given ‘authority over ten cities,’ and others over ‘five cities’ (Luke 19:11-19). For those who hate the King and rebel against His reign there will be no mercy. Here are the words of Christ Himself: ‘But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me’ (Luke 19:27)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 294). “The testimony of the New Testament writers as to this synchronism is both clear and consistent: The judging work of Christ will begin at His second coming (Matt. 25:31 ff.; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:1)” (*ibid.*, p. 335). “No national group can qualify as a group as either ‘sheep’ or a ‘goat’ nation, and no nation inherits either the kingdom or everlasting fire for its works. Eternal judgment must of necessity apply to the individual” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 90). “During the Tribulation many people will be saved (Rev. 7). Many of those Tribulation saints will be martyred (Rev. 6:9-11); 13:7; 20:4), but a good number of them will survive the Tribulation alive” (Showers, *M*, p. 190). “...the believers who live through the Tribulation that will come at the ‘end of the age’... Scripture is saying that only those who live through the Great Distress will live into the thousand-year reign of Christ” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:322). “...the Advent (2 Tim. 1:10), when He came with grace, and of the Return, when He will come in judgment (1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1)” (*ibid.*, 4:491). “Those who endure until the end of the Tribulation will

be saved (Matt. 24:13); unbelievers will be taken in the judgments (v. 39), and believers will be left to go into the Millennium alive (cf. 25:34)” (*ibid.*, p. 602).

The surviving Tribulation believers are rewarded. “**Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.** But if that evil slave says in his heart, “My master is not coming for a long time,” and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and shall cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 24:45–51). “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to **ten virgins**, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and **five were prudent.** For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but **the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.** Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But **at midnight there was a shout, “Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.”** Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the prudent, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the prudent answered, “No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they were going away to make the purchase, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast;** and the door was shut. Later the other virgins also came, saying, “Lord, lord, open up for us.” But he answered, “Truly I say to you, I do not know you.” Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Matt. 25:1–13). “...the ones who have the *oil*, a common symbol of the Holy Spirit... these who have the *oil* are people who became believers during the Tribulation... the text does not say that the foolish virgins ran out of oil, but that they *have no oil with them*. They never had the oil or the Holy Spirit to begin with” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 645). “For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves, and entrusted his possessions to them. And to one he gave five **talents**, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who received the one talent went away

and dug in the ground, and hid his master's money. Now **after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.** And the one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, "Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I have gained five more talents." His master said to him, "**Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.**" The one also who had received the two talents came up and said, "Master, you entrusted to me two talents; see, I have gained two more talents." His master said to him, "**Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master**" (Matt. 25:14-21) "But when the **Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"... And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life**" (Matt. 25:31-46). "And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, '**A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, "Do business with this until I come back."** But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, "We do not want this man to reign over us." And it came about that **when he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done.** And the first appeared, saying, "Master, your mina has made ten minas more." And he said to him, "Well done, good slave, because **you have been faithful** in a very little thing, **be in authority over ten cities.**" And the second came, saying, "Your mina, master, has made five minas." And he said to him also, "And **you are to be over five cities.**" And another came, saying, "Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow." He said to him, "By your own words **I will judge you, you worthless**

slave. Did you know that **I am an exacting man**, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?” And he said to the bystanders, **“Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.”** And they said to him, “Master, he has ten minas already.” I tell you, that **to everyone who has shall more be given**, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence” (Luke 19:11–27). (See also our discussion of the fact that Gentile nations survive the Tribulation and judgment in the section *Description of the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

Unrepentant sinners are punished. “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him**, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left... Then **He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels”**... And **these will go away into eternal punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matt. 25:31-46). “And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, ‘**A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.** And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them **ten minas**, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.”... And another came, saying, “Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.” He said to him, “By your own words **I will judge you**, you worthless slave. Did you know that **I am an exacting man**, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?” And he said to the bystanders, **“Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.”** And they said to him, “Master, he has ten minas already.” I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but **from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.** But **these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my pres-**

ence” (Luke 19:11–27). “The wicked shall see the glory and feel the authority of these saints. This is abundantly evident from the action of these saints at the Second Advent, ruling the nations with a rod of iron, etc... The wicked shall see this at the beginning of the Millennial era and again at its close. It will be a dreadful sight to them to see the saints thus honored with power, riches, dominion, and glory—triumphant heirs with Christ—and themselves defeated in their wickedness, fallen under Almighty power, trembling at the outpouring of the long-delayed wrath of the Lamb, and filled with forebodings of an impending and inevitable doom. No wonder the Spirit, all-foreknowing, tells us that they will ‘gnash with their teeth,’ for agony and despair with deep, untold remorse must be theirs when they contrast the exaltation of saints with their own unhappy one, and then remember that just such honor and blessedness and rank was freely, lovingly, and most urgently pressed upon them, but they—loving evil rather than good—foolishly and even contemptuously refused it” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:595).

Israel Possesses the Land

At the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom Israel will at long last *possess the entire promised land.*

Regarding the *fact* of the possession, “Now Jehovah said unto **Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto **the land that I will show thee**. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him. And Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran. And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan. And into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And **Jehovah** appeared unto Abram, and **said, Unto thy seed will I give this land**. And there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him” (Gen. 12:1-7). “And **Jehovah said unto Abram**, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward. For **all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever**. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered. Arise,

walk through **the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it. For unto thee will I give it**” (Gen. 13:14-17). “And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram. And, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge. And afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again. For the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces. In that day **Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.** The Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite” (Gen. 15:12-21). “Later however, as God confirmed the covenant, the exact boundaries were given in Genesis 15:12-21... The borders are to extend from the Euphrates River in the north to the River of Egypt in the south. Yet, Abram died having never possessed any part of the land except for a few wells and a burial cave which he had to purchase. In order for God to fulfill His promise to Abram, two things have to occur. Abram must be resurrected, and the land must be restored to Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 799). “And Jehovah appeared unto him [**Isaac**], and said, Go not down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee. For **unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father.** And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and **will give unto thy seed all these lands.** And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” (Gen. 26:2-5). “It should be noted that the promise of the possession of the land is not merely to Isaac’s descendants, but to Isaac himself, requiring Isaac’s future resurrection and possession of the land” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 800). “And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. **The land whereon thou [**Jacob**] liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.** And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the

earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen. 28:13-15). “The promise is made that the land will be given to both Jacob and to Jacob’s seed ([Gen. 28] v. 13b). Again, the possession of the land is not a promise to the seed only, but to the individual, Jacob, as well” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 800). “And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; **then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.** The land also shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, while it lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they rejected mine ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, **I will not** reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to **break my covenant with them;** for I am Jehovah their God; but **I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt** in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah” (Lev. 26:40-45). “This third facet of Israel’s final restoration, the possession of the land, was further developed in both the law and the prophets. As far as the law is concerned, it is found in Leviticus 26:40-45. Following the regeneration of Israel (vv. 40-41), God will fully carry out the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the land (v. 42)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 800). “and **Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it;** and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deut. 30:5). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt;** and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel” (Isa. 27:12). “In this passage, the first aspect (the borders of the land), is brought out. The northern (Euphrates River) and the southern (the Brook of Egypt) boundaries are possessed for the first time in all of Israel’s history. Israel will be able to settle in all the Promised Land” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 800). “And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when **I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I sware to give unto your fathers.** And there shall ye remember your ways, and

all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 20:42-44). "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob.** And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely, when I have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God" (Ezek. 28:25-26). "Then was **Jehovah jealous for his land**, and had pity on his people. And Jehovah answered and said unto his people, Behold, I will send you grain, and new wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations; but I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive it into a land barren and desolate, its forepart into the eastern sea, and its hinder part into the western sea; and its stench shall come up, and its ill savor shall come up, because it hath done great things. **Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for Jehovah hath done great things.** Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field; for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth its fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for he giveth you the former rain in just measure, and he causeth to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and shall praise the name of Jehovah your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be put to shame. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be put to shame" (Joel 2:18-27). "To summarize, for the first time in Israel's history, she will possess all of the Promised Land while the land itself will greatly increase in its productivity and be well watered, all on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 802).

The *basis* of the possession of the land is *The Abrahamic Covenant*. "In that day **Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy**

seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates” (Gen. 15:18). (See our discussion of the fact that possession of the land is a feature of the Abrahamic Covenant in the section *The Abrahamic Covenant* of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.)

Regarding the *extent* of the possession, **“Thou hast increased the nation, O Jehovah, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land”** (Isa. 26:15). “...the dimensions of Palestine, to accord with the original grant, will be greatly extended even from the Nile to the Euphrates” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:52) (See the description of the borders of the promised land in the section *The Abrahamic Covenant* of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.)

The *reason* for the possession is *for God’s sake*. **“Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land** which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely, when I have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; **and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God”** (Ezek. 28:25-26). “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, **Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went”** (Ezek. 36:22). “God restores the nation for His own sake” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:53) “The restoration, therefore, is impreguably fixed, upon God’s honor as a covenant-keeping God, and upon His promises given to the Fathers, which will be realized” (*ibid.*). “God’s Word will be amply vindicated, and every declaration will find its realization” (*ibid.*, p. 54).

See also our discussions of Israel’s possession of the land in our chapters *Conscience, Government and Promise, Covenants of the Kingdom, The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy* and *The Millennial Kingdom*.

The Intermediate State of the Dead

Before discussing the first resurrection, we’ll first take a look at *the intermediate state of the dead* (the state of existence between death and resurrection). “Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to

be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now it came about that the poor man **died** and he was carried away by the angels to **Abraham's bosom**; and the rich man also **died** and was buried. And **in Hades** he lifted up his eyes, **being in torment**, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame." But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us." And he said, "Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father's house — for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment." But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them." But he said, "No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!" But he said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead"" (Luke 16:19–31). "And He said to him, 'Truly I say to you, **today you shall be with Me in Paradise**'" (Luke 23:43). "...the intermediate state is 'something imperfect, abnormal'" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:228) "Whatever view may be held respecting the place or the actual state does not affect our doctrinal position, provided such a view places the period of recompensing, rewarding at the future resurrection of the just" (*ibid.*, p. 394). "Every writer on the subject of the intermediate state confesses that no attempt is made in any place whatever to describe it" (*ibid.*, p. 397). "...neither Sheol nor Hades ever stands for the third heaven, and yet all the departed, both good and bad, enter there" (*ibid.*, p. 401) "...the intermediate state. One passage reporting the words of Christ is about all that Judaism reveals on the intermediate state. This is found in Luke 16:19-31. The rich man is in torment, while the beggar is in 'Abraham's bosom.' The latter is a strongly Jewish conception and in contrast to the revelation that when the Christian departs this life he goes to be 'with Christ; which is far better' (Phil. 1:23; cf. 2 Cor. 5:8)" (Chafer, *D*, 52%). "Evangelistic preaching is generally centered around the necessity of believing in order to avoid spending eternity in Hell and in order to spend eternity in Heaven. Neither point is biblically true" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 517). "While the sacrificial system was sufficient to keep them from Hell [the hot compartment of Hades], it was not able to get them into Heaven. So all who

died, both the righteous and unrighteous, went to a place known as *Sheol* or *Hades*" (*ibid.*). "This place contained two compartments, and a description of the two sides of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, is found in Luke 16:19-31" (*ibid.*). "*Sheol*, or *Hades*, had two compartments. One compartment was for the unrighteous, and it could be called Hell in the way we use that term today; it was indeed a place of torment ([Luke 16] vv. 23-25, 28). The other compartment where the righteous went was known as *Abraham's Bosom* (v. 22); it was a place of comfort (v. 25), but it was not Heaven. Elsewhere, the righteous portion of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, is called Paradise, as in Luke 23:43" (*ibid.*, p. 518). "The most common false view, especially because of the cults, is the fourth view: the doctrine of annihilationism" (*ibid.*, p. 708). "It was Adam's body that was created from the dust, not Adam's soul. The soul came from the breath of God, not from the dust; therefore, it is the body, not the soul, that returns to dust. Luke 16:19-31 spells out what actually happens to the soul at death" (*ibid.*, p. 714). "Whenever the Bible speaks of death in the sense of sleep, it is always used of the physical body and not the soul, because the appearance of a sleeping body and a dead body are very much the same" (*ibid.*, p. 734). "...whenever the Bible uses the term 'sleep' in reference to death, uniquely, it is never used of unbelievers... From God's perspective, the death of a believer is a temporary suspension of physical activity" (*ibid.*). "The existence of angels shows that spirit beings can and do live and function apart from bodies (Heb. 1:14)" (*ibid.*, p. 735). "Are they not all ministering **spirits**, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation" (Heb. 1:14)? "...the term 'resurrection' applies only to bodies, never to souls" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 735). "As for the Ecclesiastes passages, they record the conclusions of human philosophy and not the teaching of the Word of God" (*ibid.*, p. 736). "*Sheol* or *Hades* has two primary compartments. One primary compartment was for the righteous ones, and this righteous side was known as *Abraham's Bosom*. Between Adam and the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was located in *Abraham's Bosom*. The second primary compartment was for the unrighteous ones, both angels and humans. This second compartment has three parts. As far as humans are concerned, they are located in *Hades* Proper, better known among believers today as Hell. This part is also known by two other names: *Abbadon* and the Pit. The two other parts in the unrighteous side are for fallen angels. One of these is the *Abyss*, which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. The other is *Tartarus*, which is the place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis six. So *Sheol* or *Hades* had two primary compartments. The righteous side was known as *Abraham's Bosom*. The unrighteous side had three subdivisions of its own: for

humans it is *Hades* or Hell, also known as *Abbadon* or the Pit; and for the fallen angels, the *Abyss* and *Tartarus*" (*ibid.*, p. 751).

The Intermediate State of Believers

The intermediate state of *believers* is one of disembodied yet conscious bliss and rest while awaiting future bodily resurrection. Old Testament saints experienced this bliss and rest in the righteous compartment of Sheol/Hades; New Testament saints experience this bliss and rest in Paradise; in heaven itself. "But thou shalt **go to thy fathers** in peace. Thou shalt be **buried** in a good old age" (Gen. 15:15). "The joining of the fathers precedes the burial itself" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 699). "And **Abraham gave up the ghost, and died** in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, **and was gathered to his people**" (Gen. 25:8). "gathered unto their people."... Some interpret this phrase to mean nothing more than being buried in the family cemetery. However, that would not be true of a person like Abraham whose family or clan cemetery was back in Haran" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 699). "And these are the years of the life of **Ishmael**, a hundred and thirty and seven years. And **he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people**" (Gen. 25:17). "Notice that first, physical death takes place, Ishmael dies; then after death, he is seen as gathered unto his people, as joining a company that preceded him or that had gone on in advance" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 698). "And **Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people**, old and full of days: and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him" (Gen. 35:29). "And he [**Jacob**] charged them, and said unto them, **I am to be gathered unto my people**: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite" (Gen. 49:29) "And when **Jacob** made an end of charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and **yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people**" (Gen. 49:33). "And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, Divine unto me, I pray thee, by the familiar spirit, and **bring me up** whomsoever I shall name unto thee. And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by Jehovah, saying, As Jehovah liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, **Whom shall I bring up unto thee?** And he said, Bring me up **Samuel**. And **when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice**; and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived

me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what seest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, **I see a god coming up out of the earth.** And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a robe. And Saul perceived that **it was Samuel,** and he bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance. And **Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?** And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. And **Samuel said,** Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing Jehovah is departed from thee, and is become thine adversary? And Jehovah hath done unto thee, as he spake by me: and Jehovah hath rent the kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David. Because thou obeyedst not the voice of Jehovah, and didst not execute his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath Jehovah done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover Jehovah will deliver Israel also with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and **to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me:** Jehovah will deliver the host of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines” (1 Sam. 28:8–19). “...witches... What happens in these situations is that a demon is impersonating the dead. But in this account, the real Samuel actually comes up to the surprise of the witch, which shows that she had nothing to do with it” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 702). “In 1 Samuel 28:12-19, Samuel appears in the form of a *god*, meaning in the form of a spirit (v. 13)... According to verse 14, when Samuel appeared as a spirit, he looked like he did when he had died. This shows that in the intermediate state, the soul-spirit has the same appearance as the body and yet there was no body there... King Saul was able to recognize him” (*ibid.*, p. 727). “But now **he [David’s son] is dead,** wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? **I shall go to him,** but he will not return to me” (2 Sam. 12:23). “But as for me [Job] I know that my Redeemer liveth, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: And **after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without [“from,” NASB] my flesh shall I see God**” (Job 19:25–26) “And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. And behold, **Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.** And Peter answered and said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and

behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!' And when the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were much afraid. And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, 'Arise, and do not be afraid.' And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, except Jesus Himself alone" (Matt. 17:1-8). "In the case of Elijah, he was in his immortal body, because Elijah never died; he was raptured into Heaven, having undergone the same type of experience that living saints will undergo at the time of the Rapture of the Church... There is no hint in any way that there was an intermediate body of Moses... they do share in the Shechinah Glory, but it is not necessary to have an intermediate body to share in the Shechinah Glory" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 728). "Three passages speak of the Transfiguration: Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; and Luke 9:28-36. One of those men, Moses, had died and yet Moses is conscious even though he had died" (*ibid.*, p. 735). "But Jesus answered and said to them, 'You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, "I am the **God of Abraham**, and the God of **Isaac**, and the God of **Jacob**"? He is not the God of the dead but of **the living**'" (Matt. 22:29-32). "The point being made is that God has a continuous conscious, living, relationship with the Patriarchs, which is one reason why He cannot leave their bodies dead" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 703). "And six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. And **Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus**. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' For he did not know what to answer; for they became terrified. Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, 'This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!' And all at once they looked around and saw no one with them anymore, except Jesus alone" (Mark 9:2-8). "He is not the **God of the dead**, but of the **living**; you are greatly mistaken" (Mark 12:27). "And some eight days after these sayings, it came about that He took along Peter and John and James, and went up to the mountain to pray. And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming. And behold, **two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, who, appearing in glory, were**

speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep; but when they were fully awake, **they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.** And it came about, as **these were parting from Him,** Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah’ — not realizing what he was saying. And while he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!’ And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen” (Luke 9:28–36). “Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And **a certain poor man named Lazarus** was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now it came about that **the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom;** and the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and **saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom.** And he cried out and said, “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and **send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue;** for I am in agony in this flame.” But Abraham said, “Child, remember that **during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here,** and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you **there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.**” And he said, “Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father’s house — for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment.” But Abraham said, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.” But he said, “No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!” But he said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead”” (Luke 16:19–31) “Parables do not have names like ‘Lazarus’ and ‘Abraham.’ This is a true story” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 702). “Now He is not the **God of the dead,** but of the **living; for all live to Him**” (Luke 20:38). “And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, **today you shall be with Me in Paradise**” (Luke 23:43). “For **to me,** to live is Christ, and **to die is**

gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, **having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;** yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again” (Phil. 1:21–26). “To be in Heaven at death is to be with Jesus, according to Philippians 1:23” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 519). “For we know that **if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.** Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that **while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord** — for we walk by faith, not by sight — **we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.** Therefore also **we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:1–10). “When the believer dies, though his body is also buried in the ground, his soul goes immediately into Heaven, as Paul reveals in 2 Corinthians 5:8” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 519). “While one must recognize that as long as one is in this mortal body he is absent from the Lord, one should always be willing to give up one’s life, one’s mortal body, to be at home with the Lord. Here is a clear verse which says purely and simply that upon absence from the body, upon death, the believer is in God’s presence” (*ibid.*, p. 725). “Is he speaking of an intermediate body, or is he speaking of the resurrection body? ...the evidence shows this to be the resurrection body” (*ibid.*). “Verses 3-4 do imply that there will be a temporary period of nakedness for the soul until it is clothed with the resurrection body” (*ibid.*, p. 726). “The conclusions can be stated in two simple points. First, this passage does not teach the existence of an intermediate body. Second, the body it deals with is the resurrection body” (*ibid.*). “Therefore it says, **‘When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave**

gifts to men.’ (Now this expression, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean except that **He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?** He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)” (Eph. 4:8–10) “While the body of Jesus remained in the tomb, His soul went down into the Paradise side of Sheol, or Hades, announcing that the atonement had been made. At the time of His ascension, all the souls of the Old Testament saints were removed out of Abraham’s bosom, or Paradise, and brought into Heaven. In this way the righteous portion of Sheol, or Hades, was eliminated and is no longer in existence” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 519). “The location of *Sheol* or *Hades* is in the center of the earth... Eph. 4:9-10... That is one of the reasons why *Sheol* or *Hades* is temporary, because when this earth is done away with at the end of the Messianic Kingdom, *Sheol* or *Hades* will no longer exist” (*ibid.*, p. 750). “When the Messiah ascended into Heaven, He took the souls of the Old Testament saints with Him; *he led captivity captive* (Eph. 4:8-10)” (*ibid.*, p. 754). “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about **those who are asleep**, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede **those who have fallen asleep**. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ** shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13–18). “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of **my departure** has come” (2 Tim. 4:6). “And when He broke the fifth seal, **I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God**, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and **they cried out with a loud voice**, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And **there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer**, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also” (Rev. 6:9–11). “John does not say that he saw ‘souls’ that had been beheaded, but that he saw the souls of ‘*them*’ that had been thus executed” (McClain, *GK*, p. 486). “Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “**These who are clothed in the white robes**, who

are they, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are **the ones who come out of the great tribulation** [likely via martyrdom; see our discussion of the great multitude in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* in our chapter *The Great Tribulation—ed.*], and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, **they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple**; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes" (Rev. 7:13–17). "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, 'Write, "**Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!**" 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them'" (Rev. 14:13). "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And **I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God**, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4–6). "This view of the Kingdom sustains the doctrine of an intermediate state, in which, whatever the condition of the saints, they are waiting for the period of redemption, waiting for the crown and promised inheritance" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:224). "The prominence heaped upon the condition of saints after death (so different from the Scriptural position, which says so little respecting it), and the extravagant eulogies attached to it, are practically leading multitudes to make little or nothing of the Advent, the resurrection, the covenant, and the prophecies" (*ibid.*, p. 394). "The saints after death are represented as hoping and waiting for greater blessings (Rev. 6:9, 10, 11, comp. with 20:4–6), and it is in view of this that the apostles, when comforting the bereaved, do not dwell on the intermediate state, but refer such for consolation to the period when Redemption is completed, as e.g. 1 Thess. 4:13–18" (*ibid.*, p. 397). "The Jewish view... that the Patriarchs and their deceased descendants, that all who had died true Israelites, were only to be raised to glory and covenanted promises at the Coming of

the Messiah” (*ibid.*, p. 399). “Some Jews, however, as Hudson [*Debt and Grace*, p. 257], notices, ‘did not consider the Patriarchs as living until the resurrection.’ But all united in the idea of a detention, an intermediate state” (*ibid.*). “Irenaeus (*Contra Haeres*, I. 5, c. 31, § 2), thus opposes the Gnostics: ‘The souls of His (Christ’s) disciples also, for whom the Lord did these things, go away into an unseen place appointed them by God, and there abide until the resurrection which they await. Then receiving bodies and rising entire, that is, bodily, as the Lord also arose, they come thus to the vision of God’” (*ibid.*, p. 400). “From those who advocate the highest blissful, active consciousness in a Paradise located in Hades, down through those who have gradations of bliss to a pleasant sleep, down to utter unconsciousness—all, whatever they may make out of this intermediate state, insist upon an imperfect state, outside of heaven, which imperfection is removed at the Second Coming of Jesus” (*ibid.*, p. 402). “In the intermediate state the saints are waiting for the period of manifestation, when the reward, the crown, the inheritance, etc., is bestowed by the Theocratic King” (*ibid.*, 3:60) “1 Thessalonians 4:13-18... In reference to the death of believers, Paul uses the term ‘sleep.’ This term, when used as a synonym for death, is used of believers only and never unbelievers. Thus, the Bible views the death of believers as a temporary suspension of physical activity until the believer awakens at the Rapture. Just as physical sleep is temporary (a temporary suspension of physical activity until one awakens, yet there is no suspension of mental activity), so is death: it is a temporary suspension of physical activity until one awakens at the resurrection. This verse does not teach ‘soul sleeping,’ for there is no cessation of spirit-soul activity, only physical activity” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 142). “In John 4:24, *God is a Spirit*, yet He is able to function without a body. Keep in mind that for all eternity past, the Second Person of the Trinity was also without a body; He took on a body only as of the Incarnation. Neither the Father nor the Spirit have a body; they are spirit beings and they are able to function apart from a body. Furthermore, Hebrews 1:14 [**Are they not all ministering spirits**, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?] states that the angels are spirit beings and they function without a body” (*ibid.*, p. 726). “...whenever the intermediate state of the dead is described, they are always seen as soul-spirits without bodies” (*ibid.*, p. 728). “The conclusion is very simple: there is no intermediate body! The body that the believer has is the only body he will ever have. When the body that is now mortal dies, the soul-spirit goes into Heaven and is unclothed. It remains naked until the body is resurrected, and then the soul-spirit is clothed again. There is no intermediate body” (*ibid.*, p. 729). “Paradise... it

is a term describing the abode of the righteous ones, no matter where that abode may be at any point in time. In Luke 23:43, it is the same as Abraham's Bosom because at that point all the righteous ones went down to the righteous side of Sheol or Hades, known as Abraham's Bosom or Paradise. Until the death of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's Bosom... According to 2 Corinthians 12:[2-]4 ['...**the third heaven... Paradise**'], Paradise today is in Heaven. After the Ascension of Jesus, Abraham's Bosom was eliminated. Believers no longer descend down to Abraham's Bosom, but now go directly into Heaven. Today the believer's abode is Heaven, and so now Paradise is in Heaven... Revelation 2:7 ["...To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of **the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.**"] speaks of the future, when Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem, which means that the abode of Paradise will change again. As the New Jerusalem on the new earth will be the abode of all believers after the Messianic Kingdom, even so, Paradise is going to be in the New Jerusalem... To summarize: from Adam until the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's Bosom. From the Ascension of Jesus until the end of the Millennium, Paradise is in Heaven. Then after the Millennium and for all eternity, Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem on the new earth" (*ibid.*, p. 747). "While the animal blood sacrifices were sufficient to keep the Old Testament saint out of Hell, they were not sufficient to get them into Heaven... The reason the blood sacrifices, while sufficient to keep the Old Testament Saints out of Hell, were not sufficient to get them into Heaven is because the blood sacrifices only covered sin, but they did not remove it" (*ibid.*, p. 752). "It was also the death of Jesus that removed the sins of the Old Testament saints" (*ibid.*, p. 753). "Abraham's Bosom, the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, has been eliminated and Paradise is no longer in Abraham's Bosom. Paradise is now in the Third Heaven (2 Cor. 12:1-4)" (*ibid.*, p. 754). "Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a man was caught up to **the third heaven**. And I know how such a man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows — was caught up into **Paradise**, and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak" (2 Cor. 12:1-4). "Second Corinthians 5:6-8 teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and the Lord is in the Third Heaven. Philippians 1:21-23 states that to depart in death is to be with the Messiah, and the Messiah is in the Third Heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 754). "The intermediate state between death and resurrection is both temporal

and incomplete. Paul describes this state as being ‘unclothed’ (2 Cor 5:1-4), one that awaits the return to its natural union of body and soul” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:453).

See our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom is not the intermediate state in the section *The Kingdom was Not Transformed* of our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*.

Concerning *immortality*, “to those who by perseverance in doing good **seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life**” (Rom. 2:7) “For **this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and **this mortal will have put on immortality**, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (1 Cor. 15:53–54). “which He will bring about at the proper time — **He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality** and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen” (1 Tim. 6:15–16). “but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and **brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**” (2 Tim. 1:10) “...‘immortality’... to be technical, the biblical usage of the term is limited to the body only” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 697). “In 1 Corinthians 15:53-54, the Bible speaks of ‘putting on’ immortality, and the body puts on immortality at the Rapture of the Church. For the dead believer, immortality is *put on* by means of resurrection, and for the living believer immortality is *put on* by translation. This will occur at the Rapture” (*ibid.*).

The Intermediate State of Unbelievers

The intermediate state of *unbelievers* is one of disembodied yet conscious torment in the unrighteous compartment of Sheol/Hades while awaiting future bodily resurrection. “**Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall answer and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and worms cover thee**” (Isa. 14:9–11). “**And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days shall they be visited**” (Isa. 24:22). “for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, **so shall the Son of Man be**

three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40). “When Jesus died, His soul, His immaterial part, descended into the righteous portion of *Sheol* or *Hades*. In Matthew 12:40, Jesus predicted that He must go down into the heart of the earth where *Sheol* or *Hades* is located. Ephesians 4:9 states that Jesus *descended into the lower parts of the earth*. First Peter 3:18-19 points out that in His spirit, Jesus *preached unto the spirits in prison*. These *spirits* were the unrighteous ones in Hell” (Frucht-enbaum, *FM*, p. 753). “(Now this expression, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean except that **He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth**” (Eph. 4:9)? “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also **He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison**” (1 Pet. 3:18–19) “Now there was **a certain rich man**, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now it came about that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and **the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.”** But Abraham said, “Child, remember that **during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.**” And he said, “Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father’s house — for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment.” But Abraham said, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.” **But he said, “No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!”** But he said to him, “**If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead**”” (Luke 16:19–31). “(Now this expression, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean except that **He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth**” (Eph. 4:9)? “then the

Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to **keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment**" (2 Pet. 2:9) "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also **He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison**" (1 Pet. 3:18–19) "What happened when Jesus descended is that His spirit made a proclamation that His death guarantees the judgment of the unsaved. Jesus made the proclamation to those in Hell. Because of this, some assumed that Jesus descended into Hell and this He did not. He told the dying thief on the cross that on that very day, that both of them would be in Paradise, not in Hell. When Jesus died, His spirit descended to the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, Abraham's Bosom. As has been noted, if one were in Abraham's Bosom, he could see those in Hell and converse with those in Hell. So the spirit of Jesus descended into Abraham's Bosom and He made the proclamation that the death of the Messiah guaranteed their future judgment. Those who were to benefit from the death of Jesus were the souls of Abraham's Bosom only, not the souls of Hell" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 754). "Today, when an unbeliever dies, his body is still buried in the ground and his soul still goes into Hell" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 519). "...the unbeliever has a spiritually dead soul, but it is not nonexistent" (*ibid.*, p. 713). "There is present suffering for the soul with the worst to come after the final judgment. Now in Hell, only the soul is suffering, but later in the Lake of Fire, there will be suffering of both the soul and body. The verses that are used to try to prove that final determination is made only at the final judgement, not at death, too often confuse the various types of punishment. The issue of salvation is determined upon death; the final judgment determines only the degree of punishment. So like second probation, soul-sleeping is not the teaching of the Word of God" (*ibid.*, p. 736). "While the Scriptures do not actually use a special term for 'Hell,' the concepts of Hell are definitely biblical. What people call 'Hell' is what the Old Testament calls *Abbadon* or the Pit, the unrighteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*" (*ibid.*, p. 743). "Based upon what has already been stated about the unrighteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, and what has been stated about *Abbadon* or the Pit, this Hell contains unsaved humans only. It does not include fallen angels, because fallen angels are in two other places, the *Abyss* or *Tartarus*" (*ibid.*). "As far as unbelievers are concerned, nothing has changed for them. What happens to unbelievers today is a continuation of what was true before the Ascension of Jesus. The souls of unbelievers still go down to *Hades* Proper or Hell" (*ibid.*, p. 754).

The First Resurrection

The *first resurrection* is the (bodily) resurrection of the righteous. It occurs prior to the Millennial Kingdom, in stages. It includes the resurrections of Christ, the church, Tribulation saints and Old Testament saints. **“Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead”** (Isa. 26:19). **“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt”** (Dan. 12:2). **“But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous”** (Luke 14:13-14). **“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment”** (John 5:25-29). **“...the word ‘hour’... hora... The use of the same word in John 4:21-23 [‘Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.’]... an extended period of time... the ‘hour’ has lasted throughout the present dispensation... So the word ‘hour’ does not militate in the least particular against the doctrine that there will be a first and a second resurrection, for, as Meyer has well pointed out, the word is capable of prophetic extension”** (Feinberg, *M*, p. 348). **“Martha said to Him, ‘I know that he [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection on the last day’”** (John 11:24). **“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this’”** (John 11:25-26)? **“But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits,**

after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:20-24). "in order that I may attain to **the resurrection from the dead**" (Phil. 3:11). "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about **those who are asleep**, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that **Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until **the coming of the Lord**, shall not precede **those who have fallen asleep**. For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first**. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:13-17). "Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain **a better resurrection**" (Heb. 11:35) "and the living One; and **I [Jesus] was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades**" (Rev. 1:18). "And I will grant authority to **my two witnesses**, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.'... And when they have finished their testimony, **the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them**. And their **dead bodies** will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their **dead bodies** for three and a half days, and will not permit their **dead bodies** to be laid in a tomb. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. And **after the three and a half days the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet**; and great fear fell upon those who were beholding them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, 'Come up here.' And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them" (Rev. 11:3-13) "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand**; and

they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4-6). “The doctrine of a general resurrection was of later origin, developed by the Alexandrian school; the first Christians, as far as known, not advocating it, but holding to a first and second resurrection” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:472). “...believers... like Jesus, they only triumph over death (so e.g. Paul, 1 Cor. 15) through the power of the resurrection” (*ibid.*, 2:172). “The Bride of Christ who will reign with Christ will be constituted of translated and resurrected saints, the two companies now joined forever. Furthermore, the King and Queen will rule over people alive when Christ comes (see Matt. 25:31-46), but there will also be some who have been resurrected from Israel (Dan. 12:1-2) and from the nations (Rev. 21:24)” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 335). “Three diverse resurrections are named in 1 Corinthians 15:20-24, and two in John 5:25-29 and Revelation 20:4-6. When three are indicated it is of Christ, of believers, and of the unsaved. Between the resurrection of Christ and that of believers, the present age obviously intervenes. Between the resurrection of believers and the end or final resurrection, which is of the unsaved, is the kingdom reign of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 15:24-26). The two resurrections of humanity are termed the first and the second (cf. Rev 20:4-6; Phil. 3:11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:394). “1 Corinthians 15:23... ‘every man in his own order.’ The first resurrection is composed of different groups: church saints, Old Testament saints, tribulation saints. Even though these groups are raised at different times, they are a part of the first resurrection program and are ‘orders’ in that program” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 176). “The order of events in the resurrection program would be: (1) the resurrection of Christ as the beginning of the resurrection program (1 Cor. 15:23) (2) the resurrection of the church age saints at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:16) (3) the resurrection of the tribulation period saints (Rev. 20:3-5), together with (4) the resurrection of Old Testament saints (Dan. 12:2; Isa. 26:19) at the second advent of Christ to the earth; and finally (5) the final resurrection of the unsaved dead (Rev. 20:5, 11-14) at the end of the millennial age. The first four stages would all be included in the first resurrection or resurrection to life, inasmuch as all receive eternal life and the last would be the second resurrection, or the resurrection unto damnation, inasmuch as all receive eternal judgment at that time” (*ibid.*, p. 411). “All of the righteous dead of all the ages will have been resurrected before the institution of Christ’s

earthly Davidic kingdom, leaving only the wicked dead unresurrected after the Second Advent” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 318). “Thus the Lord outlined the framework of a future age characterized by two divine works: first, the work of *spiritual* regeneration; and second, the work of *bodily* resurrection. The details are filled in by the Old Testament prophets and the Book of Revelation. The age will begin with the resurrection of the saints of past ages, and it will end with the resurrection of the unsaved. During the same age multitudes will be saved by the work of *regeneration*, and for these, apparently, there will be no physical death” (McClain, *GK*, p. 489). “The words, ‘This is the first resurrection,’ do not mean that this resurrection is confined to the ‘beheaded’ martyrs of [Rev. 20] verse 4. For, in the Biblical record, the Church of the present age, the bride of Christ, has already appeared in her glorified state in heaven (19:1-9). And the two witnesses of chapter 11 were resurrected almost immediately following their death (11:11-12). As a matter of fact, there are various classes of saved people who will have a part in this ‘first resurrection.’ But the martyrs of the judgment period of chapters 6-19 constitute the *last* of these classes. When these martyrs ‘live’ again, the Holy Spirit writes *finis* to this blessed resurrection with the pronouncement—‘This is the first resurrection’ (20:5). In the excellent comment of Lange: ‘With these words the Seer constitutes that entire resurrection-process which begins with the Parousia of Christ, a distinct dogmatical conception’” [quoting J. P. Lange, *Revelation of St. John*] (*ibid.*, p. 490). “It is significant that when the record moves from the resurrection of the martyred saints of [Rev. 20] verses 4-5 to the material in verse 6, the writer seems to broaden the scope of the first resurrection. It is no longer a specific class under consideration (the ‘beheaded ones’), but the statement becomes very general: ‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power’ (vs. 6). There is room left here for all the various groups of the saved, from the ‘church of the first-born’ (Heb. 12:23) down to the last martyr of the end-time” (*ibid.*). “All elect of all ages converge upon the millennial scene” (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 61). “Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, pp. 407-411] concludes that ‘the resurrection of the church and Israel take place at two different times’ for ‘Scripture shows that Israel will be resurrected at the close of the tribulation period, while the church will be resurrected prior to it’” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 544). “The first resurrection includes the following five stages: The *first* was the resurrection of Jesus ([1 Cor. 15] vs. 23)—He is the firstfruits of the first resurrection; the *second* is the resurrection of the Church saints at the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:16) prior to the Great Tribulation; the *third* will be the resurrection of the Two Witnesses in the middle of the Tribula-

tion; *fourth* will come the Old Testament saints (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) during the seventy-five day interval after the Tribulation; and *fifth*, the Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4). The resurrection of the Tribulation saints completes the first resurrection. There will be no such thing as a resurrection of millennial saints” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 369) “The Old Testament saints (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) and the Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4) will be resurrected in the seventy-five day interval between the Tribulation and the Millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 395). “When the first resurrection occurs, the bodies of the believers will be resurrected and reunited with their souls. This will occur at the Rapture of the Church saints, and for the Old Testament and Tribulation saints it will occur after the Second Coming” (*ibid.*, p. 519). “There will be two resurrections. The first is of believers and will occur *before* the thousand-year reign of Christ; the second is of unbelievers and will happen *after* the millennium” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:291). “Death was *officially* defeated by the Crucifixion and Resurrection (Col. 2:14-15; 1 Cor. 15:54-55), yet death still reigns in that all still physically die (Rom. 5:12). Death will be *actually* defeated after the Second Coming (Rom. 8:22-23; 1 Cor. 15:50-54; Rev. 21:4)” (*ibid.*, p. 565).

As is true of all biblical resurrections, the first resurrection is a *bodily* resurrection. “Thy dead shall live; my **dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;** for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead” (Isa. 26:19). “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2). “Martha said to Him, ‘I know that **he [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection on the last day**’” (John 11:24). “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, **He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies** through His Spirit who indwells you” (Rom. 8:11). “And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, **the redemption of our body**” (Rom. 8:23). “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**” (1 Cor. 15:52-53). “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, **the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:20-21). “...resurrection of the *bodies* of dead saints” (Pe-

ters, *TTK*, 2:228) “The belief in a literal resurrection of the body, according to numerous writers, was a common one among the Jews at the time of Christ (Matt. 22; Luke 20; Acts 23:6-8; John 11:24, etc.), and the language of Christ and the apostles is pre-eminently calculated to confirm them in their belief” (*ibid.*). “That the language of Christ and the apostles taught such a resurrection, is confirmed by the fact that all the early churches distinctively proclaimed it as their faith, thus corroborating the views entertained by the Jews. And this general belief was not confined to Jewish but was embraced in the Gentile churches” (*ibid.*). “If the body is not also redeemed, restored to its forfeited condition, then the Redemptive process is in so far incomplete” (*ibid.*, p. 229). “...forming again a reunion of soul and body” (*ibid.*, p. 230) “The Church is rapidly drifting away from the idea of a corporeal resurrection. The old-fashioned faith—even evidenced by the Patriarchs—does not suit modern notions” (*ibid.*). “Philosophy, science, spiritualizing may speculate and tender objections, but faith accepts the asserted fact that the body itself—like Christ’s—shall undergo this change or transformation, just as it is represented that the bodies of the living at the Second Advent, when translated, shall also undergo a wonderful transformation” (*ibid.*, p. 232). “Luther’s view, as repeatedly taught, was that of a resurrection of the body, but that the resurrected body was one totally changed from the corruptible body buried, and that such a change was only to be realized at the future Second Advent” (*ibid.*, p. 234). “We are old-fashioned enough in our belief to cling with hope to that day beyond the intermediate period or state, when the redemption of the body will also be effected. And this, because we rest on a perfect, complete Redemption... Everything else that man and the race forfeited by sin is restored through Christ, and we can make no exception in favor of the body, given over to death and corruption, without making Redemption in so far incomplete, and giving in this particular the victory and triumph to Satan... Hence, every theory, however plausible, and no matter by whom advocated, that proceeds to limit Redemption, the work of Christ, must be rejected as irreconcilable with the honor, power, etc. of God in Redemption” (*ibid.*, p. 236). “Knapp (*Ch. Theol.*, 151, 1) remarks: ‘Death was compared with sleep and the dead body with a sleeping person. Hence the terms which literally signify to awake, to rise up, to rise out of sleep, are also used to denote the resurrection of the lifeless body.’... Our opponents, themselves, give us the proper interpretation and application, although they cannot logically fit it into their system” (*ibid.*, p. 258). “They were put to death physically, and they will come to life physically” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 334). “In more than forty New Testament references to resurrection, with the possible exception of Luke

2:34, it is always used of a literal resurrection, never in a spiritual or non-literal sense, and has to do with the raising up of the physical body. This is assumed and not debated at this point” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 395). “And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is appointed for **the fall and rise of many in Israel**, and for a sign to be opposed —” (Luke 2:34) “...the term ‘resurrection’ (*anastasis*)... no one has ever produced a single indisputable instance in the New Testament where the Greek *anastasis* is ever applied to man’s soul, or an instance where the new birth is ever called a ‘resurrection’” (McClain, *GK*, p. 488). “...the unbiblical notion of disembodied ‘souls’ reigning with Christ *before* their resurrection and glorification” (*ibid.*, p. 492). “...if what died had not risen again, God would have lost the battle over death to Satan” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:269). “Rather than replacing the mortal body, the immortal resurrection body is ‘put on’ over it. We will be raised in our physical bodies” (*ibid.*, p. 270). “The resurrection body is not a mere physical body, it is a supernatural physical body, spiritually powered, literally *Spirit-dominated* (1 Cor. 15:44)... the ‘change’ (v. 51) will not be from a material body to an immaterial body but from a perishable physical body to an imperishable physical body” (*ibid.*). “**it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body**. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15:44). “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall **not all sleep, but** we shall all be **changed**” (1 Cor. 15:51) “A ‘spiritual’ body is one dominated by the spirit, not one devoid of matter; the Greek word *pneumatikos* (*spiritual*) means a body directed by the Spirit, as opposed to one under the dominion of the flesh. Spiritual here does not mean ‘immaterial’ but ‘immortal, imperishable’” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 276) “1 Cor. 15:50... ‘nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.’ Paul is not saying the resurrection body will not have flesh, but that it will not have *perishable* flesh” (*ibid.*, p. 281). “The resurrection body is called ‘spiritual’ and ‘life-giving spirit’ because its source is the spiritual realm, not because its substance is immaterial” (*ibid.*, p. 285). “‘Resurrection’ (Gk: *anastasis*) is never biblically used of a spiritual resurrection; it always means a literal physical resurrection from the dead. There is a spiritual coming to life called ‘regeneration’ (Titus 3:5-7; cf. Eph. 2:1), but this is never scripturally called a resurrection. It *isn’t* a resurrection, that is, ‘a coming alive again’; those dead in sin were born that way—they were never alive spiritually” (*ibid.*, p. 585). “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of **regeneration** and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope

of eternal life” (Titus 3:5–7). “And **you were dead in your trespasses and sins**” (Eph. 2:1) (See also our discussion of the fact that Christ’s resurrection was a *bodily* resurrection in the section *Career of the King* of our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.)

The first resurrection is *distinct from glorification*. “Many writers confound the resurrection and subsequent glorification, speaking of the future body as the resultant only of the resurrection, when it is one of the resurrection and the subsequent transforming (making the mortal immortal, etc.) power of God” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:230). (See our discussion of the glorification of the church in the section *Purposes of the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

It is *distinct from the second resurrection*. “And **many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake**, these to everlasting life, but the **others** to disgrace and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2). “But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at **the resurrection of the righteous**” (Luke 14:13-14). “And Jesus said to them, ‘The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but **those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead**, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die anymore, for they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection’” (Luke 20:34–36). “Luke 20:34-36... ‘they that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead,’ implies that some shall not be accounted worthy, and hence shall not then be raised up” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:275). “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; **those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment**” (John 5:28-29). “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first**” (1 Thess. 4:16). “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus** and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and **they came to life** and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. **The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection;** over these the

second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4-6). “...resurrection... the term ‘first’... has not so much reference to time as to privilege” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 243) “...the Jewish view... Aben Ezra... says: ‘Those who awake shall be (appointed) to everlasting life, and those who awake not shall be (doomed) to shame and everlasting contempt’” (*ibid.*, p. 247). “No clearer truth is taught in God’s Word than this: that there are two resurrections... one for the righteous unto life, and the other for the wicked unto condemnation” (*ibid.*, p. 278). “Wherever the resurrection of Christ or of His people is spoken of in Scripture, it is a ‘resurrection *from* the dead;’ and wherever the general resurrection is spoken of, it is the ‘resurrection *of* the dead’” (*ibid.*, p. 308). “The word ‘first’ applied to the resurrection has reference not to its being first in time (which would be incorrect, seeing that Christ’s res. and that of saints, Matt. 27:52, 53, preceded), but of its being a resurrection which also brings those who participated in it within the privileges of ‘the first-born,’ viz., a double portion, Deut. 21:17; priesthood, Num. 3:13, and government or dominion, Gen. 27:29. The subject of the resurrection, for a long time, was not clear to the writer until he observed the real scriptural application of the word ‘first,’ as just given” (*ibid.*, p. 315). “The notion that there is one general, all-inclusive, simultaneous resurrection within one hour is more a product of Romish theology than a doctrine of the Scriptures” (Chafer, *ST*, p. 366). “Scripture knows nothing of a general resurrection, either of Israelites or of all men, both good and bad, simultaneously” (McClain, *GK*, p. 196). “Dan. 12:2... John 5:28-29... In each of these passages where both resurrections are mentioned, the order is the same: The saved are raised, then the unsaved are later raised” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:263). “The two resurrections will be separated by a thousand years—Christ’s millennial reign” (*ibid.*) (See our discussion of the second resurrection in the section *Events in Preparation for the Eternal Order* of our chapter *The Lake of Fire*.)

It is to occur “*On the last day.*” ““And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but **raise it up on the last day.** For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and **I Myself will raise him up on the last day**” (John 6:39–40). “No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and **I will raise him up on the last day**” (John 6:44). “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and **I will raise him up on the last day**” (John 6:54). “Martha said to Him, ‘I know that **he [Lazarus] will rise again in the**

resurrection on the last day” (John 11:24). “He will raise up believers (not at death) at the last day” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:230).

It is *the time of reward*. “But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for **you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous**” (Luke 14:13-14). (See also our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Rapture of the church is to judge and reward the church in the section *Purposes of the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

It is *for the purpose of raising up kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom*. “Rev. 20:1-6... the Divine Purpose... it is futile to attempt to dwarf it into the narrow boundary suggested. The Pre-Millennial resurrection is only a means necessary to secure a part of the rulers of this Kingdom; the idea of the Kingdom is not to be sought for in the means used for its re-introduction, but lies firmly imbedded in the oathbound covenant of God” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:599). (See our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Rapture of the church is to prepare rulers for the Kingdom in the section *Purposes of the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*. See also our discussion of the fact that believers will reign with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom in the section *Government of the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

It includes the resurrection of *the church*, which is accomplished at the Rapture. “Jesus said to her, **I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies**, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26)? “But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came **the resurrection of the dead**. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that **those who are Christ’s at His coming**, then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:20-24). “in order **that I [Paul] may attain to the resurrection from the dead**” (Phil. 3:11). “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede **those who have fallen asleep**. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and

with the trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first**. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up **together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13-18). “Sheol and Hades are used to denote the grave or the place of the dead. Many writers correctly infer that Matt. 16:18, ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,’ includes a direct reference to the resurrection, viz., that the power of death, decimating the Church, shall be destroyed—its prisoners being released. Lange presents the view of such in the following: ‘The leading thought in these words, is the triumph of life over death, of the Kingdom of the resurrection over the usurped reign of the Kingdom of Hades’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:258). “Tertullian tells us that in his day it was customary for Christians to pray ‘that they might have part in the first resurrection’” (*ibid.*, p. 305) “The thought in the mind of Paul [in Phil. 3:11], then, at the time of his turning to God, was not that he might attain to the general resurrection in which all would participate, but that he might take part in the out-resurrection from among the dead, the resurrection of the just” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 350). “...those who will be resurrected before the Tribulation, when Christ returns for His bride, which is the first stage of the first resurrection” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:631). (See also our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

It includes the resurrection of *the Tribulation saints*. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of **those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. **This is the first resurrection**. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:4-6). “Tribulation martyrs... Scripture also reveals there are others besides the saved Jews and the saved Gentiles who will participate in Christ’s earthly kingdom. In Revelation 20:4-6 it is revealed that those in the Tribulation period who receive Christ as personal Saviour and seal their testimony with their lives will be resurrected and ‘will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years’ (v. 6). Thus the martyred Tribulation saints will have their part in that earthly kingdom. They will be joined by all the Old Testament saints

who looked forward as Abraham did, ‘For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God’ (Heb. 11:10)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 315). “In this verse [Rev. 20:4], John sees two groups of saints co-reigning with Messiah. First are those to whom judgment was given. The judgment spoken of here is the Judgment Seat of the Messiah. These saints, then, will be the Church saints who will be resurrected at the Rapture of the Church and will receive their rewards in the course of the judgment... the second group... nor... the mark of the Beast... the Tribulation saints” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 368) “The Tribulation saints, those who *had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus* will also be resurrected after the Second Coming. They will also co-reign, like the Church saints, with the Messiah for one thousand years” (*ibid.*, p. 755). “All who die must be resurrected; those who die after Christ raptures His bride into heaven will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:631).

It includes the resurrection of *Israel’s Old Testament saints*. “Thus saith Jehovah: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, **Rachel weeping for her children**; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because **they are not**. Thus saith Jehovah: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith Jehovah; and **they shall come again from the land of the enemy**. And there is hope for thy latter end, saith Jehovah; and **thy children shall come again to their own border**” (Jer. 31:15–17). “This is applied (Matt. 2:17, 18) to a literal slaughter, and the resurrection promised is also literal” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:253). “Then that which was spoken through **Jeremiah** the prophet was fulfilled, saying, ‘A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, WEEPING AND GREAT MOURNING, **RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN; AND SHE REFUSED TO BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY WERE NO MORE**’” (Matt. 2:17–18). “The application made by Matthew of the passage in Jeremiah... Rachel... This passage is intensely interesting, because it answers the question whether little children (comp. with Matthew) will participate in this resurrection. The answer is given by God Himself in the affirmative” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 255). “**He hath swallowed up death for ever**; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 25:8). “A perfect exhibition of ‘death being swallowed up in victory’ (Isa. 25:8) will be manifested in the resurrected and glorified saints” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 148) “**Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead**” (Isa. 26:19). “The hand of Jehovah was

upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of Jehovah, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. And he caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, **can these bones live?** And I answered, O Lord Jehovah, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy over these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah. **Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.** So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and, behold, an earthquake; and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: **Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.** So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the **breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.** Then he said unto me, Son of man, **these bones are the whole house of Israel:** behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off. Therefore prophecy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, **I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land:** and ye shall know that *I, Jehovah, have spoken it and performed it, saith Jehovah*” (Ezek. 37:1-14). “The Jews (comp. e.g. *Westminster Review*, Oct., 1861, p. 246) held that Ezek. 37 taught a literal resurrection” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 253) “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be **a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time;** and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. And **many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life,** but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever” (Dan.

12:1-3). "...a leading objection against the Book of Daniel by destructive critics is, that a literal resurrection is taught" (Peters, *TTK*, p. 246). "Judaism contemplated a resurrection for Israel. In Daniel 12:1-3 we read that, following the great tribulation, Daniel's people will be raised from the dead" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:23). "The first resurrection is complete before the thousand years begin. All Old Testament saints are raised some time after the Tribulation, probably immediately after, according to Daniel 12:2, which follows the prophet's word on the time of trouble (12:1)" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 184). "What becomes of the Old Testament saints?... their place has been noted in Daniel 12:2 as after the time of trouble that is to come upon Israel" (*ibid.*, p. 350). "...a resurrection of godly Israelites (Dan. 12:1-3)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 172). "In the context of Daniel 12:2, Daniel is speaking of events after the Tribulation and, therefore, this is the time that the Old Testament saints will be resurrected" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 368). "But go thou thy way till the end be; for **thou [Daniel] shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days**" (Dan. 12:13). "**I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death: O death, where are thy plagues? O Sheol, where is thy destruction?** repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hos. 13:14). "Hos. 13:14... 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'"... Paul well knew that Hosea 13:14 (as well as Isa. 25:8) was a favorite passage of the Jews to support a resurrection of righteous Jews at the inauguration of the Kingdom by the coming of the Messiah" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:244) "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for **an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment**" (John 5:25-29). "Martha said to Him, 'I know that **he [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection on the last day**'" (John 11:24). "...the covenant given by God to Abraham and David cannot possibly be realized until the enemy death, which holds its chosen ones, is overcome" (Peters, *TTK*, p. 251) "This doctrine of a literal Pre-Millennial resurrection we admit, is 'Jewish.' This term of reproach (given in this sense by man) we cheerfully accept, for it is a distinguishing feature of our faith, seeing that we find it in the covenant given to Jews, in Jewish Prophets, in the teaching of a Jewish Saviour and Jewish apostles, and in agreement with Jewish statements of doctrine; and that only such

who are engrafted into the Abrahamic stock and become members of the Jewish commonwealth, shall participate in it. It belongs pre-eminently to the introduction of that Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom promised to the Jewish select nation. Even Rabbinical lore is full of intimations respecting it. That, therefore, which forms such an objectionable feature to many, is only an additional reason for retaining it” (*ibid.*, p. 260). “Barnes (*Com. loci*) says: ‘A doctrine similar to this was held by the Jews. Resch Lachish said, “Those who die in the Land of Israel shall rise first in the days of the Messiah”’” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “As to the Jewish belief, we only need to quote one authority hostile to Pre-Millenarianism, viz., Prof. Stuart, who (*Com. Apoc.*, vol. 1, p. 177) says; ‘That the great mass of Jewish Rabbins have believed and taught the doctrine of the resurrection of the just, in the days of the Messiah’s development, there can be no doubt on the part of him who has made any considerable investigation of this matter’” (*ibid.*, p. 311). “The ancient Jews (Cudworth’s *Intel. System*, p. 797) called the resurrection of the body ‘the angelic clothing of the soul,’ which, reminds one of the saying of Jesus, ‘made equal unto the angels’” (*ibid.*, p. 313). “The simplicity of the early meaning... The Jews held to the resurrection of the pious dead at the Advent of the Messiah, and from the prophets believed that this would be followed by a renovation of nature resulting from the exalted nature, power, and glory of the Messiah’s Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 476). “A resurrection is in store for Israel (Ezek. 37:1-14; Dan. 12:1-3), but there seems to be no revelation of the precise time when it will take place. The passage in Daniel relates this resurrection to the great tribulation. The passage in Ezekiel, if interpreted as a bodily resurrection, is definitely, according to the whole context, a part of the restoration of Israel to their own land” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:399). “Old Testament saints... Old Testament saints who died in faith will be resurrected at the second advent of Jesus Christ to the earth (Dan. 12:2; Isa. 26:19-20)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 315). “The surviving remnant enters into the millennial land of Israel where they will be joined by the resurrected Old Testament saints. At that time, the ‘Old Testament saints and resurrected Israel’ will be ‘given their places of honor and privilege and are associated with Christ in His millennial government’” [quoting Walvoord, *Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 288-291] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 543). “After the second coming, the Old Testament saints will be resurrected. This is stated by two Old Testament passages: Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2. With this resurrection, the unfulfilled covenantal promises will finally be fulfilled to them” (*ibid.*, p. 791). “These are the friends of the bridegroom (Jn. 3:29) who will be invited to the wedding feast with which the Millennium will begin” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 368). “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom:

but **the friend of the bridegroom**, that standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is made full" (John 3:29). "As for the Old Testament saints, they will be resurrected only after the Second Coming (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2), and they will be inside the Promised Land during the Kingdom. The Old Testament saints will inherit all of the Promised Land" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 755).

It may include the resurrection of *godly Gentiles*. "**Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust**; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. **For, behold, Jehovah cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain**" (Isa. 26:19-21). "Whether or not there may be a resurrection hope for godly Gentiles at this time is a matter of which Daniel says nothing. But Isaiah seems to indicate a wider scope in his words, 'Thy dead men shall live... Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust' (26:19). For this resurrection of God's 'men' is associated with the glorious coming of the Lord to punish the inhabitants of the earth (vs. 21)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 197).

Finally, we should point out, because Jehovah's Witnesses teach otherwise, that Scripture does not mention any resurrection as occurring *during* the Millennial Kingdom itself. Neither the Witnesses' millennial Kingdom resurrection hope nor their associated millennial "second chance" doctrine have any Scriptural support. Instead, the plain teaching of Scripture is that "it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

The Marriage Feast of the Lamb

The Millennial Kingdom will be inaugurated with the celebratory *marriage feast of the Lamb*. "**And in this mountain will Jehovah of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined**. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covereth all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. **He hath swallowed up death for ever**; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it" (Isa. 25:6-8). "Isaiah... connects a feast with the Kingdom and with a resurrection from the dead in Isaiah 25:6-8" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 372). "And Jesus answered and

spoke to them again in parables, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to **a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son**. And he sent out his slaves to call **those who had been invited to the wedding feast**, and they were unwilling to come. Again he sent out other slaves saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast.’ But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and **destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire**. Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but **those who were invited were not worthy**. Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to **the wedding feast**.’ And those slaves went out into the streets, and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with **dinner guests**. But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt. 22:1–14). “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the prudent answered, saying, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they were going away to make the purchase, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast**; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’ But he answered and said, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’ Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Matt. 25:1–13). “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the

Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.’ And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write, **“Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”**’ And he said to me, ‘These are true words of God’” (Rev. 19:6-9). “Dispensationalists do believe that the marriage feast comes after ‘the return of Christ in glory,’ and many believe that it is with this feast that the Millennium begins” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 296). “The marriage feast will take place on earth after the Second Coming, and with the feast the Messianic Kingdom will begin... Whereas the marriage ceremony involves only the Church, the marriage feast will include the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints... The Seventy-Five Day Interval” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 162). “[Rev.] 19:9:... *Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb...* It is with the Marriage Feast that the Millennium will begin, but the invitations are sent out just prior to the Second Coming. They go out to all the redeemed who are not members of the Church, i.e., the Old Testament and Tribulation saints soon to be resurrected” (*ibid.*, p. 344). “In a sense then, there will be a double wedding feast: One for the Church as the Bride of the Messiah and one for Israel as the remarried Wife of Jehovah” (*ibid.*, p. 372). (See our discussion of the marriage of the Lamb in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation* and our discussion of the restoration of Israel’s marriage relationship to Jehovah in the section *The Church is Not Israel* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.)

Chapter 25: The Millennial Kingdom

The Millennial Kingdom is the capstone of God's theocratic Kingdom program. It is the goal and the end result of the four unconditional Jewish covenants, and the subject of hundreds of Hebrew prophecies. It is the Kingdom for which Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Indeed, the Millennial Kingdom is the foreordained consummation of all biblical and human history. (For an introductory summary of the Millennial Kingdom, especially as it relates to the other four facets of the Kingdom of God, see the section 4. *The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*.)

Basis for Belief in the Millennial Kingdom

Belief in the Millennial Kingdom is the inevitable result of acceptance of a literal or "plain sense" understanding of Israel's covenants, Old Testament prophecy, Jewish tradition and Jesus' teachings. "It is the extensive prophetic writings as well as the unfulfilled portions of these covenants that provide the basis for the belief in the future Messianic Kingdom, and not merely one chapter of a highly symbolic book [Rev 20]" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 793). "To summarize, the basis for the belief in a Messianic Kingdom is two-fold: the unfulfilled promises of the Jewish covenants, and the unfulfilled prophecies of the Jewish prophets" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 377).

Considering these sources individually, belief in the Millennial Kingdom is based on:

Israel's covenants. The foundational basis of the Millennial Kingdom is God's four unconditional covenants with Israel: The Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants. "The kingdom expectation is based on the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the Palestinian covenant, but is in no way based on the Mosaic covenant. It is insisted that the covenants will be fulfilled in the kingdom age" (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 518). "The second basis for the belief in a coming kingdom rests on the four unconditional, unfulfilled covenants God made with Israel [the first basis in Fruchtenbaum's *Israelology* being Old Testament prophecy; see our next paragraph below—*ed.*]. These covenants are unconditional and so rely solely on God for their fulfillment and not on Israel. They are also unfulfilled and, since God is One who keeps His promises, they must be fulfilled in the future. They can only be fulfilled within the framework of a Messianic Age or a Millennial Kingdom... The first of these is the Abrahamic Covenant which promised an eternal seed developing into a nation that will possess the Promised Land with some definite borders. While that nation, the Jews,

continues to exist, never in Jewish history have they possessed all of the Promised Land. For this promise to be fulfilled, there must be a future kingdom. Furthermore, the possession of the land was not merely a promise to Abraham's seed, but to Abraham personally when God said: *To thee will I give it and to thy seed forever*. For God to fulfill His promise to Abraham (as well as to Isaac and Jacob), there must be a future kingdom. The second covenant is the Palestinian Covenant which spoke of a worldwide regathering of the Jews and repossession of the land following their dispersion. While the dispersion has already occurred and is in effect today, the regathering and repossession of the land still awaits fulfillment in the future. This too requires a future kingdom. The Davidic Covenant is the third covenant which promised four eternal things: an eternal house (dynasty), an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom, and an eternal person. The dynasty became eternal because it culminated in a Person who is Himself eternal: Jesus the Messiah. For that reason, the throne and kingdom will be eternal as well. Jesus has never yet sat upon the Throne of David ruling over a kingdom of Israel. The re-establishment of the Davidic throne and Christ's rule over the kingdom still awaits a future fulfillment. It requires a future kingdom. The last of these covenants is the New Covenant which spoke of the national regeneration and salvation of Israel encompassing each individual Jewish member of that nation. This, too, awaits its final fulfillment and requires a future kingdom" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 792). (See also our discussion of Israel's four unconditional covenants in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*.)

Old Testament prophecy. "The basis for the belief in the Messianic Age is based on two things. The first is the numerous prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the coming of the Messiah who will reign on David's throne and rule over a peaceful kingdom. There is a great amount of material in the Old Testament on the Messianic Kingdom and the belief in a Messianic Kingdom rests on the basis of a literal interpretation of this massive material" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 792). "Israel, in the period of the Messianic Kingdom, is a major theme of the Old Testament prophets. Indeed, it was the high point of Old Testament prophecy and every writing prophet with the exception of Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Malachi had something to say about it. To spiritualize and allegorize away such a great amount of Scripture is to confuse the whole science of interpretation. There is no reason to spiritualize any of these prophecies any more than there is reason to do so to those prophecies dealing with the first coming of Christ, such as the virgin birth, the birth in Bethlehem, His death, or His physical resurrection, etc." (*ibid.*, p. 793) (See hundreds of examples of Old Testament

prophecies which pertain to the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*.)

Jewish tradition. “...the Jewish idea of a dispensation to follow this one” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:424) (For a full discussion of the Jewish expectation of the Kingdom see our chapter *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*.)

And, *Jesus’ teachings.* “**Pray, then, in this way:** “Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come.** Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven”” (Matt. 6:9–10). “It is to be regretted, however, that the word ‘Millennium’ ever supplanted the Biblical word ‘Kingdom,’ for it is this period that Christ taught His Disciples to pray for in the petition—‘Thy Kingdom Come’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 92). (See our discussion of Jesus’ announcement and offer of the Kingdom in our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*.)

Purposes of the Millennial Kingdom

The Millennial Kingdom is not the ultimate, desired end in itself (the ultimate, desired end being the Eternal Order), but rather a means to an end. “He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He **purposed** in Him with a view to **an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth**” (Eph. 1:9–10). (For a full discussion of the purposes of the Millennial Kingdom, see our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*.)

Timing of the Millennial Kingdom

The *timing* of the Millennial Kingdom is *after Jesus’ Second Coming*. After His Second Coming, Jesus will be physically (bodily) present and available to administer His Kingdom. “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31). (See our discussion of the fact that the Second Coming occurs *before the Millennial Kingdom* in the section *Timing of the Second Coming* of our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

Some speculation has been offered that the Millennial Kingdom might possibly coincide with the seventh millennium of man’s existence. “...the Covenant promises were linked with the seventh Millenary by the Jews... they believed that David’s Son would inaugurate in His Kingdom the Great Sabbath” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:455) “The kingdoms of this world are to last for Six Thousand Years. Moses was compelled to wait for Six days on the Mount before God revealed Himself unto him” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 172). “It was

Six days after Jesus foretold of His coming glory before He took His Disciples to the Mount where He was transfigured before them. Matt. 16:28-17:2” (*ibid.*).

Duration of the Millennial Kingdom

The *duration* of the Millennial Kingdom is, by definition and by Scripture, *one thousand years*. “And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for **a thousand years**, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until **the thousand years** should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and **reigned with Christ a thousand years**. The rest of the dead lived not until **the thousand years** should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall **reign with him a thousand years**. And when **the thousand years** are completed, Satan will be released from his prison” (Rev. 20:1-7) “The 1000 years of Rev. 20:2-7 are ordinary years, just as the 70 years of the Babylonian Captivity were” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 74). “This period is mentioned 6 times in Rev. 20:1-7, and is generally called ‘The Millennium,’ from the Latin words ‘Mille’ (1000) and ‘Annum’ (year)” (*ibid.*, p. 92). “Six times in this passage [Rev. 20:1-7] it is stated that Christ’s millennial kingdom will continue for a thousand years” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 491). “Since the Kingdom is to be established at the second coming of Christ, and it is to be delivered up to the Father at the ‘end,’ the period of the Kingdom must be located in the future between the two resurrections, as also indicated clearly in Revelation 20” (McClain, *GK*, p. 435). “The only real contribution that Revelation makes to the knowledge of the kingdom is to disclose just how long the Messianic Kingdom will last, namely one thousand years, for which the term ‘Millennium’ is used. This is the one key truth concerning the kingdom that was not revealed in the Old Testament” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 792). “...material in the Old Testament on the Messianic Kingdom... the belief in a Messianic Kingdom rests on the basis of a literal interpretation of this massive material... The only real contribution that the Book of Revelation makes to the

knowledge of the Kingdom is to disclose just how long the Messianic Kingdom will last—namely one thousand years” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 376). “A second thing that was unknown from the Old Testament prophets was the circumstances by which the Kingdom would come to an end and how this would lead into the Eternal Order” (*ibid.*) “John also declares the messianic reign is temporary, affirming six times that it is a thousand years long (Rev. 20)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:474). “Facts mentioned only once in the Bible are true; the future messianic kingdom is said to be a thousand years long *six times* in Revelation 20:1-7” (*ibid.*, p. 558). “Other numbers in Revelation are used literally; for example, 1,260 days (12:6) is a literal three and one-half years (Dan. 12:7, 11)” (*ibid.*). “The ‘thousand years’ of the millennial reign is mentioned six times (Rev. 20:2-7). Being ‘born again’ is only mentioned twice (John 3:3, 7), yet no evangelical has difficulty upholding that” (*ibid.*, p. 574).

However, *the Kingdom will extend beyond the one thousand years.* “And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up **a kingdom which shall never be destroyed**, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and **it shall stand for ever**” (Dan. 2:44). “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: **his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed**” (Dan. 7:13-14). “For unto us a child is born, unto us **a son** is given; and **the government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it** with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even **for ever**” (Isaiah 9:6-7). “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and **He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:31-33). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and **He will reign forever and ever**’” (Rev. 11:15). “Calvin’s [in John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II, 250-51] reason for re-

jecting the premillennial view was his concept that the thousand year reign nullified the eternal reign of Christ. Did the premillennialist limit the reign of Christ to a thousand years, his contention that ‘their fiction is too puerile to require or deserve refutation’ would be true. However such is not the case” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 491). “...‘the thousand years,’... the mediatorial reign of *Christ* is not limited to this precise measure of time. The record specifically states that this measure applies to the reign of the *saints*: ‘they... shall reign with him a thousand years’ (20:6). In a very real sense, the mediatorial reign of Christ Himself may be said to begin *de jure* with His judicial work from heaven, as suggested by the announcement in 11:15 — ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.’ And not only so, but His mediatorial reign extends beyond the end of the thousand years. ‘For he must reign,’ Paul writes, ‘till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death’ (1 Cor. 15:25-26). And the destruction of death is beyond the end of the thousand years (Rev. 20:7, 14)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 495). “Even though Christ’s reign is less than literally eternal, the results of it are everlasting” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:474). “The actual result of a literal thousand-year reign will be an unending kingdom” (*ibid.*).

Description of the Millennial Kingdom

The Millennial Kingdom will be glorious, encompassing the earth, the human race, the government of mankind, nations, culture and life. “...language is too feeble to express what will be realized” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:127). “Yes let us, in imagination, take our position in the established Theocratic Kingdom, and we can easily realize the simple fact that the Theocratic King —so exalted and majestic, so mighty and the Purchaser of salvation—having died to secure redemption, will ever preserve the loyalty and love of His subjects. Saints experiencing the blessings of perfected salvation are, of course, self-devoted to the Theocracy; Jews, repentant and believing, restored and exultant with their station after painful ages of affliction, are jubilant in their adhesion to a Messiah once scorned and rejected; and Gentiles, coming under and realizing the blessings of the Theocratic sway, cheerfully honor and praise the King. Imagine ourselves in such a happy state, and in it to read Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 2:16, and a thousand similar passages, and will not our hearts be so bound up with this King and the welfare of His Kingdom that to serve and honor Him will be our highest joy? Well can we see how the future mission of the Church (Eph. 3:21) and of the Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 11) will be verified by glorious experience” (*ibid.*, 3:456). “For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God

through the death of His Son, **much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life**" (Rom. 5:10). "namely, that **God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them**, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19). "and might **reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity**" (Eph. 2:16). "**to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen**" (Eph. 3:21). "The most reasonable thing in the world, if once the prophetic and covenanted idea of the Messianic Kingdom is retained, is that, when the Theocratic Kingdom is restored under David's Son and Lord, the greatness and majesty of the King should bring forth, as Jesus testifies, a splendor and glory far exceeding anything that the world has ever witnessed, or that we can imagine" (Peters, *TTK*, p. 528). "The Millennium includes all the saints of all ages" (Walvoord, *TRQ*, p. 187). "...the glory of a millennial kingdom" (Walvoord, *MK*, p.183) "Consequently, if the Paradise lost is *not* a Paradise regained, then God will have lost the war; if physical death is not reversed by physical resurrection, then Satan obtains ultimate victory; if literal perfection is not restored, then God will have lost what He created. However, because God is immutable and omnipotent, He will reverse the curse and gain victory over the Satan-damaged creation. This He will do by a literal resurrection and by a literal earthly reign of Christ. He will reign until death is actually defeated (1 Cor. 15:24-27; Rev. 20:4-6), at the end of the Millennium and the beginning of the new heaven and earth (21:4)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:565). "Premillennialism maintains that the Millennium is not the first chapter of eternity but the last chapter of time, the time when sin, suffering, and death will be finally overcome by Christ's reign (1 Cor. 15:24-25)" (*ibid.*).

The Earth in the Millennial Kingdom

The earth will return to a paradisiacal, Edenic state, as originally proposed by God.

The earth will be renovated. "For, **behold, I create new heavens and a new earth**; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create **Jerusalem a rejoicing**, and **her people a joy**. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her **no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying**. There shall be **no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days**; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And **they shall**

build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for **as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.** They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. **The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy** in all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah" (Isa. 65:17–25). "This passage begins with the announcement of the creation of new heavens and a new earth ([Isaiah] v. 17). These new heavens and new earth are not to be confused with those of Revelation 21-22. The latter describes the new heavens and new earth of the Eternal Order, while the Isaiah passage describes those of the Messianic Kingdom which will be a renovation of the present heavens and earth. Those of the Revelation are not a renovation, but a brand new order. Hence, for the Millennium, there will be a total renovation of the heavens and the earth. The fact that the term *create* is used shows that this renovation will be a miraculous one, possible by God alone" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 382).

The curse will be removed. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life**" (Gen. 3:17) "For **the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God**" (Rom. 8:20–21). "And **there shall no longer be any curse;** and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him" (Rev. 22:3) "At the Millennium's commencement, the Paradise lost will become the Paradise regained. The dead who believed will be raised and reverse the curse on the body; nature will be restored and reverse the curse on creation" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:563). "...with many (but not all) of the effects of the curse removed" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 384). (See also our discussion of the removal of the curse in the section *Purposes of the Kingdom* in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*.)

Visible light will be increased. "Moreover **the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be**

sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that Jehovah bindeth up the hurt of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound” (Isa. 30:26). “The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but Jehovah will be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended” (Isa. 60:19–20). “Isa. 30:26... Isa. 60:19-20... This may refer to that part of the Holy Land that shall be illuminated by the ‘Shekinah Glory,’ where it will make no difference whether the sun shines or not. It will have its complete fulfillment when the nations of the New Earth shall walk in the Light of the New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:23-24” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 96). “And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it” (Rev. 21:23–24). “...astonishing changes in the light enjoyed, Isa. 30:26 and 60:19” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:143)

The earth will be productive. **“There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the top of the mountains; The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon” (Ps. 72:16) “And he will give the rain for thy seed, wherewith thou shalt sow the ground; and bread of the increase of the ground, and it shall be fat and plenteous. In that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures; the oxen likewise and the young asses that till the ground shall eat savory provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fork. And there shall be upon every lofty mountain, and upon every high hill, brooks and streams of waters, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that Jehovah bindeth up the hurt of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound” (Isa. 30:23-26). “Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fertile field And the fertile field is considered as a forest” (Isa. 32:15). “The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God” (Isa. 35:1-2). “Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the**

glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes” (Isa. 35:6-7).

The Human Race in the Millennial Kingdom

The human race will be rejuvenated. It will be:

Saved. “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that **the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God**” (Rom. 8:19–21). “This Theocracy embraces not only perfected salvation as in the Rulers, i.e. those who reign with Jesus Christ, who are crowned as the inheritors of the Kingdom, but it includes the contemplated salvation of others, and the redemption of the race as a race” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:128).

The subjects of the kingdom. “The early Church, consistently with the doctrine of the Kingdom advocated, taught that after the Advent and after the resurrection and glorification of the saints, the Kingdom then established—being the Theocratic-Davidic restored under Messiah, David’s Son—would have the Jewish nation and spared Gentiles for its willing subjects” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:539).

Populous. “No one has ever yet found a passage within the Bible that directly teaches that the multiplication of the race ceases after the Advent of Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:542) (See our discussions of the facts that both Israel and the Gentile nations will be populous during the Millennial Kingdom in our section *Nations of the Millennial Kingdom* below.)

Government of the Millennial Kingdom

In the Millennial Kingdom mankind will enjoy *perfect government*.

The government will be *global*. “**And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it**” (Isa. 2:2). “**And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth:** in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). “‘In that day,’ the prophet Zechariah writes, ‘The LORD shall be king over all the earth’ (14:9). The Kingdom will include ‘all nations’ (Isa. 2:2)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 213). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever**” (Rev. 11:15).

It will be *pervasive*. “Instead of regarding government as a necessary evil—the less of it, the better—the beneficent rule of this Kingdom will extend to every department of human life and affect in some way its every detail” (McClain, *GK*, p. 213)

Israel will be politically supreme. “And it shall come to pass **in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples;** and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:2–4). “**For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;** yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (Isa. 60:12). “**But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills;** and peoples shall flow unto it. And **many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem;** and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning **strong nations afar off;** and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of Jehovah of hosts hath spoken it” (Mic. 4:1-4). “To ‘be established in the top of the mountains’ and to be ‘exalted above the hills’ denotes supremacy; for mountains and hills, being symbolic of kingdoms and nations, the meaning is, that the first position among the nations, an elevation above all others, is assigned to this ‘mountain of the house of the Lord’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:92). “The nations today are a ‘Headless’ body... There is no ‘Chief Nation’ today. In that day Israel shall be the ‘Chief Nation,’ and the nation that will not serve her shall perish. Isa. 60:12” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 96). “The political supremacy of Israel will be restored, this time to be exercised by a regenerated nation over Gentile nations which are willing to submit to the rule of Is-

rael's regal Messiah in the coming days of His power and Kingdom (Mic. 4:1-4)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 298). "...the Law of the Millennial Kingdom will emanate from this mountain ([Isaiah 2] vv. 2b-3). This will result in world-wide peace because differences among the nations will be settled by the Word of the Lord that will come from the Mountain of Jehovah's House (vv. 3b-4)" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 444). (See also our discussion of Israel's exaltation in our section *Nations of the Millennial Kingdom: Israel* below and our discussion of the Gentile nations' recognition of Israel's blessedness in the section *Nations of the Millennial Kingdom: Gentile Nations* below.)

Jehovah will visibly reign as King from Jerusalem in the Person of Messiah. "Yet **I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion.** I will tell of the decree: **Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son;** This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and **I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession**" (Ps. 2:6-8). "Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, **Is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, The city of the great King**" (Ps. 48:2). "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw **concerning Judah and Jerusalem.** And it shall come to pass **in the latter days,** that the mountain of **Jehovah's house** shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and **let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob;** and **he will teach us of his ways,** and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.** And **he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples;** and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:1-4). "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, **a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel ["God with us"]**" (Isa. 7:14). "For **unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this**" (Isa. 9:6-7). "Cry aloud and shout, thou inhabitant of **Zion; for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel**" (Isa. 12:6). "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for **Jehovah**

of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem; and before his elders shall be glory” (Isa. 24:23). “And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covereth all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever; and **the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces;** and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it. **And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him,** and he will save us: **this is Jehovah;** we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. For **in this mountain will the hand of Jehovah rest;** and Moab shall be trodden down in his place, even as straw is trodden down in the water of the dung-hill” (Isa. 25:7-10). “Look upon **Zion,** the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see **Jerusalem** a quiet habitation, **a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.** But **there Jehovah will be with us in majesty,** a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For **Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king;** he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not strengthen the foot of their mast, they could not spread the sail: then was the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame took the prey. And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity” (Isa. 33:20–24). “The Messiah in the midst of the city will serve as the Judge, Lawgiver, King, and Savior (v. 22)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 472) “O thou that tellest good tidings to **Zion,** get thee up on a high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to **Jerusalem,** lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; **say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God! Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him:** Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young” (Isa. 40:9-11). “Thus saith **Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer,** Jehovah of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God” (Isa. 44:6). “**At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem:** neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart” (Jer. 3:17). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.** In his days **Judah** shall

be saved, and **Israel** shall dwell safely; and **this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness**” (Jer. 23:5-6). “And the Spirit took me up, and brought me into **the inner court**; and, behold, **the glory of Jehovah filled the house**. And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, **this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever**; and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by the dead bodies of their kings in their high places” (Ezek. 43:5-7) “Then he brought me back by the way of **the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east**; and it was shut. And Jehovah said unto me, This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it; for **Jehovah, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it**; therefore it shall be shut” (Ezek. 44:1-2). “And I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed: for **Jehovah dwelleth in Zion**” (Joel 3:21). “Therefore **shall Zion** for your sake **be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains**, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and **peoples shall flow unto it**. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to **the mountain of Jehovah**, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and **he will teach us of his ways**, and we will walk in his paths. For **out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem**; and **he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off**: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Mic. 3:12-4:3). “and **I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever**” (Mic. 4:7). “But thou, **Beth-lehem Ephrathah**, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, **out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel**; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth: then **the residue of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God: and they shall abide; for now shall he**

be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be our peace. When the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men” (Mic. 5:2-5). “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of **Zion**; for, lo, I come, and **I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah.** And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and **I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee.** And **Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem**” (Zech. 2:10-12). “and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, **the man whose name is the Branch:** and he shall grow up out of his place; and **he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.** And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah; and **ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you.** And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God” (Zech. 6:12-15). “**Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem:** and **Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain**” (Zech. 8:3). “And **Jehovah shall be King over all the earth:** in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). “And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem** shall go up from year to year to **worship the King, Jehovah of hosts,** and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso of **all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts,** upon them there shall be no rain” (Zech. 14:16-17). “or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by **Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King**” (Matt. 5:35). “And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus.** He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:30-33). “But each in his own order: **Christ** the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then comes the end,

when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For **He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet**" (1 Cor. 15:23-25). "John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from **Him** who is and who was and **who is to come**; and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne; and from **Jesus Christ**, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and **the ruler of the kings of the earth**. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood" (Rev. 1:4-5) "And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever'**" (Rev. 11:15). "Jesus, who is the promised King of this re-established Theocracy" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:220) "Jesus was literally, personally a Prophet in teaching; He was also a personal Priest, offering up a real sacrifice in His own person. Thus He will also personally manifest His Kingly office, for the same language is employed in relation to this Kingship that is used in reference to His Prophetical and Priestly offices" (*ibid.*, 2:188). "No one, that we are aware of, has ever yet presented a passage of Scripture to prove the invisibility of the reign in the future" (*ibid.*, p. 341). "If His stay on earth at the First Advent as Son of Man included His personal, visible presence, so precisely at the Second Advent and stay on earth must the visible presence and reign be embraced because He then also comes and reins as the Son of Man and Son of David" (*ibid.*). "The leading objection urged against our doctrine, viz., that it is a lowering, etc., of the majesty of Christ, is precisely the same urged by the ancient Celsus against the First Advent of Jesus, viz., that it could not be credited that a divine Being should assume humanity, suffer, etc., because all this would be a virtual degradation" (*ibid.*, p. 342). "Mt. Zion, where David's throne was located" (*ibid.*, p. 349). "...the references to the Christ reigning in Mt. Zion and in Jerusalem are numerous... the very same Jerusalem that was overthrown, and made desolate and oppressed, is the one to which this Jesus comes and in which He is to reign... The Lord 'shall choose Jerusalem again.' The same contrast is preserved in Micah 3 and 4. For the identical Zion that was 'ploughed as a field' and the same Jerusalem that 'became heaps,' is to be re-established and exalted, and 'the Lord shall reign in Mt. Zion from henceforth, even forever'" (*ibid.*, 3:32). "What thoughts must have filled the mind of this King when, with His knowledge of the future, He walked the streets of the city destined to such long-continued downtreading and then to such honor and glory" (*ibid.*, p. 35). "Indeed, it would be difficult to identify this earthly Jerusalem more decisively than God has done" (*ibid.*). "Simple faith in God's promises

should prevent the substitutions which are to-day offered in place of Mt. Zion and Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 37). “God in the Person of ‘the Christ’ is King” (*ibid.*, p. 595). “...the Christocracy... our danger does not lie in believing too implicitly or too literally what is written” [quoting Adolph Saphir, *The Lord’s Prayer*, p. 193] (McClain, *GK*, p. 149). “Certainly, if there is ever to be a Kingdom of God on earth, no more appropriate place for its world center could be found than the place hallowed by the sacred memories of the One who there suffered and died for the sins of the world” (*ibid.*, p. 230). “It is a great privilege to walk where the Son of God once lived, suffered, and died. If this be so, how much more wonderful it will be to go there when He is once more there in visible manifestation and glory” (*ibid.*, p. 253). “If our Lord can be present bodily in heaven today while at the same time He is manifesting Himself wherever two or three are gathered in His name, why could He not during the millennial reign be present bodily in *Jerusalem*, while at the same time manifesting Himself spiritually wherever men call upon Him” (*ibid.*, p. 500). (See also our discussion of the meaning of the title “the Christ” in the section *Titles of the King* of our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.)

Believers will reign with the Christ. “Behold, **a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice**” (Isa. 32:1). “**But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever**” (Dan. 7:18). “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that **the saints possessed the kingdom**” (Dan. 7:21–22). “**And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him**” (Dan. 7:27). “**And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever**” (Dan. 12:3). “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than **John the Baptist**; yet **he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he**” (Matt. 11:11). “**Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father.** He who has ears, let him hear” (Matt. 13:43). “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that **you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**’” (Matt. 19:28). “He said therefore,

‘A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business with this until I come back.” But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.” And it came about that **when he returned, after receiving the kingdom,** he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done. And the first appeared, saying, “Master, your mina has made ten minas more.” And he said to him, “Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, **be in authority over ten cities.**” And the second came, saying, “Your mina, master, has made five minas.” And he said to him also, “**And you are to be over five cities.**” And another came, saying, “Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.” He said to him, “By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?” And he said to the bystanders, “Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.” And they said to him, “Master, he has ten minas already.” I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence” (Luke 19:12–27). “that you may eat and drink at My table **in My kingdom,** and **you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Luke 22:30). “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that **we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with **the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.** For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:16–21). “You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have **become kings** without us; and I would indeed that you had **become kings so that we also might reign with you**” (1 Cor. 4:8). “If we endure, we

shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:12) **“and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen”** (Rev. 1:6). **“And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father”** (Rev. 2:26–27) **“And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth’”** (Rev. 5:9-10). **“Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years”** (Rev. 20:6). “Saints are co-heirs with Jesus in this Judgeship, for they are to judge with Him on earth. But the passages explanatory of this Judgeship represent it as equivalent to the possession of authority, rulership, or kingship” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:355). “The taunt employed in the early Church (evidently derived from this doctrinal feature) that Christians were a ‘genus tedium,’ a class elevated above others, is, after all, but sober truth” (*ibid.*, p. 588). “...they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever (Dan. 12:3), or as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:43)... The least in this body of kings and priests is far greater than John the Baptist, Matt. 11:11... It is ‘a manifestation of the sons of God,’ a multitude of royal personages, forming the ruling power of an earth-wide dominion; the very number of them, all arrayed in magnificence, swelling the splendor of the court of the great King, thus presenting a scene of glory that shall be the praise of the world. The very services rendered by these kings and priests aid materially to exalt and endear them to the nations over whom they rule; for not only their authority shall be recognized, but their love, favor, and friendship” (*ibid.*, p. 592). “...discourses by Hon. Gerard T. Noel in his *Brief Inquiry into the Prospects of the Church of Christ*... ‘The higher management and control of the world will be in the hands, first of Christ Himself, and under Him, in the hands of men—of men, once like the mortal sojourners they govern, but now glorified like their Lord, and living amid their mortal kindred, as benefactors, princes, and kings. It is not needful to suppose their presence to be always apparent to their happy subjects; but still their visible manifestations to be sufficiently frequent, to sustain the mutual allegiance

and concord of mankind; to cheer the intercourse of life; and to perpetuate an abiding recognition of their intense benevolence and their sovereign authority,'... 'Is it not a reasonable anticipation, that in the future scenes of predicted glory it may be within the power of the glorified saints still to mingle invisibly amid the mortal sojourners of earth; sometimes to veil the radiance with which they will be clothed?'... Let the reader compare our doctrine of this reign, thus making the saints, while highly exalted, engaged in the most noble work in behalf of the race, with that shadowy, intangible, ethereal theory now so prevailing in the church" (*ibid.*, p. 593). "Compare our view with the vague, indefinite, spiritualistic views so prevalent and see the great difference. Here we have something substantial, real, for faith to see and hope to grasp, founded, not on the vain conjectures of man, but on the oath-bound covenants of God and His precious promises, which are 'Yea and Amen.' Our doctrine does not present the saint in his future inheritance as subject to a blind fate, or the unswerving forces of nature, or resolving back into original elements through natural causes, or uniting with the Supreme in some Pantheistic union, or taken away from his forfeited inheritance to unknown regions, or being enshrouded in a mystical grandeur and glory that no one can comprehend, etc., but it presents him in a definite inheritance, in a well-known Kingdom, in a position so accurately described, that we behold him sustaining an intelligent, religious, social, and civil relationship with the Supreme Intelligence and Ruler, being evermore a blessed, exalted co-worker with God and His Christ" (*ibid.*). "Dr. Schmucker (*On Rev.* ch. 20: 4-6, vol. 2, p. 852) correctly says: 'The Lord here invests those worthy and qualified from among His combatants with royal authority to govern the different nations, kingdoms, countries, and States as His viceroys, under His superintendence and direction. This is indicated by the thrones, upon which they seated themselves to execute *krima*, temporal judgment, against the disobedient,' etc." (*ibid.*, p. 600) "They are specially designed to exhibit the Theocratic ordering—its authority, institutions, laws, privileges, blessings, etc.—forming a medium between its King and its subjects, its magnificent throne and the nations... a channel of communication between God and the nations" (*ibid.*, p. 611) "As Lincoln (*Lect. on Rev.*, p. 232) has well said: 'For surely it would be a diminution of heaven's joy, if, once there, we were no more allowed to serve Him whom we love—if our hearts, brimful, had no outlet provided for their relief'" (*ibid.*, p. 612). "In virtue of their office they are near to God and accessible to men, and their influence will be felt in a commanding manner among all nations" (*ibid.*, p. 613). "...in Revelation 19:16, Christ is 'KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.' This would certainly imply other rulers (cf. Isa.

32:1; Ezek. 45:8-9; Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:12-27)” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 301). “If resurrected saints are to reign with Christ over the millennial earth, it would seem evident that there must be at least a limited amount of communication and association between resurrected saints and those in their natural bodies... comingling. As far as Scripture revelation is concerned, however, it seems to be limited to a few specific functions, and the primary activity of the resurrected saints will be in the new and heavenly city” (*ibid.*, p. 329). “...our Lord in His resurrection body was able to mingle freely with His disciples” (*ibid.*, p. 330). “The rod of iron that will characterize the rule of the government in the Kingdom will be implemented through various spheres and positions of authority” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 401).

There will be *two branches of government: Jewish and Gentile*. “The Messianic Kingdom will be administered through an absolute monarchy with a definite chain of command and lines of authority. The absolute monarch will be the Person of Jesus the Messiah. The delegated authority will be split into two branches: a Jewish branch of government and a Gentile branch, each in turn having a chain of command” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 387).

Jewish Government

The *Jewish* people will enjoy perfect government and political supremacy on the world stage. (See our discussion of the fact that *Israel will be politically supreme* above.)

The *chain of command* in the Jewish government will be: “Jesus the Messiah the King -> David -> The Twelve Apostles -> Princes -> Judges and Counselors -> Israel -> Gentiles” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 387)

Regarding *Jesus*, see our discussion of the fact that *Jehovah will visibly reign as King from Jerusalem in the Person of Messiah* above.

Regarding *David*, “And these are the words that Jehovah spake **concerning Israel and concerning Judah... but they shall serve Jehovah their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them**” (Jer. 30:4-9). “And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them **upon the mountains of Israel**, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture; and **upon the mountains of the height of Israel** shall their fold be: there shall they lie down in a good fold; and on fat pasture shall they feed **upon the mountains of Israel**. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord Jehovah... And **I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their**

shepherd. And *I*, Jehovah, will be their God, and **my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it**” (Ezek. 34:13–24). “And **my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd:** they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell **in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt;** and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children’s children, for ever: and **David my servant shall be their prince for ever**” (Ezek. 37:24–25). “afterward shall the children of **Israel** return, and seek Jehovah their God, and **David their king,** and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness **in the latter days**” (Hos. 3:5). “As the ‘Lord of Hosts’ shall reign in Mt. Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients ‘gloriously’ (Isa. 24:23), the inference is that King David will reign simply as ‘Regent’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 92) “In Ezekiel’s visions of the coming Kingdom, David is named a ‘prince’ who will resume his shepherdly care and reign in the midst of Israel ‘for ever’ ([Ezek.] 37:24-25; cf. 34:23-24)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 210). “David... He will be a king because he will rule over Israel, but he will be a prince in that he will be under the authority of the Messiah. Just as all the Gentile nations will have kings, so will Israel. The difference is that the Gentile kings will all have their natural bodies, while David will have his resurrected body” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 396). “From the viewpoint of Israel, David will be their king ruling over them. But from the viewpoint of the Messiah, David will be a prince” (*ibid.*, p. 397). “David will apparently be a regent in the millennial kingdom. A number of prophecies speak of David’s important place in the kingdom (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 37:24-25). Apparently David, who with other Old Testament believers will be resurrected at the second coming of Christ, will act as a prince under the authority of Christ, the King. Authority over the twelve tribes of Israel will be vested in the hands of the 12 Apostles (Matt. 19:28)” [quoting Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, p. 509] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 556).

Regarding *the twelve apostles*, “Then **Peter** answered and **said to Him**, ‘Behold, **we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?**’ And **Jesus said to them**, ‘**Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**’” (Matt. 19:27–28). “‘...judging the twelve tribes of Israel,’ thus explaining why they are to be enthroned, viz., to govern the restored Jewish nation, which will again be manifested in its tribal divisions (comp. e.g. Isa. 1: 26, 27)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:586). “and **I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy coun-**

sellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called The city of righteousness, a faithful town. **Zion** shall be redeemed with justice, and her converts with righteousness” (Isa. 1:26–27). “You who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel’ ([Matt.] 19:28). These men were assured positions of administrative authority in the kingdom that Christ will establish on earth at His return” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 268). “Again, the literal sense of a visible, outward political kingdom seems clearly to be in view; this is the common (if not universal) biblical use of terms like *tribes* and *Israel*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:470). “Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, bowing down, and making a request of Him. And He said to her, ‘What do you wish?’ She said to Him, ‘**Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left**’” (Matt. 20:20–21). “James and John had just previously heard from the lips of the Saviour (Matt. 19:28) that the apostles would be rewarded in the Kingdom with a rulership on twelve thrones; hence the request itself is indicative of this acquired knowledge of rulership and of their faith in its ultimate attainment” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:586). “**And you are those who have stood by Me in My trials; and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Luke 22:28–30). “The Twelve are promised two privileges with this appointment. The *first* is that they will be continually with Jesus and eating and drinking at His table throughout the Kingdom period. The *second* privilege is to have their own thrones from which they will rule over the Tribes of Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 398). “Unfortunately, nothing is said as to which Apostle is to rule over which tribe. The answer to that question awaits the fulfillment in the future Kingdom” (*ibid.*).

Regarding *princes*, “Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and **princes shall rule** in justice” (Isa. 32:1). “In the land it shall be to him for a possession **in Israel:** and **my princes** shall no more oppress my people; but they shall give the land to **the house of Israel according to their tribes**. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Let it suffice you, O **princes of Israel:** remove violence and spoil, and execute justice and righteousness; take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 45:8–9). “And the word of Jehovah came the second time unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; and **I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations;** and I will overthrow the chariots, and

those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. **In that day**, saith Jehovah of hosts, will I take thee, O **Zerubbabel**, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith **Jehovah**, and **will make thee as a signet**; for I have chosen thee, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Hag. 2:20–23). “...will make him as close to God as a signet ring is to a king. Zerubbabel has been chosen for an exalted position in the Kingdom and will apparently be among the princes mentioned by the other two prophets. Zerubbabel is also of the House of David” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 399) “...save the race as a race. This class also become saints, but subordinate to the saints raised to special Theocratic position under ‘the Christ.’... We are not authorized (as the Duke of Manchester in *The Finished Mystery*), to limit the saints elevated in the Theocracy to Kingship and Priesthood with Christ, to those living between the First and Second Advents. The transfiguration which introduces Moses and Elias who lived before, evidences this fact” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:563)

Regarding *judges and counselors*, “Therefore saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, the Mighty One of **Israel**, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies; and I will turn my hand upon **thee**, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy tin; and **I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning**: afterward thou shalt be called The city of righteousness, a faithful town” (Isa. 1:24-26). “...‘the first-fruits’ (144,000)... a variety of station and rank will be introduced into the incoming Theocracy” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:380). “These rulers will be responsible for the dispensing of justice in a judicial sense, and there will be no perversion of this justice” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 400).

Gentile Government

The *Gentiles* will also enjoy perfect government. “And I saw **thrones**, and **they sat upon them**, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of **those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus** and because of the word of God, and **those who had not worshiped the beast or his image**, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and **they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. **This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection**; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:4–6). “The Church and Tribulation saints will co-reign with the Messianic King over the Gentile nations. They will be the

King's representative authority and will carry out His decrees to the nations" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 395). "...in Psalm 72, the different Gentile nations will have kings over them... These kings will have their natural bodies, while the saints who will be over them will have their spiritual, resurrected, and glorified bodies. While the individual kings will be the supreme rulers over their own nations, they themselves will be under the authority of the Church and Tribulation saints" (*ibid.*). "A Psalm of Solomon. Give **the king** thy judgments, O God, And thy righteousness unto **the king's son**. He will judge thy people with righteousness, And thy poor with justice. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness. He will judge the poor of the people, He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee while the sun endureth, And so long as the moon, throughout all generations. He will come down like rain upon the mown grass, As showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace, till the moon be no more. **He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River unto the ends of the earth.** They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; And his enemies shall lick the dust. **The kings of Tarshish and of the isles** shall render tribute: **The kings of Sheba and Seba** shall offer gifts. Yea, **all kings** shall fall down before him; **All nations** shall serve him. For he will deliver the needy when he crieth, And the poor, that hath no helper. He will have pity on the poor and needy, And the souls of the needy he will save. He will redeem their soul from oppression and violence; And precious will their blood be in his sight: And they shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: And men shall pray for him continually; They shall bless him all the day long. There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the top of the mountains; The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: And men shall be blessed in him; **All nations** shall call him happy. Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things: And blessed be his glorious name for ever; And let **the whole earth** be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended" (Ps. 72:0–20).

The *chain of command* in the Gentile government will be: "Jesus the Messiah the King -> The Church and the Tribulation Saints -> Kings -> Gentile Nations" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 387) "So then, in the Gentile branch of government, the chain of command will be from Messiah to the Church and Tribulation saints to the kings of the Gentile nations" (*ibid.*, p. 396).

Regarding *Jesus*, see our discussion of the fact that *Jehovah will visibly reign as King from Jerusalem in the Person of Messiah* above.

Regarding *the church*, “The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.** He who has ears, let him hear” (Matt. 13:41-43). “You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have **become kings** without us; and **I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you**” (1 Cor. 4:8). “Remember **Jesus Christ**, risen from the dead, **descendant of David**, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him**; If we deny Him, He also will deny us” (2 Tim. 2:8-12) “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood **men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.** And **Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth**” (Rev. 5:9-10). “Coreigning with Christ will not confine the church to the earth; she will still have free access to heaven” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 318). “The gracious New Testament promise, ‘we shall... reign with him’ (2 Tim. 2:12), should never blind our eyes to the unbridgeable gulf between Him and us. He is infinite; we are finite. He is perfect in holiness; we are sinners saved by grace. In Him alone resides that regal authority which is final and complete, and which cannot be equally shared by even the highest and best of His creatures” (McClain, *GK*, p. 210). “Christ will reign with His transfigured saints over men in the flesh (Auberlen)” (*ibid.*, p. 483). “...if Christ and His saints are to be present bodily ruling in the coming Kingdom, where would they live... The answer is, of course, in *heaven*. The residence of the saints in heaven while ruling on earth, actually, is much less of a problem than that of a business man whose office is in a city while his residence is in the suburbs. One wonders at times how foolish the objectors can get. Have they learned nothing about the powers of a resurrection body, as set forth in the Bible, with its immeasurable superiority over both space and time” (*ibid.*, p. 500) “After the Tribulation period, at the time of His coming with His angels, He will bring the church with Him from heav-

en to remain with Him on the earth throughout the Millennium” (Showers, *M*, p. 13). “He is King of kings and Priest of priests; we will reign and minister under Him, drawing from Him both example and power” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:49). “There is no reason immortals and mortals cannot mix together in the Millennium. The immortals will have physical bodies and can eat and drink, just as Jesus did after His resurrection (cf. Luke 24:36-43; Acts 1:3). Jesus also was sinless and lived for some thirty-three years with sinful people; if anything, it will encourage sinful mortals to live alongside sinless immortals, seeing what they will soon be realizing (cf. 1 John 3:1-3)” (*ibid.*, p. 594). (See also our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Church Age is to select and prepare kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom in the section *Purposes of the Church Age* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*, and our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Rapture of the church is to reward faithful believers with authority in the Millennial Kingdom in the section *Purposes of the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Regarding *the Tribulation saints*, “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of **those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**” (Rev. 20:4).

Positionally, *Israel will be over the Gentiles*. “For Jehovah thy God will bless thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and **thou shalt rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over thee**” (Deut. 15:6). “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that **Jehovah thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth**” (Deut. 28:1) “And **Jehovah will make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath**; if thou shalt hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them” (Deut. 28:13) “For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and **the sojourner** shall join himself with them, and they **shall cleave to the house of Jacob**. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and **the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they**

were; and they shall rule over their oppressors” (Isa. 14:1–2). (See also our discussion of the fact that *Israel will be politically supreme* above and our discussion of the Gentile nations’ recognition of Israel’s blessedness in the section *Nations of the Millennial Kingdom: Gentile Nations below*.)

The rulers will be *ideal and perfect rulers*. “Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but **when the perfect comes**, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but **then I will know fully** just as I also have been fully known” (1 Cor. 13:8–12). “For **this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory’” (1 Cor. 15:53–54). “For **we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses**, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, **yet without sin**” (Heb. 4:15). “And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be **made perfect**” (Heb. 11:39–40). “Freedom consistent with the benefit and happiness of all is the only liberty, as the greatest of statesmen have shown, that ought to pertain to a State striving to become a blessing to its subjects... With a King who suffered in humanity and died for man, and with subordinate rulers who passed through the trials incident to an earthly pilgrimage, we have a body of rulers who can and will sympathize with the people, and manifest it by the power exerted in their behalf” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:596). “The Theocracy of the past (established to evidence God’s own chosen form of government, and to show that man as now constituted is incapable of properly appreciating and perpetuating it), could not be sustained because of man’s love for sin and guilt, which caused its withdrawal. Before it can be restored to its perfected, covenanted form to remain a permanency, there must be raised up for it a body of rulers who shall be permanently delivered both from the love of sin and its guilt... Hence as a preliminary to the future Theocracy, as an essential work to secure its stability and holiness, as a prerequisite to cause the will of God to be done on earth as it is done in heaven, He, the King, tenders Himself as a sacrifice for His people, so that by faith in Him

they might be justified, made holy, receive the better resurrection, and obtain the salvation and glory inseparably connected with His Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 600). “The Kingdom and reign of the saints are said to be in the future ‘on the earth’ (Rev. 5:10; see also Matt. 13:41-43; Luke 19:12, 17, 19, etc.). The error of identifying the Kingdom with the Church, followed by the logical attempt of certain ecclesiastical organizations to exercise during the present age a regal authority which belongs to the true Church in a *future* Kingdom, has been the source of untold evil and disaster. Such authority and power could never be safely committed to sinful men, even though redeemed and members of the body of Christ. To this lamentable fact we have the clear witness of nineteen centuries of church history. The Church must be perfected in order to reign with Christ over the nations in the coming Kingdom (Rom. 8:17-23)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 329). “There is a judging activity, however, of which men are capable even today, though very imperfectly. This consists in the investigation of facts, the interpretation of existing law, its application to specific cases, and the rendering of verdicts. Since throughout the Millennial Kingdom human life will continue with the possibilities of sin and error, though greatly restrained and controlled, it should be obvious that there will be need for such judicial activity then as well as now. But the immeasurable superiority of this millennial judging will be the absence of that prejudice and fallibility so characteristic of present human courts, even at their best. For, in that glad day, there will be no weariness, no disease, no weakening of the faculties of the mind by reason of age, and no sinful inclinations to cloud the pure judgments which will be issued by the perfected members of the Church. And each of the judges, we must not forget, will then be fully possessed and indwelt without hindrance by the Holy Spirit of God, who is ‘the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord’ (Isa. 11:2)” (*ibid.*, p. 485).

Believers will be priests with Christ. “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for **Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth**’” (Rev. 5:8–10). “The saints who inherit this Kingdom, i.e. are rulers in it, are designated as Priests, whose office can only be explained by referring it chiefly to an official position in which they make known the Will of God” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:30). (See also our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Church Age is to select and prepare

kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom in the section *Purposes of the Church Age* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.)

The government will be *a union of church and state*. (See our discussion of the fact that the government of the Millennial Kingdom will be a union of church and state in the section *4. The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom: Description of the Millennial Kingdom* of our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*.)

It will be *supernatural*. “The divine King who controls all the factors of physical environment will need no armies to rule the nations. The sanction of hunger alone would be a sufficient deterrent to all rebellion” (McClain, *GK*, p. 245).

It will be *lawful*. “And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law**, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:2–4). “During the Messianic Kingdom, a whole new system of law, Kingdom Law, will be instituted. There will be no reinstatement of any previous code of law” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 452).

It will be *righteous and just*. “Give the king thy judgments, O God, And thy righteousness unto the king’s son. **He will judge thy people with righteousness, And thy poor with justice**. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, And the hills, in **righteousness**. **He will judge the poor of the people, He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor**. They shall fear thee while the sun endureth, And so long as the moon, throughout all generations. He will come down like rain upon the mown grass, As showers that water the earth. **In his days shall the righteous flourish**, And abundance of peace, till the moon be no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; And his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute: The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; All nations shall serve him. For he will deliver the needy when he crieth, And the poor, that hath no helper. **He will have pity on the poor and needy**, And the

souls of the needy he will save. **He will redeem their soul from oppression and violence**; And precious will their blood be in his sight: And they shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: And men shall pray for him continually; They shall bless him all the day long. There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the top of the mountains; The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: And men shall be blessed in him; All nations shall call him happy. Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things: And blessed be his glorious name for ever; And let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen” (Ps. 72:1-19) “And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel** and might, the spirit of **knowledge** and of **the fear of Jehovah**. And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but **with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth**; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And **righteousness** shall be the girdle of his waist, and **faithfulness** the girdle of his loins” (Isa. 11:1-5). “And **a throne shall be established in lovingkindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness**” (Isa. 16:5). “And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. **They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat**: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (Isa. 65:21-22). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land**. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: **Jehovah our righteousness**” (Jer. 23:5-6). “The word of God is unmistakable on this point: nowhere short of the established Kingdom under the personal control of Christ will complete social justice *rule* on earth” (McClain, *GK*, p. 226). “Isaiah... ‘They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat’ (65:21-22)... The wastrels and parasites will not be living at the expense of others” (*ibid.*)

And, it will be *balanced*. “Historically, governments have been prone to swing between the two opposite poles of legal harshness on the one hand or sentimental laxness on the other. And the end is disaster in either case. But under the coming Mediatorial Kingdom the perfect equilibrium shall be reached” (McClain, *GK*, p. 209).

Nations of the Millennial Kingdom

Both Israel and Gentile nations will exist in the Millennial Kingdom. While they will have differing (although complimentary) roles in the Kingdom, they will both enjoy God’s blessings under idyllic conditions.

Israel

Israel, God’s chosen nation, will be regenerated and restored. She will be prosperous, with her covenants fulfilled and Jerusalem rebuilt and exalted. Her people will be God’s witnesses and ministers to the Gentiles. “...the promises of restoration were never realized in the return from Babylon; not in the King that was to reign over them, not in the magnitude of the return, not in the dwelling safely, removal of sorrow, imparting of prosperity, etc., not in the union of the two Kingdoms, or in the protection from enemies and perpetuity of the Kingdom, or in a manifestation of the Branch, or in repentance of the nation occurring as described, or in an engrafting of Gentiles, or in a gathering of nations against Jerusalem and a sudden deliverance, or in a fearful overthrow of nations and corresponding exaltation of the nation, or in a removal from nations so far off that they then did not know them (Zech. 7:14), etc... No! The Divine Spirit deals in sober, actual, blessed truth and, as fulfillment down to the present day abundantly testifies, never deals in Oriental eulogies with their engrafted exaggerations. It is amazing that believers in Holy Writ can overlook the fact that not only prophets before, but prophets at and after, the return from Babylon predict the same glorious restoration... The one from Babylon was designed and carried out to provide the necessary preliminary conditions for the First Advent; the one in the future is identified with the Second Advent... It is sad to reflect on the lack of faith existing in God’s promises, and how, to accommodate such want of faith, human reason seeks after an apologetic fulfillment which diminishes the lustre of the Divine Record, bringing its prophetic portion down to the level of the uninspired productions of man. Well may it be asked, if the return from Babylon with its small colony, under Persian rule, struggling painfully on, etc, is all that is meant by those glowing portrayals of restoration, dominion, and exaltation, where, in the light of historical fact, is the boasted foreknowledge of the Spirit which these prophets professed to be guided by, and what becomes then of the

credibility of their utterances in other respects? Such manipulation of Scripture is not only unwarranted but dangerous, leading as it does (as infidels have shown in seizing this Maccabean theory) to a direct impeachment of the truthfulness of the Divine Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:59). “It is impossible to apply them to the extremity under the Romans, for the events represented to follow, did not then take place; there was no deliverance and triumph of the nation, no Divine interposition and destruction of enemies, no Millennial glory, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 60) “The great spiritual blessings are promised to the identical people that suffered dispersion from their land, and are so repeatedly linked with a return to the same land from which they were driven, that it is folly to apply these to the Church as now constituted, and not to the time, place, and people for whom they are intended” (*ibid.*, p. 90). “Millennial blessedness without the cessation of Jewish tribulation and the elevation of that nation to its predicted supremacy, is something unknown to the Scriptures. Hence this simple distinctive point is itself sufficient to crush opposing theories which contradict it” (*ibid.*, p. 629). “Within the ranks of those who accept inspiration the restoration of Israel is recognized in exact proportion to the degree of literal interpretation allowed” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 184). “J. Dwight Pentecost [in *Things to Come*, p. 507] gives an excellent summary of the important place of Israel in the millennium in the following statement: ‘Israel will become the subject of the King’s reign (Isa. 9:6-7; 33:17; 22; 44:6; Jer. 23:5; Mic. 2:13; 4:7; Dan. 4:3; 7:14, 22, 27). In order to be subjects, Israel, first, will have been converted and restored to the land, as has already been shown. Second, Israel will be reunited as a nation (Jer. 3:18; 33:14; Ezek. 20:40; 37:15-22; 39:25; Hos. 1:11). Third, the nation will again be related to Jehovah by marriage (Isa. 54:1-17; 62:2-5; Hos. 2:14-23). Fourth, she will be exalted above the Gentiles (Isa. 14:1-2; 49:22-23; 60:14-17; 61:6-7). Fifth, Israel will be made righteous (Isa. 1:25; 2:4; 44:22-24; 45:17-25; 48:17; 55:7; 57:18-19; 63:16; Jer. 31:11; 33:8; 50:20, 34; Ezek. 36:25-26; Hos. 14:4; Joel 3:21; Mic. 7:18-19; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2-3). Sixth, the nation will become God’s witnesses during the millennium (Isa. 44:8, 21; 61:6, 66:21; Jer. 16:19-21; Mic. 5:7; Zeph. 3:20; Zech. 4:1-7; 4:11-14; 8:23). Seventh, Israel will be beautified to bring glory to Jehovah (Isa. 62:3; Jer. 32:41; Hos. 14:5-6; Zeph. 3:16-17)’” (*ibid.*, p. 303). “Israel within the period of the Messianic Kingdom is a major theme of the Old Testament Prophets. Indeed, it was the high point of Old Testament prophecy and every writing prophet with the exception of Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Malachi had something to say about it. The latter two did make reference to the Second Coming and the Tribulation, which, in the wider context of the Prophets, implied a kingdom

to follow. To spiritualize and allegorize away such a great amount of Scripture is to confuse the whole science of interpretation. There is no reason to spiritualize any of these prophecies any more than there is reason to do so to those prophecies dealing with the First Coming of the Messiah such as the virgin birth, the birth in Bethlehem, His death, or His physical resurrection” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 403). “To summarize, for the first time in Israel’s history, she will possess all of the Promised Land while the Land itself will greatly increase in its productivity and be well watered, all on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 432).

Specifically:

Jerusalem will again be chosen. “And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee. And **Jehovah** shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and **shall yet choose Jerusalem**” (Zech. 2:11-12).

Jerusalem will be rebuilt and exalted. And as the following passages make abundantly clear, the Jerusalem that is to be rebuilt and exalted during the Millennial Kingdom is not a “spiritual” Jerusalem or the heavenly New Jerusalem, but is rather the same earthly Jerusalem that has for millennia been center stage for Jehovah’s theocratic activities on earth. “Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised, In **the city of our God, in his holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is mount Zion**, on the sides of the north, **The city of the great King**. God hath made himself known in her palaces for a refuge. For, lo, **the kings** assembled themselves, **They passed by** together. **They saw it, then were they amazed**; They were dismayed, they hasted away. Trembling took hold of them there, Pain, as of a woman in travail. With the east wind Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish. As we have heard, so have we seen In **the city of Jehovah of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever**. Selah We have thought on thy lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of thy temple. As is thy name, O God, So is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: Thy right hand is full of righteousness” (Ps. 48:1-10). “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto **the house of Jehovah**. Our feet are standing Within thy gates, O **Jerusalem**, Jerusalem, that art builded As a city that is compact together; Whither **the tribes go up, even the tribes of Jehovah, For an ordinance for Israel**, To give thanks unto the name of Jehovah. For **there are set thrones for judgment, The thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem**: They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, And prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say,

Peace be within thee. For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God I will seek thy good” (Ps. 122:1-9). “Praise ye Jehovah; For it is good to sing praises unto our God; For it is pleasant, and praise is comely. **Jehovah doth build up Jerusalem; He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart,** And bindeth up their wounds. He counteth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite. Jehovah upholdeth the meek: He bringeth the wicked down to the ground. Sing unto Jehovah with thanksgiving; Sing praises upon the harp unto our God, Who covereth the heavens with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth, Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, And to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: He taketh no pleasure in the legs of a man. Jehovah taketh pleasure in them that fear him, In those that hope in his lovingkindness. Praise Jehovah, O **Jerusalem**; Praise thy God, O **Zion**. For **he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; He hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders; He filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. He sendeth out his commandment upon earth; His word runneth very swiftly.** He giveth snow like wool; He scattereth the **hoar-frost** like ashes. He casteth forth his **ice** like morsels: Who can stand before his **cold**? **He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow. He showeth his word unto Jacob, His statutes and his ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation;** And as for his ordinances, they have not known them. Praise ye Jehovah” (Ps. 147:1-20). “and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called **The city of righteousness, a faithful town. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her converts with righteousness**” (Isa. 1:26-27). “And it shall come to pass, that **he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof,** by the spirit of justice, and by the spirit of burning. And **Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be spread a covering. And there shall be a pavilion for a shade in the day-time from the heat, and for a refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain**” (Isa. 4:3-6).

“Over the entire Mount Zion will be the visible form of the *Shechinah Glory* ([Isaiah 4] vv. 5-6)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 815). “What then shall one answer **the messengers of the nation? That Jehovah hath founded Zion, and in her shall the afflicted of his people take refuge**” (Isa. 14:32). “**Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there Jehovah will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams,** wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not strengthen the foot of their mast, they could not spread the sail: then was the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame took the prey. And **the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity**” (Isa. 33:20-24). “Jehovah in the person of the Messiah will dwell in this city ([Isaiah 33] v. 21a)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 815). “How beautiful upon the **mountains** are the **feet** of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that **saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!** The voice of **thy watchmen!** they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, **when Jehovah returneth to Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for Jehovah hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God**” (Isa. 52:7-10). “Jerusalem will be built all over again” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 472) “**And foreigners shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations, and their kings led captive. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel**” (Isa.

60:10-14). **“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah; for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are Jehovah’s remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Jehovah hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy grain to be food for thine enemies; and foreigners shall not drink thy new wine, for which thou hast labored: but they that have garnered it shall eat it, and praise Jehovah; and they that have gathered it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up an ensign for the peoples. Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. And they shall call them The holy people, The redeemed of Jehovah: and thou shalt be called Sought out, A city not forsaken”** (Isa. 62:1-12). “To make sure that these promises will some day be fulfilled, angelic messengers have been placed upon the walls of Jerusalem whose entire ministry consists of reminding God of His promises to make Jerusalem the joy and praise of the whole earth ([Isa. 62] vv. 6-7)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 474). **“But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying”** (Isa. 65:18-19). **“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn over her; that ye may suck and be satisfied**

with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and **be delighted with the abundance of her glory**. For thus saith Jehovah, Behold, **I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream**: and ye shall suck thereof; ye shall be borne upon the side, and shall be dandled upon the knees. **As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And ye shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like the tender grass**: and the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants; and he will have indignation against his enemies” (Isa. 66:10-14). **“At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem**: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart” (Jer. 3:17). “In Jeremiah 3:17, the re-established Davidic throne will be situated in Jerusalem, making it the center of Gentile attention” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 816). **“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the city shall be built to Jehovah from the tower of Hananel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall go out further straight onward unto the hill Gareb, and shall turn about unto Goah. And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto Jehovah; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever”** (Jer. 31:38-40). **“And this city shall be to me for a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it. Thus saith Jehovah: Yet again there shall be heard in this place, whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that say, Give thanks to Jehovah of hosts, for Jehovah is good, for his lovingkindness endureth for ever; and of them that bring sacrifices of thanksgiving into the house of Jehovah. For I will cause the captivity of the land to return as at the first, saith Jehovah”** (Jer. 33:9-11). **“And these are the egresses of the city: On the north side four thousand and five hundred reeds by measure; and the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel, three gates northward: the gate of Reuben, one; the gate of Judah,**

one; the gate of Levi, one. And at the east side **four thousand and five hundred reeds**, and three gates: even the gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one. And at the south side **four thousand and five hundred reeds** by measure, and three gates: the gate of Simeon, one; the gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one. At the west side **four thousand and five hundred reeds**, with their three gates: the gate of Gad, one; the gate of Asher, one; the gate of Naphtali, one. **It shall be eighteen thousand reeds round about: and the name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah is there**” (Ezek. 48:30-35). “The total measurement of the city will be ten miles square ([Ezek. 48] v. 35a), and Jerusalem’s name will be changed to *Jehovah Shammah*, which means ‘Jehovah is there’ (v. 35b). Since the Messiah will personally reign from this particular city, the city will not only fulfill the meaning of its name of Jerusalem (the city of peace) but also *Jehovah Shammah* (Jehovah is there)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 815). **“So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more”** (Joel 3:17). **“In that day, saith Jehovah, will I assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever.** And thou, O tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of **Zion**, unto thee shall it come, yea, **the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem”** (Mic. 4:6-8). **“And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them”** (Amos 9:14). **“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more.** In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. **Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee**, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing” (Zeph. 3:14-17). **“So the angel that talked with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased, and they helped**

forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith Jehovah: **I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it**, saith Jehovah of hosts, and **a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem**. Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **My cities shall yet overflow with prosperity; and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem**” (Zech. 1:14-17). “And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To **measure Jerusalem**, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, **Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her**” (Zech. 2:1-5). “The Shechinah Glory in a form of fire will surround the city ([Zech. 2] v. 5)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 817). “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of **Zion**; for, lo, **I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah**. And many **nations** shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my **people**; and **I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee**. And **Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem**” (Zech. 2:10-12). “God, in the person of the Messiah, will indeed dwell in Jerusalem ([Zech. 2] v. 10). For this reason, Jerusalem will be the center of worldwide Gentile attention (v. 11)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 817). “And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for **Zion** with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. **Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain**. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof**. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: If it be marvellous in the eyes of **the remnant of this people in those days**, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith Jehovah of hosts. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Behold, **I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness**” (Zech.

8:1-8). “The very young will be those who will be born in the kingdom, while the very old will indeed be very old, for many will be several hundred years of age in the closing centuries of the Millennium” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 818). “Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that **there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem,** and to entreat the favor of Jehovah” (Zech. 8:20-22). “And **Jehovah shall be King over all the earth:** in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. **All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king’s wine-presses. And men shall dwell therein, and there shall be no more curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely**” (Zech. 14:9-11). “**In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLY UNTO JEHOVAH; and the pots in Jehovah’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto Jehovah of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil therein: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts**” (Zech. 14:20-21). “In Holy Scripture there are two Jerusalems: the one is on earth in the land of Palestine; the other is ‘above,’ in heaven (Gal. 4:25-26; Heb. 12:22). Now the Old Testament prophets speak of a city which, in the coming Kingdom, shall be reclaimed from Gentile power, rebuilt, restored to the historic nation of Israel, and made the religious center of the world. This Jerusalem cannot be the ‘heavenly Jerusalem,’ for that city is impeccably holy, the eternal dwelling of the true God, and has never been defiled or marred by human sin and rebellion. Any such notion is to the highest degree impossible and absurd. All predictions of a restored and rebuilt Jerusalem must therefore refer to the historical city of David on earth” (McClain, *GK*, p. 244). “Isaiah is the primary Major Prophet describing the Millennial Jerusalem” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 475) “Of all the Minor Prophets, Zechariah had the most to say concerning the Millennial Jerusalem” (*ibid.*, p. 477). “The golden age of Jerusalem is yet to come” (*ibid.*, p. 480).

The mountain of Jehovah’s house will be raised up. “And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that **the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall**

be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:2-4). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in **the holy mountain at Jerusalem**” (Isa. 27:13). “Also the foreigners that join themselves to Jehovah, to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast my covenant; even them will I bring to **my holy mountain**, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. The Lord Jehovah, who gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own that are gathered” (Isa. 56:6-8). “And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to **my holy mountain Jerusalem**, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah” (Isa. 66:20). “Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will also take of the lofty top of the cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I will plant it upon **a high and lofty mountain: in the mountain of the height of Israel** will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all birds of every wing; in the shade of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that *I*, Jehovah, have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish; *I*, Jehovah, have spoken and have done it” (Ezek. 17:22-24). “For in **my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel**, saith the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries

wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations” (Ezek. 20:40-41). “In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day, the hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me **into the land of Israel**, and set me down upon a **very high mountain**, whereon was as it were the frame of a city on the south. And he brought me thither; and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I shall show thee; for, to the intent that I may show them unto thee, art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel” (Ezek. 40:1-4). “Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto Jehovah, a holy portion of the land; the length shall be the length of **five and twenty thousand reeds**, and the breadth shall be ten thousand: it shall be holy in all the border thereof round about. Of this there shall be **for the holy place five hundred in length by five hundred in breadth, square** round about; and fifty cubits for the suburbs thereof round about. And of this measure shalt thou measure a length of **five and twenty thousand**, and a breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanctuary, which is most holy... In the land it shall be to him for a possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; but they shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes” (Ezek. 45:1-8). “And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the oblation which ye shall offer, **five and twenty thousand reeds in breadth**, and in length as one of the portions, from the east side unto the west side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it. The oblation that ye shall offer unto Jehovah shall be five and twenty thousand reeds in length, and ten thousand in breadth. And for these, even for the priests, shall be the holy oblation: toward the north five and twenty thousand in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of Jehovah shall be in the midst thereof. It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok, that have kept my charge, that went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray... Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, being in the midst of that which is the prince’s, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, it shall be for the prince” (Ezek. 48:8-22). “Ezekiel

48:8-22 describes the holy oblation discussed earlier. But now Ezekiel notes the exact location of this mountain of Jehovah's house. The mountain of the holy oblation will be situated south of Judah's border and north of Benjamin's border and will serve as the dividing line between the northern seven tribes and the southern five tribes" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 814). **"But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem"** (Mic. 4:1-2) "Charles L. Feinberg [in *God Remembers*, pp. 257-58] summarizes these topographical changes as follows:... '...the description must be taken literally (else why the abundance of detail?)" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 321) "At the time of the second coming of Christ the land will undergo some tremendous geographical and topographical changes. One of the key changes in the Land of Israel will be the rise of a very high mountain which will become the highest mountain of the world. On top of this mountain the Millennial Temple and the Millennial Jerusalem will stand" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 809). "This very high mountain, the highest in the world, will itself have a fifty-mile square plateau on top... the Millennial Temple, which will be one mile square in size" (*ibid.*).

The millennial temple will be built. "And, behold, a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed six cubits long, of a cubit and a handbreadth each: so he measured the thickness of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed. Then came he unto the gate which looketh toward the east, and went up the steps thereof: and he measured the threshold of the gate, one reed broad; and the other threshold, one reed broad... Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two cubits; and the porch of the gate was toward the house... And he measured the breadth of the opening of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits; and a border before the lodges, one cubit on this side, and a border, one cubit on that side; and the lodges, six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side... Then brought he me into the outer court; and, lo, there were chambers and a pavement, made for the court round about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement... And he led me toward the south; and, behold, a gate toward the south: and he measured the posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these measures. And there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about, like

those windows: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits... Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate: and he measured the south gate according to these measures; and the lodges thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about; it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad... And he brought me into the inner court toward the east... And he brought me to the north gate... And a chamber with the door thereof was by the posts at the gates; there they washed the burnt-offering. And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt-offering and the sin-offering and the trespass-offering. And on the one side without, as one goeth up to the entry of the gate toward the north, were two tables; and on the other side, which belonged to the porch of the gate, were two tables. Four tables were on this side, and four tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon they slew the sacrifices. And there were four tables for the burnt-offering, of hewn stone, a cubit and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad, and one cubit high; whereupon they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt-offering and the sacrifice. And the hooks, a handbreadth long, were fastened within round about: and upon the tables was the flesh of the oblation. And without the inner gate were chambers for the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and their prospect was toward the south; one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north. And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house; and the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok, who from among the sons of Levi come near to Jehovah to minister unto him. And he measured the court, a hundred cubits long, and a hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar was before the house. Then he brought me to the porch of the house, and measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side... And he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tabernacle. And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits; and the sides of the entrance were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits. Then went he inward, and measured each post of the entrance, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits; and the breadth of the entrance, seven cubits. And he measured the

length thereof, twenty cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he said unto me, This is the most holy place. Then he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of every side-chamber, four cubits, round about the house on every side. And the side-chambers were in three stories, one over another, and thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which belonged to the house for the side-chambers round about, that they might have hold therein, and not have hold in the wall of the house... And the building that was before the separate place at the side toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits. So he measured the house, a hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, a hundred cubits long; also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, a hundred cubits. And he measured the length of the building before the separate place which was at the back thereof, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, a hundred cubits; and the inner temple, and the porches of the court; the thresholds, and the closed windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the threshold, ceiled with wood round about, and from the ground up to the windows now the windows were covered, to the space above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by measure. And it was made with cherubim and palm-trees; and a palm-tree was between cherub and cherub, and every cherub had two faces; so that there was the face of a man toward the palm-tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm-tree on the other side: thus was it made through all the house round about. From the ground unto above the door were cherubim and palm-trees made: thus was the wall of the temple. As for the temple, the door-posts were squared; and as for the face of the sanctuary, the appearance thereof was as the appearance of the temple. The altar was of wood, three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and he said unto me, This is the table that is before Jehovah. And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors. And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves; two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other. And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubim and palm-trees, like as were made upon the walls; and there was a threshold of wood upon the face of the porch without... Then he brought me forth into the outer court, the way toward the north: and he brought me into the chamber that was over against the separate place, and which was over against the building toward the north... Then said he unto

me, The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they are the holy chambers, where the priests that are near unto Jehovah shall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the most holy things, and the meal-offering, and the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering; for the place is holy. When the priests enter in, then shall they not go out of the holy place into the outer court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister; for they are holy: and they shall put on other garments, and shall approach to that which pertaineth to the people... Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and, **behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east:** and his voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. And **it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar;** and I fell upon my face. And **the glory of Jehovah came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.** And the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, **behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house.** And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And he said unto me, **Son of man, this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever;** and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by the dead bodies of their kings in their high places; in their setting of their threshold by my threshold, and their door-post beside my door-post, and there was but the wall between me and them; and they have defiled my holy name by their abominations which they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let them put away their whoredom, and the dead bodies of their kings, far from me; and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever. Thou, son of man, show the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, make known unto them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the egresses thereof, and the entrances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof; and write it in their sight; that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them. This is the law of the house: upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house. And these are the measures of the altar by cubits: the cubit is a cubit and a handbreadth: the

bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about a span; and this shall be the base of the altar... And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon. Thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that are of the seed of Zadok, who are near unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord Jehovah, a young bullock for a sin-offering. And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the ledge, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse it and make atonement for it. Thou shalt also take the bullock of the sin-offering, and it shall be burnt in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary. And on the second day thou shalt offer a he-goat without blemish for a sin-offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock. When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish. And thou shalt bring them near before Jehovah, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt-offering unto Jehovah. Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin-offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish. Seven days shall they make atonement for the altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it. And when they have accomplished the days, it shall be that upon the eighth day, and forward, the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 40:5-43:27). “Just as the *Shechinah* Glory authenticated and sanctioned the Solomonic Temple, it will also sanction this Temple by its return from the same direction that it left ([Ezek. 43] vv. 1-5)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 452). “Then he brought me back by the way of **the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; and it was shut.** And Jehovah said unto me, **This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it; for Jehovah, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut.** As for the prince, he shall sit therein as prince to eat bread before Jehovah; he shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go out by the way of the same” (Ezek. 44:1-3). “In the beginning of the Millennium, the outer eastern gate will be shut, never to be reopened again throughout the Millennium (v. 1). The reason for the shutting of the outer eastern gate is due to the fact that the *Shechinah* Glory returned by way of the eastern gate (Ezek. 43:1-9), never to leave Israel again ([Ezek. 44] v 2)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 453). “It should be pointed out that this passage of Scripture has nothing to do with

the present eastern gate of Jerusalem, known today as the Golden Gate. This passage, in its context, is not dealing with Jerusalem today, but is dealing with the Temple Gate in the Millennium. The gate of Jesus' day was destroyed in A.D. 70. The present Golden Gate was built in the seventh century and later modified by the Crusaders. It was partially destroyed by the Ottoman Turks and rebuilt in the early sixteenth century. It was walled up by the Turkish governor of Jerusalem in 1530" (*ibid.*). **"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old"** (Amos 9:11) "As a result of the coming of the Lord, the tabernacle of David will be built again... 'as it used to be' (Amos 9:11)" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 145) "For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts"** (Hag. 2:6-9). "and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is **the Branch**: and he shall grow up out of his place; and **he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne**; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. **And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple** of Jehovah; and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God" (Zech. 6:12-15). "...the restored earthly Jerusalem... has a temple worship and to which the nations come" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:422) "Admitting that in the earthly Jerusalem a temple will be rebuilt in order to manifest in a public manner the worship of God" (*ibid.*, 3:90) "...the temple will be rebuilt with the sacrifices, as memorials, reinstated (Ezek. 40-48)" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 186). "...the superlatively glorious temple in the future Kingdom, a structure which will far exceed anything in the past... 'The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former'... (Hag. 2:6-9, ASV)... the historic temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel" (McClain, *GK*, p. 248). "It will be the largest and most beautiful Temple Israel has had so far. It is impossible to

make any sense of this passage if it is to be allegorized away. As much detail is given here as in the construction of the Tabernacle and the construction of the First Temple” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 810). “From all these various measurements, it is evident that this particular Temple will be larger than all previous Temples, measuring about one mile square. The area of the present Temple Compound is not large enough to hold the Temple described by Ezekiel and will require some major geographical changes. That is why the new Mountain of Jehovah’s House will be necessary” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 451). “Since God Himself in the Person of the Messiah will be dwelling in and reigning from Jerusalem, there will be no need for any Ark of the Covenant. Furthermore, the Ark of the Covenant contained the tablets of stone that were the embodiment of the Law of Moses. The fact that the Law of Moses is no longer in effect is another reason why the Ark of the Covenant will be missing” (*ibid.*, p. 454). “Some say, these chapters of Ezekiel must not be taken literally. But if not, Ezekiel gives a lot of detail that would suddenly become meaningless... There are at least four reasons to take this whole section of Ezekiel literally... *First*: This is the normal hermeneutic used elsewhere in Scripture and all theologies use the literal approach in at least parts of the Bible. Only the Dispensationalist uses the literal approach consistently... *Second*: Ezekiel is not the only one to speak of the Millennial Temple and sacrifices... Daniel... Joel... Haggai... Jeremiah... Malachi... Zechariah... allegorize away... *Third*: The Millennial Temple is not the only temple that Ezekiel describes. In chapters 8-11, he describes the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory from Israel from the First Temple... the Fourth Temple... If what he said about the First Temple was literal, then what he says about the Fourth Temple should also be taken literally... *Fourth*: Ezekiel provides a tremendous amount of detail which includes specific measurements and types of sacrifices. All accept the details of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses to be very literal. All accept the detailed measurements of the Tabernacle and the First Temple to be very literal. There is no good reason not to accept the details of the Fourth Temple to be equally literal. If they are not and are all symbolic, then why does Ezekiel not explain the meanings of these symbols? Why have those who take these passages as allegorical and symbolic not been able to give explanations for what the symbols mean” (*ibid.*, p. 455)?

A sacrificial system will be instituted. “even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: **their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar;** for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples” (Isa. 56:7). “**neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to of-**

fer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually” (Jer. 33:18). “Then he brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. And Jehovah said unto me, This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it; for Jehovah, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut. As for the prince, he shall sit therein as prince to eat bread before Jehovah; he shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go out by the way of the same. Then he brought me by the way of the north gate before the house; and I looked, and, behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah: and I fell upon my face. And Jehovah said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of Jehovah, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entrance of the house, with every egress of the sanctuary... Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any foreigners that are among the children of Israel. But the Levites that went far from me, when Israel went astray, that went astray from me after their idols, they shall bear their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house, and ministering in the house: they shall slay the burnt-offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them... But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me; and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord Jehovah: they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge... They shall eat the meal-offering, and the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering; and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs. And the first of all the first-fruits of every thing, and every oblation of every-thing, of all your oblations, shall be for the priest: ye shall also give unto the priests the first of your dough, to cause a blessing to rest on thy house... a holy portion of the land; it shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, that come near to minister unto Jehovah; and it shall be a place for their houses, and a holy place for the sanctuary... The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate; and the priests shall prepare his burnt-offering and his peace-offerings, and he shall worship at the

threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. And the people of the land shall worship at the door of that gate before Jehovah on the sabbaths and on the new moons. And the burnt-offering that the prince shall offer unto Jehovah shall be on the sabbath day six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish; and the meal-offering shall be an ephah for the ram, and the meal-offering for the lambs as he is able to give, and a hin of oil to an ephah... And when the prince shall prepare a freewill-offering, a burnt-offering or peace-offerings as a freewill-offering unto Jehovah, one shall open for him the gate that looketh toward the east; and he shall prepare his burnt-offering and his peace-offerings, as he doth on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth one shall shut the gate... Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meal-offering, and the oil, morning by morning, for a continual burnt-offering... Then he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests, which looked toward the north: and, behold, there was a place on the hinder part westward. And he said unto me, This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass-offering and the sin-offering, and where they shall bake the meal-offering; that they bring them not forth into the outer court, to sanctify the people. Then he brought me forth into the outer court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, in every corner of the court there was a court. In the four corners of the court there were courts inclosed, forty cubits long and thirty broad: these four in the corners were of one measure. And there was a wall round about in them, round about the four, and boiling-places were made under the walls round about. Then said he unto me, These are the boiling-houses, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people” (Ezek. 44:1-46:24). “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, **HOLY UNTO JEHOVAH**; and the pots in Jehovah’s house shall be like the **bowls before the altar**. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto Jehovah of hosts; and all **they that sacrifice shall come and take of**

them, and boil therein: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts” (Zech. 14:16-21). “and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify **the sons of Levi**, and refine them as gold and silver; and **they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness**” (Mal. 3:3). “How consistent to view Old Testament sacrifices as promissory notes (Rom. 3:25) of the coming all-sufficient redemption, and millennial sacrifices as receipts” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 190). “Those sacrifices will serve as a memorial, looking back to Calvary as does the Lord’s Supper now” (*ibid.*, p. 319). “The sacrifices in Leviticus were not expiatory, but anticipatory” (*ibid.*, p. 328). “The church has had for over 1900 years a memorial of that sacrifice of Christ in the Lord’s Supper; Israel as such has had none. It will be that memorial for them primarily” (*ibid.*, p. 329). “The absence of that which was most vital to the Levitical system shows that the millennial age will not see the re-establishment of Judaism” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 522). “In the Lord’s Supper we commemorate Christ’s death; we altogether repudiate the Popish doctrine of a repetition of the offering of Christ; we do not believe in any such renewal of the sacrifice, but we gratefully obey the command of Christ to commemorate His death in such a way that both an external memorial is presented to the world, and an outward and visible sign and seal given to the believing partaker. May not a similar plan succeed the Lord’s Supper, which we know shall cease at Christ’s coming? It is also possible that both the glorified saints in heaven and the nations on the earth will contemplate during the millennium the full and minute harmony between type and reality. Even the Church has as yet only a superficial knowledge of the treasures of wisdom in the Levitical institutions and its symbols.” [quoting Arno C. Gaebelin, *The Prophet Ezekiel*, pp. 312-13] (*ibid.*, p. 526). “...the Passover will be observed throughout the Millennial Age as a memorial of the death of Christ (Ezek. 45:21)... blood sacrifices will be offered in the millennial temple as memorials of the death of Christ (43:19-27)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 317). “No animal sacrifice in the Bible has ever had any expiatory efficacy” (McClain, *GK*, p. 250). “If it has been fitting for the church in the present age to have a memorial of the death of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, it is suggested that it would be suitable also to have a memorial of possibly a different character in the millennium in keeping with the Jewish characteristics of the period” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 312). “The entire sacrificial system of the Old Testament, while perhaps incongruous with western civilization aesthetics, was nevertheless commanded by God Himself as a proper typical presentation of the coming work of Christ. If such sacrifices were fitting in the mind of God to be the shadows of the cross of Christ, what more fitting memorial could be

chosen if a memorial is desired for that same sacrifice. Obviously, a memorial is not intended to equal or to be a substitute of the real sacrifice, but as a ritual it is to point to the reality which is Christ” (*ibid.*, p. 314). “Dispensationalists do not believe that in the Millennium there will be a reinstatement of ‘the Old Testament sacrificial system,’ since the very nature of Dispensationalism forbids it. It is the Dispensationalist who believes that the Law of Moses has forever been rendered inoperative and will not be reinstated in the Millennium. What Dispensationalists do believe is that in the Messianic Kingdom, the sacrificial system described in such detail by Ezekiel the Prophet will be instituted. While this system has many similarities with the Mosaic, it also has many dissimilarities, showing it is not the same system” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 310). “The Church has been commanded to keep the Lord’s Supper as a physical and visual picture of what Christ did on the cross. God intends to provide for Israel in the kingdom a physical and visual picture of what the Messiah accomplished on the cross. For Israel, however, it will be a sacrificial system instead of communion with bread and wine. The purpose of the sacrificial system in the kingdom will be the same as the purpose of communion of the Church: *in remembrance of me*” (*ibid.*, p. 811). “Whitcomb [in John C. Whitcomb, ‘Christ’s Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel,’ *Grace Theological Journal* 6:2 (1985): 201-217] affirms that ‘future sacrifices will have nothing to do with eternal salvation which only comes through true faith in God.’ However, these future animal sacrifices will also be efficacious, but ‘only in terms of the strict provision for ceremonial (and thus temporal) forgiveness within the theocracy of Israel.’ Whitcomb’s conclusion on this point is: ‘Thus, animal sacrifices during the coming Kingdom age will not be primarily memorial...’ The millennial sacrificial system is a distinct system arising out of the New Covenant, not the Mosaic Covenant” (*ibid.*, p. 812). “While there are many similarities with the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law, as there are between the sacrifices of Noah and Moses, the differences show they are not the same. It was these very differences that kept the rabbis from accepting Ezekiel into the Hebrew Canon for some time” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 456). “Under the Mosaic Law, only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, but in Ezekiel 44:15-16, all priests will be able to enter” (*ibid.*, p. 457). “But **the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok**, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, **they shall come near to me to minister unto me; and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord Jehovah: they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me**, and they shall keep my charge” (Ezek. 44:15–

16). “Since when is taking the Bible literally and believing it literally a heresy? The burden of proof is always on the one who claims that a certain part of the Bible does not mean what it says. Just because there are no blood sacrifices for the Church does not mean there cannot be such sacrifices for Israel. Just because there is no physical temple, priesthood, and sacrifice for the Church does not mean the same will be true for Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 458). “The Kingdom sacrifices will also be multi-purposed and there are at least four purposes for the sacrificial system that can be suggested. *First*: A memorial of the death of the Messiah... The Church has been asked to do something very physical, to partake of the bread and the cup, to remember the body and the blood of the Messiah. This ceremony is to be terminated with the Second Coming (1 Corinthians 11:26). What will be used to remember the Lord’s death by Israel in the Messianic Kingdom? The blood sacrifices of the Kingdom will also be a physical ceremony to serve for Israel what communion serves for the Church: to remember the body and blood of the Messiah” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 459). “For as often as **you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes**” (1 Cor. 11:26). *Second*: The means of restoring fellowship for the millennial saint... The blood sacrifices were the means of restoring fellowship of the Mosaic saint who sinned. In this age, fellowship for the believer is restored by confession (1 John 1:9). The millennial sacrifices will not take away sin either, but they will be the means of restoring fellowship for the millennial saint who sins. *Third*: Ritual cleansing for ritual uncleanness. Since the Shechinah Glory will be within the Holy of Holies of the Millennial Temple, it would be impossible to approach the Temple compound in a state of ritual impurity and therefore the sacrifices will be for the cleansing of ceremonial uncleanness. Ice [in Thomas Ice, ‘Literal Sacrifices in the Millennium,’ *Pre-Trib Perspectives*, June 2000, pp. 4-5] expresses it this way: ‘Since all the sacrifices of Ezekiel relate to purification of the priests for Temple service, they do not specifically depict or represent Christ’s atoning sacrifice.’... Jerry Hullinger [in Jerry Hullinger, ‘The Problem of Animal Sacrifices in Ezekiel 40-48,’ *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July-September 1995, pp. 281, 289] also reaches the same conclusion: ‘...Because of God’s promise to dwell on earth during the Millennium (as stated in the New Covenant), it is necessary that He protect His presence through sacrifice... It should further be added that this sacrificial system will be a temporary one in that the Millennium (with its partial population of unglorified humanity) will last only one thousand years. During the eternal state all inhabitants of the New Jerusalem will be glorified and will therefore not be a source of contagious impurities to defile the ho-

liness of Yahweh.’ *Fourth*: The privilege of life and physical blessing in a theocratic kingdom. Dr. John C. Whitcomb [in ‘Christ’s Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel,’ *Grace Theological Journal*, Fall 1985, pp. 201-21]... ‘...Millennial sacrifices will not simply memorialize Christ’s redemption but will primarily function in restoring theocratic harmony.’ ...Whitcomb shows what the animal sacrifices did with regard to forgiveness and atonement. The real issue is not whether forgiveness and atonement took place, but rather the precise nature of this forgiveness and atonement. Whitcomb states that whatever happened was *temporal, finite, external, and legal*—not *eternal, infinite, internal, and soteriological*... What the animal sacrifices of the Law of Moses did achieve was *national/theocratic forgiveness* for *national/theocratic transgressions*. They provided for external cleansing and outward efficacy. Under the Mosaic Law, the choice was not *either faith or sacrifices; rather, it was to be both faith and sacrifices*. The former resulted in spiritual salvation and the latter was for *the cleanness of the flesh* in accordance with Hebrews 9:13... Whitcomb’s conclusion on this point is [*ibid.*, pp. 210, 211]: ‘Thus, animal sacrifices during the coming Kingdom age will not be primarily memorial (like the Eucharist in church communion services), any more than sacrifices in the age of the of the Old Covenant were primarily prospective or prophetic in the understanding of the offerer... The distinction between ceremonial and spiritual atonement is by no means a minor one, for it is at the heart of the basic difference between the theocracy of Israel and the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ. It also provides a more consistent hermeneutical approach for dispensational Premillennialism’” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 460). “...such sacrifices will not be totally voluntary and purely memorial as is true of the Christian Eucharist... just as in Old Testament times, the privilege of life and physical blessing in the theocratic kingdom will be contingent upon outward conformity to the ceremonial law... their symbolic and pedagogic value, unlike the communion service, will be upheld by a legalistic system of enforced participation. For example, those who decide to neglect the annual Feast of Tabernacles will be punished by a draught or a plague... If the true significance of the five offerings be understood, it is not difficult to see how they could serve as effective vehicles of divine instruction and discipline for Israel and the nations during the Kingdom age” [quoting John C. Whitcomb, ‘The Millennial Temple of Ezekiel 40-48,’ *The Diligent Workman Journal*, May 1994, p. 22] (*ibid.*, p. 463). “Even Jewish Christians in the New Testament church practiced temple worship (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42), including animal sacrifices (21:26)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:590). “And day by day continuing with one mind **in the temple**, and breaking

bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart” (Acts 2:46) “Now Peter and John were going up **to the temple** at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer” (Acts 3:1). “And every day, **in the temple** and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:42). “Then **Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple, giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them**” (Acts 21:26). “Ezekiel’s prediction ([in Ezekiel chapters] 40-48) will be fulfilled in the Millennium; later, in the new heaven and new earth, there will be no temple or sacrifices” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:590). “The Ezekiel sacrifices mentioned have no *atonement* significance; they are *memorial* in nature. Like the Lord’s Supper, they look back in remembrance at the accomplished work of Christ on the Cross” (*ibid.*). “Celebration of the Eucharist will end at the Second Coming (1 Cor. 11:26). After this, Israel will be restored (Rom. 11:25-27), along with her sabbaths and sacrifices, which will be with her during the Millennium” (*ibid.*). “For as often as **you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes**” (1 Cor. 11:26). “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus **all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.’ ‘And this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins’**” (Rom. 11:25-27). “Hebrews (8-10) speaks of abolishing animal sacrifices in an *atonement* sense, not as regards *memorial* observance. Otherwise, the use of bread and wine to symbolize Christ’s body and blood would not be legitimate either” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 591) “Certainly the Hebrews’ epistle says, “Where forgiveness of sins is there is no more offering for sin” (10:18). But this in no way proves that there can be no more symbolic actions in Divine service after the redeeming work of Christ” [quoting Erich Sauer, *From Eternity to Eternity*, p. 183]” (*ibid.*). “Both baptism and the Lord’s Supper go beyond the merely symbolic and are associated with the reception of divine blessing (1 Cor. 10:16-21)” (*ibid.*). “**Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.** Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar? What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but I say that the things

which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot **drink the cup of the Lord** and the cup of demons; you cannot **partake of the table of the Lord** and the table of demons” (1 Cor. 10:16-21).

A millennial river will flow from the temple. “And he brought me back unto the door of the house; and, behold, **waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward**; for the forefront of the house was toward the east; and **the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar**. Then he brought me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of the gate that looketh toward the east; and, behold, **there ran out waters on the right side**” (Ezek. 47:1-2). “Then said he unto me, **These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah; and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea shall the waters go which were made to issue forth; and the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish; for these waters are come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed, and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh**. And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand by it: from En-ge-di even unto En-eglaim shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many” (Ezek. 47:8-10). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters; and **a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah**, and shall water the valley of Shittim” (Joel 3:18). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be**” (Zech. 14:8).

Jewish feasts will be observed. “In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, **ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days**; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin-offering. And the seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt-offering to Jehovah, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a he-goat daily for a sin-offering. And he shall prepare a meal-offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and a hin of oil to an ephah” (Ezek. 45:21-24). “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is

left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep **the feast of tabernacles**. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16–19). “Two Feasts are to be observed, ‘The Passover,’ but no Passover Lamb will be offered as Jesus fulfilled that Type (Ezek. 45:21-24), and the ‘Feast of Tabernacles,’ Zech. 14:16-19. This feast is to be observed by all the nations under penalty of ‘Drought’ or ‘Plague’” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 94). “The ‘Feast of Pentecost’ will be done away with on account of its fulfillment” (*ibid.*). “In obedience to God's command ([Lev. 23] v. 2), Moses announced to the Israelites the appointed feasts of the Lord. The annual cycle of the appointed feasts of the Lord is regarded by many as typical of God's future program for Israel as a nation. The interrelated spring and early summer festivals are thought to typify the events of Christ's First Advent: (a) the death of Christ on the cross as the Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5: 7), (b) the believer's holy walk and complete break from the old life, pictured by the absence of leaven (1 Cor. 5:7-8) (others think the unleavened bread pictures the sinless humanity of Christ), (c) the resurrection of Christ as prefigured by the firstfruits of the barley harvest (1 Cor. 15: 20-23), and (d) the advent of the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of the Feast of Pentecost (Acts 2; cf. Joel 2: 28). The break in the festival calendar before the fall festivals suggests the present interadvent period during which Israel's messianic King is in heaven. The fall festivals prefigure events associated with His Second Advent: (a) Israel's future re-gathering at the end of the Tribulation period (Feast of Trumpets; Matt. 24:29-31), (b) Israel's national conversion at the Second Advent based on the death of Christ at the First Advent (Day of Atonement; Heb. 9:23-28; Zech. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:26-27), and (c) Israel's blessing by God on the millennial earth (Feast of Tabernacles, Zech. 14:9-20)” (Walvoord, *BKC*, Lev. 23:44). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Gentile nations will worship the King and observe the Feast of Tabernacles in our section *Gentile Nations* below.)

Israel's borders will be enlarged. “**Thou hast increased the nation, O Jehovah, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land**” (Isa. 26:15). (See our discussion of the borders of the promised land in the section *The*

Abrahamic Covenant of our chapter Conscience, Government and Promise.)

The Jews will be in the land forever. “Thy people also shall be all righteous; **they shall inherit the land for ever**, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified” (Isa. 60:21). “And **they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children’s children, for ever:** and David my servant shall be their prince for ever” (Ezek. 37:25). “And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And **I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God**” (Amos 9:14-15). “...Ezek. 37:25, when at the time the nation is restored in its undivided form and ‘my servant David shall be their prince forever,’ then the nation shall dwell in the land ‘wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children and their children’s children forever.’ (Comp. Jer. 32:39, 40; Jer. 33:7-14; Joel 3:27-30, etc.) The unity on this point running through Scripture is surprising, and the repeated declarations on the subject seem to be given as if to meet the lack of faith in such predictions” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:550).

Israel’s covenants will be fulfilled. “who are **Israelites, to whom belongs** the adoption as sons and the glory and **the covenants** and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises” (Rom. 9:4) “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to **Israel** until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘**THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.**’ ‘**AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.**’ From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of **God’s choice** they are beloved **for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable**” (Rom. 11:25–29). “What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does **not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise**” (Gal. 3:17). “This age will see the complete fulfillment of all the covenants that God made with Israel... the kingdom on earth is viewed as the complete fulfillment of those covenants, and that the millennial age is instituted out of necessity in order

to fulfill the covenants. A. *The Abrahamic covenant*. The promises in the Abrahamic covenant concerning the land and the seed are fulfilled in the millennial age... Israel's perpetuity, their possession of the land, and their inheritance of blessings are directly related to the fulfillment of this covenant. B. *The Davidic covenant*. The promises in the Davidic covenant concerning the king, the throne, and the royal house are fulfilled by Messiah in the millennial age... The fact that Israel has a kingdom, over which David's Son reigns as King, is based on this Davidic Covenant. C. *The Palestinian covenant*. The promises in the Palestinian covenant concerning the possession of the land are fulfilled by Israel in the millennial age... These references to the possession of the land promise fulfillment of the Palestinian covenant. D. *The new covenant*. The promises of the new covenant of a new heart, the forgiveness of sin, the filling of the Spirit are fulfilled in the converted nation in the millennial age... All the spiritual blessings Israel receives are fulfillment of this covenant. Simply put, since the above-mentioned covenants are all eternal and unconditional, and since they contain promises not fulfilled heretofore, they require a future fulfillment, and in the program of God they could only be fulfilled in the Millennium" [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 476-477] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 557). (See our discussion of Israel's four unconditional covenants in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*. See also our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Second Coming is to fulfill Israel's covenants and prophecies in the section *Purposes of the Second Coming* of our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

Israel's life and culture in the Millennial Kingdom will be spiritual. Israel will be:

Regenerated. (See our discussion of Israel's regeneration in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Reconciled to God. "And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and **I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God**" (Hos. 2:23). "**I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more**

with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found” (Hos. 14:4-8). **“So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy,** and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah, and shall water the valley of Shittim. Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. But Judah shall abide for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. **And I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed: for Jehovah dwelleth in Zion**” (Joel 3:17-21). (See also our discussion of the restoration of Israel’s marriage relationship to Jehovah in the section *The Church is Not Israel* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.)

Restored. **“Then I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning;** After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city” (Isa. 1:26). **“And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm,** my great army which I sent among you” (Joel 2:25). **“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old**” (Amos 9:11) “...the restoration of the Jewish nation (so all the prophets)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:486) “The Kingdom itself can never be realized, as promised, until Jerusalem and its nation experience the returned mercy of God and His Christ” (*ibid.*, 3:424). “With all the inestimable spiritual blessings, the deliverance from sin and the results of sin, we have added as inseparably connected a remarkable temporal deliverance... For if, as many Christians declare, this Jesus is not to restore the Jewish nation and elevate it in honor and power; if He is not to re-establish the Davidic throne and Kingdom, exalting it in dominion and glory over the earth, then it necessarily and inevitably follows that Jesus is not the Messiah covenanted to David and predicted by the prophets... This Jesus will yet come as promised, and then the full parallel between Him and Moses (Acts 7:5-37; Deut. 18:15-18) will be brought out, a Deliverer of the nation and the instrument through whom a Theocracy is established” (*ibid.*, p. 426). “The restoration of the Jews unmistakably proves the correctness of our position, because that restoration is indispensable to the re-establishment of the same Theocracy overthrown

(the nation being in covenanted relationship to it), and its extension over the world... The supremacy of the Jewish nation, so clearly taught, can only be explained in view of this future restored Theocracy" (*ibid.*, p. 586) "All the prophetic descriptions of historic Israel's future restoration indicate that the restored relation to Jehovah's favor will be something permanent, never again to be interrupted" (McClain, *GK*, p. 151). (See also our discussion of the fact that eventual restoration of the Theocracy is promised in our chapter *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom* and our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Second Coming is to restore the Theocratic Kingdom in the section *Purposes of the Second Coming* of our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.)

United. "**In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together** out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jer. 3:18). "And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and **I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all;** neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God" (Ezek. 37:21-23). "When the regathering of Israel comes ([Ezek. 37] v. 21), they will not be regathered into two nations, but only into one, for they will be under one king in one kingdom (v.22). At that time they will be thoroughly cleansed of their sins which were the root cause of the original division (v. 23)" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 807).

Forgiven. "Look upon **Zion**, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see **Jerusalem** a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there Jehovah will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not strengthen the foot of their mast, they could not spread the sail: then was the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame took the prey. And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: **the people that dwell therein shall be**

forgiven their iniquity” (Isa. 33:20–24). “Israel’s sins will be totally forgiven ([Isaiah 33] vv. 23-24)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 472).

Healed. “**Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing;** for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto **Zion**; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:5-10). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **living waters shall go out from Jerusalem**; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king’s wine-presses. And men shall dwell therein, and **there shall be no more curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely**” (Zech. 14:8-11).

Exalted. “For Jehovah thy God will bless thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and **thou shalt rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over thee**” (Deut. 15:6). “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that **Jehovah thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth**” (Deut. 28:1) “And **Jehovah will make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath**; if thou shalt hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them” (Deut. 28:13) “The word that the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that **the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peo-**

ples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:1-3). “For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose **Israel**, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the **peoples** shall take them, and bring them to their place; and **the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids**: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and **they shall rule over their oppressors”** (Isa. 14:1-2). “Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will lift up my hand to **the nations**, and set up my ensign to the peoples; and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: **they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet**; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah; and they that wait for me shall not be put to shame” (Isa. 49:22-23). “For **that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish**; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (Isa. 60:12). “And **strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Instead of your shame ye shall have double; and instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their portion**: therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be unto them” (Isa. 61:5-7). “But **in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it”** (Mic. 4:1). “There is abundant prophecy announcing the fact that in the coming kingdom age the Jew will be again and forevermore be divinely exalted above the Gentiles (Isa. 14:1-2, 60:12)” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:317). “...Israel. In the future Kingdom this historic people will at last realize fully that international supremacy implied in the Abrahamic covenant” (McClain, *GK*, p. 211). “Their political supremacy will be guaranteed by the edict of Jehovah: ‘For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted’ ([Isa. 60] vs. 12)” (*ibid.*, p. 212). (See also our discussion of Israel’s political supremacy in the section *Government* above, our discussion of Jerusalem’s exaltation above and our discussion of the

Gentile nations' recognition of Israel's blessedness in the section *Gentile Nations* below.)

Righteous. "Then justice shall dwell in the wilderness; and **righteousness** shall abide in the fruitful field. And the work of **righteousness** shall be peace; and the effect of **righteousness**, quietness and confidence for ever. And my people shall abide in a peaceable habitation, and in safe dwellings, and in quiet resting-places. But it shall hail in the downfall of the forest; and the city shall be utterly laid low. Blessed are yet that sow beside all waters, that send forth the feet of the ox and the ass" (Isa. 32:16-20). "**Thy people also shall be all righteous**; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Isa. 60:21). "I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of **righteousness**, as a bridegroom decketh himself with a garland, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so **the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness** and praise **to spring forth before all the nations**" (Isa. 61:10-11). "Seventy weeks are decreed upon **thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy**" (Dan. 9:24). "**The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth**; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid" (Zeph. 3:13). "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and **I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness**" (Zech. 8:7-8). "While there will be Gentile unbelievers in the kingdom, there will not be Jewish unbelievers in the kingdom" (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 794).

Sinless [?—*ed.*]. "Therefore by this shall the iniquity of **Jacob** be forgiven, and this is all the fruit of **taking away his sin**: that he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, so that the Asherim and the sun-images shall rise no more" (Isa. 27:9). "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will

make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: **I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it;** and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for **they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more**” (Jer. 31:31–34). “**And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.** A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. **And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them**” (Ezek. 36:25–27). “**neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions;** but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and **will cleanse them:** so shall they be my people, and I will be their God” (Ezek. 37:23). “**Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy**” (Dan. 9:24). “**AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS**” (Rom. 11:27).

Holy. “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. **And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed:** the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:5–10). “**Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts,**

The holy mountain” (Zech. 8:3). **“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness”** (Zech. 13:1). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **living waters shall go out from Jerusalem**; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king’s wine-presses. And men shall dwell therein, and **there shall be no more curse**; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely” (Zech. 14:8-11). **“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLY UNTO JEHOVAH; and the pots in Jehovah’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto Jehovah of hosts**; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil therein: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts” (Zech. 14:20-21).

Spiritual. “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah**: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: **I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me**, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). **“And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you**; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh” (Ezek. 36:25-26). **“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour**

out my Spirit” (Joel 2:28-29). ““AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,” God says, “THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS”” (Acts 2:17) “authentic miracles... if continued on, perpetuated on in the Church without intermission, the Baptism of the Spirit would have failed in its significance as a sign, a pledge of the future fulfillment... This is a sign that the prophets will be fulfilled in this very particular; but had the sign been perpetuated (as many claim it ought to have been, and was), then it would have defeated itself in causing the mistake (which was made, and is now so tenaciously held by the multitude), that all that the prophets predicted related, to the present dispensation, and that we need not look for any better here on earth... Now the prophecies associate this peculiar outpouring of the Spirit with the Jewish nation—it is not isolated from it, but inseparably joined with its restoration, and the period of the restored Theocracy. While it was suitable to exhibit even the signs or pledges of future fulfillment when the temple, city, land, and people were prospered, the propriety ceased after the destruction of the temple and city, and the captivity of the land and the people. The consideration due to the prophets inspired by the Spirit itself (who locate the period), the respect due to Jerusalem, etc., which the Spirit itself expresses in the Word (owing to its relationship to David’s Son and God Himself), now prevents the repetition of those signs so long as Jerusalem is trodden down by the Gentiles. A perfect realization of this baptism as described by the prophets is an utter impossibility so long as the Jewish nation remains unrestored, because it is linked with the period of restoration; and to have continued the prelude to, or earnest of, better things, would have not only contradicted the prophets, but would have made a kind of imperfect fulfillment take the place of the true and perfect one. As it is, this dispensation, so exceedingly precious especially to us Gentiles, has been by many, exalted out of all proportion in comparison with others; and if this baptism had continued, then under its influence, an antagonism between prediction and fact would have at once existed, and this dispensation would have been greatly magnified to the exclusion of any such gifts being connected with the Jewish race—with the loss of them, Gentiles have become so ‘highminded’ that anything distinctively ‘Jewish’ is obnoxious—with the retention of them they really would possess an argument against our being ‘too Jewish,’ for then they could triumphantly point to the very prophecies pertaining to the Jews and claim that they too realized them without having arrived at the period designated. This baptism

then ceased from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, both that it might be a sign during the prevalence of ‘the times of the Gentiles,’ and that the Spirit might preserve the integrity and consistency of His own glorious and truthful predictions” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:74). “born of water and of the Spirit,”... Christ’s appeal to Nicodemus that he ought to know these things, evidently because recorded in the Scriptures, indicates that reference is made to the prophecies which predict the sprinkling with ‘clean water,’ the obtaining of ‘a new spirit,’ the putting of God’s Spirit ‘within’ them, and the raising up of the dead out of their graves by the power of the Spirit, all of which is represented as essential to the introduction of the Kingdom, and its blessings, and as related to the glorious reign of David’s Son. The language of Christ is, therefore, far from being exhausted in the experience of believers in the present dispensation” (*ibid.*, p. 80).

Joyful. “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and **the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away**” (Isa. 35:5-10). “For Jehovah hath comforted **Zion**; he hath comforted all her waste places, and hath made her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of Jehovah; **joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody**” (Isa. 51:3). “For ye **shall go out with joy**, and be led forth with peace: **the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands**. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off” (Isa. 55:12-13). “Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light, and **the days of thy mourning shall be ended**” (Isa. 60:20). “I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, **my soul shall be joyful** in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of

righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with a garland, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations” (Isa. 61:10-11). “But **be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying**” (Isa. 65:18-19). “**Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad for her**, all ye that love her: **rejoice for joy with her**, all ye that mourn over her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and **be delighted** with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream: and ye shall suck thereof; ye shall be borne upon the side, and shall be dandled upon the knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted **in Jerusalem**. And ye shall see it, and **your heart shall rejoice**, and your bones shall flourish like the tender grass: and the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants; and he will have indignation against his enemies” (Isa. 66:10-14). “And **all nations shall call you happy; for ye shall be a delightful land, saith Jehovah of hosts**” (Mal. 3:12).

And, *peaceful*. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**. **Of the increase** of his government and **of peace there shall be no end**, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “Then justice shall dwell in the wilderness; and righteousness shall abide in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be **peace**; and the effect of righteousness, **quietness and confidence for ever**. And **my people shall abide in a peaceable habitation, and in safe dwellings, and in quiet resting-places**” (Isa. 32:16-18). “**Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, desolation nor destruction within thy borders**; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise” (Isa. 60:18). “Rejoice ye with **Jerusalem**, and be glad for her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn over her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith Jehovah, Behold,

I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream: and ye shall suck thereof; ye shall be borne upon the side, and shall be dandled upon the knees. **As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.** And ye shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like the tender grass: and the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants; and he will have indignation against his enemies” (Isa. 66:10-14). “And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And *I*, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; *I*, Jehovah, have spoken it. And **I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.** And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and **they shall be secure in their land;** and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the hand of those that made bondmen of them. And **they shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid.** And I will raise up unto them a plantation for renown, and they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land, neither bear the shame of the nations any more. And they shall know that *I*, Jehovah, their God am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord Jehovah. And ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 34:23-31). “And **in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely**” (Hos. 2:18). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king’s wine-presses. And men shall dwell therein, and

there shall be no more curse; but **Jerusalem shall dwell safely**" (Zech. 14:8-11).

Israel will be populous. "**The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation; I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time**" (Isa. 60:22). "And I will gather **the remnant** of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and **they shall be fruitful and multiply**. And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 23:3-4). "**But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn into you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings:** and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because they say unto you, Thou land art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nation; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nation any more, saith the Lord Jehovah; neither will I let thee hear any more the shame of the nations, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nation to stumble any more, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 36:8-15). "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: For this, moreover, will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: **I will increase them with men like a flock.** As the flock for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts, **so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men;** and they shall know that I am Jehovah" (Ezek. 36:37-38). "...36th chapter of Ezekiel... a great increase in population shall fill the devastated cities (vss. 37-38)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 220) "and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, **Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein.** For *I*, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her" (Zech. 2:4-5). "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: **There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys**

and girls playing in the streets thereof” (Zech. 8:4-5). “...Israel will increase tremendously in population” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 408).

The land will be productive. “**And he will give the rain for thy seed, wherewith thou shalt sow the ground; and bread of the increase of the ground, and it shall be fat and plenteous. In that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures; the oxen likewise and the young asses that till the ground shall eat savory provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fork. And there shall be upon every lofty mountain, and upon every high hill, brooks and streams of waters,** in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Moreover **the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days,** in the day that Jehovah bindeth up the hurt of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound” (Isa. 30:23-26). “**The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God**” (Isa. 35:1-2). “**And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain,** nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah, and their offspring with them” (Isa. 65:21-23). “At that time, saith Jehovah, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith Jehovah, The people that were left of the sword found favor in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. Jehovah appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: again shalt thou be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. Again **shalt thou plant vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit thereof.** For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto Jehovah our God. For thus saith Jehovah, Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout for the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Jehovah, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the utter-

most parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall they return hither. They shall come with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them: **I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters**, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born. Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as shepherd doth his flock. For Jehovah hath ransomed Jacob, and redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and **shall flow unto the goodness of Jehovah, to the grain, and to the new wine, and to the oil, and to the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden**; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old together; for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And **I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness**, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:1-14). “Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, **they shall build houses, and plant vineyards**, and shall dwell securely, when I have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God” (Ezek. 28:25-26). “And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And **I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase**, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the hand of those that made bondmen of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up unto them a plantation for renown, and **they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land**, neither bear the shame of the nations any more. And they shall know that *I*, Jehovah, their God am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord Jehovah. And

ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 34:25-31). “But **ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel**; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn into you, and **ye shall be tilled and sown**; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and **the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful**; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because they say unto you, Thou land art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nation; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nation any more, saith the Lord Jehovah; neither will I let thee hear any more the shame of the nations, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nation to stumble any more, saith the Lord Jehovah” (Ezek. 36:8-15). “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses: and **I will call for the grain, and will multiply it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye may receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations**. Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Nor for your sake do I this, saith the Lord Jehovah, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and **the waste places shall be builded. And the land that was desolate shall be tilled**, whereas it was a desolation in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, **This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited. Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I, Jehovah, have builded the ruined places, and planted that which was desolate: I, Jehovah, have spoken it, and I will do it**. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: For this, moreover, will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: I will increase them with men like a flock. As the flock for

sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am Jehovah” (Ezek. 36:28-38). “Ezekiel declared that Israel will again possess the land ([Ezek. 36] v. 28) as a result of her regeneration (v. 29). The reproach of Israel will be removed (v. 30) and Israel will detest her past sins (v. 31). It is not for Israel’s glory (v. 32) that the regeneration (v.33), possession (v. 34) and the rebuilding of the land (v. 35) will occur, but it is for God’s own glory among the nations (v. 36)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 802). “And it shall come to pass **in that day**, I will answer, saith Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and **the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil**; and they shall answer Jezreel” (Hos. 2:21-22). “Then was Jehovah jealous for his land, and had pity on his people. And Jehovah answered and said unto his people, Behold, **I will send you grain, and new wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith**; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations; but I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive it into a land barren and desolate, its forepart into the eastern sea, and its hinder part into the western sea; and its stench shall come up, and its ill savor shall come up, because it hath done great things. Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for Jehovah hath done great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field; for **the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth its fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength**. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for **he giveth you the former rain in just measure, and he causeth to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain**, in the first month. And **the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil**. And **I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm**, my great army which I sent among you. And **ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied**, and shall praise the name of Jehovah your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be put to shame. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be put to shame” (Joel 2:18-27). “The ‘early’ rain falls in October and November, and prepares the land for ploughing and sowing; the ‘latter’ rain falls in April and May and insures a good crop” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 95). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah,**

and shall water the valley of Shittim” (Joel 3:18). **“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them”** (Amos 9:13-14). **“For there shall be the seed of peace; the vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things”** (Zech. 8:12). **“And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king’s wine-presses. And men shall dwell therein, and there shall be no more curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely”** (Zech. 14:8-11).

Israel will be prosperous. **“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: they all gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms. Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar; and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of Jehovah thy**

God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And foreigners shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. **Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations,** and their kings led captive. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. **The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.** And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. **Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings;** and thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. **For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron.** I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness" (Isa. 60:1-17). "to appoint unto them that mourn in **Zion**, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And **strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vine-dressers.** But ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God: **ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Instead of your shame ye shall have double; and instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess double;** everlasting joy shall be unto them. For *I*, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity; and I will give them their recompense in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And **their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah hath blessed**" (Isa. 61:3-9). "For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and **I will**

shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Hag. 2:6-9).

Israel will be glorious. “**And Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be spread a covering”** (Isa. 4:5). “In Isa. 4:5 we find that there will be exhibited a visible manifestation of ‘the glory of the Lord’ over the houses and the religious assemblies of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, somewhat similar to that which accompanied the Israelites in their journey from Egypt” (Peters, *TTK*, 4:146). “**And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious”** (Isa. 11:10). “**Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there Jehovah will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby”** (Isa. 33:20–21). “**and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it”** (Isa. 40:5). “**Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising”** (Isa. 60:1–3). “According to Isaiah 60:1-3, the reason why Israel will become the center of Gentile attention is due to the fact that the *Shechinah* Glory will abide over Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 439). “**Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah”** (Isa. 60:5–6). “Over the entire Mount Zion will be the visible form of the *Shechinah* Glory ([Isa.] vv. 5-6)” (*ibid.*, p. 471). “Afterward he brought me to the gate, even **the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of**

the east: and his voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and **I fell upon my face.** And **the glory of Jehovah came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.** And the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, **the glory of Jehovah filled the house.** And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, **this is the place of my throne,** and the place of the soles of my feet, **where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever;** and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by the dead bodies of their kings in their high places” (Ezek. 43:1–7) “and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, **Jerusalem** shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For **I, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her**” (Zech. 2:4–5). “It does not require much reason to see, that when God’s Plan is carried out and openly manifested, it will exceed the highest eulogies that the Prophets have given, and most amply vindicate God’s Word. Let all the seed of Abraham be brought together at the appointed time, and language fails to express the might and grandeur of the nation. The world will be astonished at the sublime manifestation” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:416). “Jesus will again be a visible manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory in the form of the God-Man without the veiling, while other manifestations will be in the forms of cloud, fire and smoke. All of this will be related to Israel, for it is with Israel that the *Shechinah* Glory will dwell in every one of its manifestations” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 618).

And, *Israel will be God’s witnesses and ministers to the Gentiles.* “Now Jehovah said unto **Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse. And **in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed**” (Gen. 12:1–3). “The word that the son of Amoz saw **concerning Judah and Jerusalem.** And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that **the mountain of Jehovah’s house** shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and **all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come**

ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:1-3). “to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vine-dressers. But **ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God:** ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Instead of your shame ye shall have double; and instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be unto them. For *I*, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity; and I will give them their recompense in truth, and I will make **an everlasting covenant with them.** And **their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah hath blessed**” (Isa. 61:3-9). “Israel... they will be the ministers of the Word to the Gentiles ([Isaiah 61] v. 6a)” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 807). “And **the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew from Jehovah, as showers upon the grass,** that tarry not for man, nor wait for the sons of men. And **the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples,** as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and there is none to deliver” (Mic. 5:7-8). “...the Remnant will spread the Word of God among the Gentile nations, according to Micah 5:7-8” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 792) “And it shall come to pass that, **as ye were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.** Fear not, but let your hands be strong” (Zech. 8:13). “Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that **there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah.** Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In

those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:20-23). “In the past, when ten Gentiles grabbed the clothes of the Jew, it was for other reasons than to say, *Let us go with you, for we have heard God is with you.* At the time of the final restoration, the Jews will no longer be reproached. Instead, Jews will be treated with reverential respect, for they will be known as the ministers of God” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 441). “Israel ‘will become God’s witnesses during the millennium” [quoting Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 504-508] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 558) “But this world supremacy of Israel, as set forth in the prophets, is never an end in itself. Its grand purpose is the welfare of all nations, as asserted in the original covenant, ‘In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed’ (Gen. 12:3). All the hard discipline of the centuries has had only one divine intention—the preparation of a nation to be the channel of divine blessing to a world unable to solve its own problems” (McClain, *GK*, p. 212). “In the establishment of the historical Theocracy at Sinai, the word of Jehovah came to Israel, saying, ‘Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests’ (Exod. 19:6). And, although the nation failed through unbelief and disobedience, the purpose of God will not fail... the blessing of God promised through the seed of Abraham, although already realized in part even in the present age, will receive its ultimate fulfillment in the future Millennial Kingdom of God on earth... the tribe of Levi will again have a definite place (Jer. 33:17-22)” (*ibid.*, p. 243). “For thus saith Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; **neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.** And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne; **and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.** As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will **I multiply** the seed of David my servant, and **the Levites that minister unto me”** (Jer. 33:17–22). “The nation of Israel remains the divinely ordained channel of blessing for the world” (McClain, *GK*, p. 293). “Israel will take a lead role in teaching God’s Word to the nations... (Isa. 2:2-3)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:435) “A central sanctuary, established for all worship (Ezek. 37:27-28), will be filled with God’s shekinah (43:1-7). God’s original intention for Israel will be established as

she becomes a spiritual beacon to the nations (Isa. 61:6)” (*ibid.*, p. 562). **“My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore”** (Ezek. 37:27–28).

Gentile Nations

In the Millennial Kingdom, along with Israel, *Gentile nations* and individuals will also be in existence.

Some Gentiles will survive the Tribulation and the subsequent “sheep and goats” judgment, thus enabling them to populate the Millennial Kingdom. **“God be merciful unto us, and bless us, And cause his face to shine upon us; Selah That thy way may be known upon earth, Thy salvation among all nations.** Let the peoples praise thee, O God; **Let all the peoples praise thee. Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, And govern the nations upon earth.** Selah Let the peoples praise thee, O God; **Let all the peoples praise thee. The earth** hath yielded its increase: God, even our own God, will bless us. God will bless us; And **all the ends of the earth shall fear him”** (Ps. 67:1-7). **“Say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth:** The world also is established that it cannot be moved: **He will judge the peoples with equity.** Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; Let the field exult, and all that is therein; Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy Before Jehovah; **For he cometh, For he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with his truth”** (Ps. 96:10-13). **“Thus saith Jehovah against all mine evil neighbors,** that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit: behold, **I will pluck them up from off their land,** and will pluck up the house of Judah from among them. And it shall come to pass, **after that I have plucked them up, I will return and have compassion on them; and I will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.** And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, As Jehovah liveth; even as they taught my people to swear by Baal; **then shall they be built up** in the midst of my people. But if they will not hear, then will I pluck up **that nation,** plucking up and destroying it, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 12:14–17). **“And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of**

Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And **he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more**” (Isa. 2:2-4). “For Jehovah will have compassion on **Jacob**, and will yet choose **Israel**, and set them in their own land: and **the sojourner shall join himself with them**, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob” (Isa. 14:1). “Behold, **my servant**, whom I uphold; **my chosen**, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; **he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles**. He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth. **He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law**” (Isa. 42:1-4). “For I know their works and their thoughts: **the time cometh, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see my glory**. And I will set a sign among them, and **I will send such as escape of them unto the nations**, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, **to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations**. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And **of them also will I take for priests and for Levites**, saith Jehovah. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, **shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah**. And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. 66:18-24). “But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and **peoples shall flow unto it**. And **many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob;**

and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and **he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more**” (Mic. 4:1-3). “Likewise, the prophets indicate, ‘many nations’ will survive the holocaust of divine judgment on their political systems, but under new and happier forms. There will be humble submission to the ‘God of Jacob,’ in whose ways they will walk, and political forms based on military force will be abandoned as of no longer any effective purpose in the face of authority enforced by supernatural power (Mic. 4:1-3)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 154). “Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that **ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you**” (Zech. 8:23). “And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles**” (Zech. 14:16). “For **the coming of the Son of Man** will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. **Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left**” (Matt. 24:37-41). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’**... Then He will answer them, saying, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but **the righteous into eternal life**” (Matt. 25:31-46). “The Gentiles who survive the Judgment of the Gentiles for their treatment of Israel are the ones who will enter and populate the Gentile nations in the Millennium. These are the

sheep Gentiles who, because of their faith shown by their pro-Semitism, will be able to participate in and populate the Kingdom” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 485). (See also our discussion of the gathering and judgment of the Gentiles (the sheep and goats judgment) in our previous chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*.)

Gentile nations and individuals will therefore be in existence throughout the Millennial Kingdom. “for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be **Egypt my people**, and **Assyria the work of my hands**, and **Israel** mine inheritance” (Isa. 19:25). “Isaiah 19:25... What the coming King will be able to do for Egypt and Assyria is a token of the unimaginable reach of His Kingdom, not only in spiritual blessings but also in political and social benefits for a needy and confused world” (McClain, *GK*, p. 154). “and will come out to deceive **the nations which are in the four corners of the earth**, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore” (Rev. 20:8). “...that the human race would become Jewish... it is not quite accurate seeing that Gentile nations are predicted as continuously existing, acknowledging and enjoying the blessings of such a rule” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:428).

The Gentile nations will recognize and acknowledge Israel's preeminence in the Kingdom. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the root of Jesse**, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, **unto him shall the nations seek**; and his resting-place shall be glorious” (Isa. 11:10). “And now saith Jehovah that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring **Jacob** again to him, and that **Israel** be gathered unto him for I am honorable in the eyes of Jehovah, and my God is become my strength; yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers: **Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall worship**; because of Jehovah that is faithful, even the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee” (Isa. 49:5–7). “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee [**Jacob**, 59:20]. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but **Jehovah** will arise upon thee, and **his glory shall be seen upon thee**. And **nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising**” (Isa. 60:1-3). “For I, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity; and I will give them [**Zion**, vs. 3] their recompense in truth, and I will make an everlasting

covenant with them. And **their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah hath blessed**” (Isa. 61:8-9). “For **Zion’s sake** will I not hold my peace, and for **Jerusalem’s sake** I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And **the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory**, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God” (Isa. 62:1-3). “Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thy heritage, which dwell solitarily, in the forest in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old. **As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto them marvellous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; like crawling things of the earth they shall come trembling out of their close places; they shall come with fear unto Jehovah our God, and shall be afraid because of thee**” (Mic. 7:14-17). “At that time I will bring you [**Israel, vs. 14**] in, and at that time will I gather you; for **I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth**, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah” (Zeph. 3:20). “Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that **there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you**” (Zech. 8:20-23). “And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles**. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the

feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16-19). “What the ark has hitherto been to Jerusalem... Jerusalem is now to be to the nations” (McClain, *GK*, p. 148). (See also our discussion of Israel’s political supremacy in the section *Government of the Millennial Kingdom* above.)

The Gentiles who observe Israel’s glory will tell other nations of Israel’s blessedness. “For I know their works and their thoughts: **the time cometh, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see my glory.** And I will set a sign among them, and **I will send such as escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations.** And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And **of them also will I take for priests and for Levites, saith Jehovah.** For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that **from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah. And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me:** for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. 66:18-24). “The *Shechinah* Glory, which will be especially manifested in the Kingdom, will be seen by many of the Gentiles ([Isaiah 66] v. 18), and those who do see it will set off to travel among the Gentiles who have not seen it to tell them of it (v. 19)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 488). “From among these Gentiles, God will choose some to serve as priests in the Temple ([Isaiah 66] v. 21)” (*ibid.*). “As for the unfaithful among the Gentiles, their dead bodies and the suffering of their souls will be visible throughout the Kingdom ([Isaiah 66] v. 24), illustrating for one thousand years God’s grace to the faithful and His severity to the lost” (*ibid.*).

The Gentiles will serve Israel. “For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and

the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids; and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors” (Isa. 14:1-2). “Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will lift up my hand to **the nations**, and set up my ensign to the peoples; and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And **kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet**; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah; and they that wait for me shall not be put to shame” (Isa. 49:22-23). “And **foreigners shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee**: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. **Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations, and their kings led captive. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.** The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. And **the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.** Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. **Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings**; and thou shalt know that *I*, Jehovah, am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob” (Isa. 60:10-16). “to appoint unto them that mourn in **Zion**, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And **strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves**” (Isa. 61:3-6). “In the Messianic Kingdom all ‘nations or peoples that will not serve Israel will perish’” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 7:134] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 333). “Yes, there will be

Gentile nations in the Millennium, but positionally they will be there ‘to abide in the reflected glory of Israel.’ Not only will the Gentiles not replace Israel in the kingdom, but the Gentiles will be subservient to Israel in the kingdom” [quoting Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 3:105-108] (*ibid.*, p. 554). “McClain [in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, pp. 231-323] concludes that ‘when the political unification and supremacy of Israel have been firmly established by divine power, all nations will gladly recognize the benefits of such an arrangement.’ In this way, the so-called ‘Jewish problem’ will be solved forever” (*ibid.*, p. 559).

Some Gentiles will help build the millennial temple and some will serve in it. “Also **the foreigners that join themselves to Jehovah, to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples**” (Isa. 56:6-7). “For I know their works and their thoughts: the time cometh, that I will gather **all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see my glory.** And I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And **of them also will I take for priests and for Levites,** saith Jehovah. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that **from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me,** saith Jehovah” (Isa. 66:18-23). “and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is **the Branch:** and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even **he shall build the temple of Jehovah;** and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a

memorial in the temple of Jehovah. **And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple** of Jehovah; and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God” (Zech. 6:12-15). “And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.** And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain” (Zech. 14:16-17). “In the Mosaic Law, the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles was mandatory for Jews only, while under Kingdom Law, it will be mandatory for both Jews and Gentiles (Zech. 14:16-21). Under the Law of Moses, only Jews could be priests, but under Kingdom Law, Gentiles will also serve as priests (Is. 66:18-21)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 457). “The Temple ministry will be open to all Gentiles who are rightly related to the King” (*ibid.*, p. 487).

The Gentiles will also be blessed. They will be *populous*, “and will come out to deceive **the nations** which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; **the number of them is like the sand of the seashore**” (Rev. 20:8). “During the Millennium, children will be born (Isa. 65:20), and there will be innumerable people by the end of it (Rev. 20:8). People in resurrection bodies do not have children... populate the earth during Christ’s reign... many of the 144,000 Jews saved therein, and the great multitude of others they win (7:4, 9), will be alive on earth in unresurrected bodies. *These are the ‘sheep’ of Matthew 25 who will replenish the earth during a thousand years of reproduction under perfect conditions*” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:619). “**There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old,** and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed” (Isa. 65:20). and they will be *blessed*. “And it shall come to pass **in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it**” (Isa. 2:2). “And it shall come to pass **in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek;** and his resting-place shall be glorious” (Isa. 11:10). “In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and **the Egyptians shall worship with the Assyrians.** In that day shall Israel be the third with **Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of**

the earth; for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance” (Isa. 19:23-25). “and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 40:5). “Thus saith Jehovah, Keep ye justice, and do righteousness; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that holdeth it fast; that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the foreigner, that hath joined himself to Jehovah, speak, saying, Jehovah will surely separate me from his people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith Jehovah of the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and hold fast my covenant: Unto them will I give in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the foreigners that join themselves to Jehovah, to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. The Lord Jehovah, who gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own that are gathered” (Isa. 56:1-8). “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah” (Isa. 66:23). “that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this” (Amos 9:12). “And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto thee” (Zech. 2:11). “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith Jehovah of hosts” (Mal. 1:11). “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34) “Or is God the God of Jews only? is he

not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also” (Rom. 3:29). “These nations will be owned of Jehovah as ‘nations that are called by my name’ (Amos 9:12, ASV). Even those peoples which were once enemies of Israel and her God may find a place of favor within the future Mediatorial Kingdom (Isa. 19:23-25). For, as the New Testament reminds us, God is the God of all men, whether Jews or Gentiles (Rom. 3:29)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 213). “The residue of men will seek the Lord; that is, all the Gentiles will be brought to a knowledge of the Lord after the kingdom is established. This same truth is taught in passages like Isaiah 2:2, 11:10; 40:5; and 66:23” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 146).

And, *the Gentiles will worship the King; they will observe the Feast of Tabernacles*. “The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of **Midian** and **Ephah**; all they from **Sheba** shall come; **they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah**. All the flocks of **Kedar** shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of **Nebaioth** shall minister unto thee; **they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar**; and I will glorify the house of my glory” (Isa. 60:6–7). “And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles**. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of **all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles**” (Zech. 14:16–19). “And it shall come to pass, that **from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah**” (Isa. 66:23). “Zech. 14... the yearly worship at Jerusalem ([Zech. 14] v. 16)... a national acknowledgement of nations through their representatives of the Theocratic King and Kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:93). “...the restored Theocracy... All nations falling under its sway and enjoying its blessings must publicly worship the Ruler” (*ibid.*, 3:596) “Of the various feasts and celebrations and festival offerings of the Millennium mentioned by Ezekiel, there is one feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, that will be obligatory for all Gentile nations. This is declared in Zechariah 14:16-19” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 488). “All the Gentile nations that will populate the Kingdom will be obligated to send a delegation to Jerusalem in order to worship the King at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 16)”

(*ibid.*, p. 489). (See also our discussion of Israel's observance of the Jewish feasts in our section *Israel* above.)

In the Millennial Kingdom, there will be *no war* between nations. "The word that the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of **Jehovah** from Jerusalem. And **he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.** O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah" (Isa. 2:1-5). "And **in that day** will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and **I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land**, and will make them to lie down safely" (Hos. 2:18). "But **in the latter days** it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And **many nations** shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of **Jehovah** from Jerusalem; and **he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more**" (Mic. 4:1-3). "So plain and decisive are these predictions [Isa. 2:1-5 and Micah 4:1-3] that it is a matter of amazement that the Church has ever departed from the early Church belief, sustained as it is by the fair grammatical sense and analogy of the Word" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:685). "While differences between nations will arise, such differences will no longer be settled by military conflicts, but only by the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 380).

Culture in the Millennial Kingdom

Culture in the Millennial Kingdom will be *diverse*. “The peculiar cultural values of the various nations, in so far as they may be used to contribute to the good of all, will not be abolished. In this respect, there will be no reduction of human society to one dull and faceless mediocrity, as it appears in the ‘one world’ of Marxism” (McClain, *GK*, p. 212).

Life in the Millennial Kingdom

Life in the Millennial Kingdom will be agrarian, spiritual and good.

Lifestyles will likely be largely *agrarian*. “But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.. they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But **they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree**; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of Jehovah of hosts hath spoken it” (Mic. 4:1–4). “And they shall build houses and inhabit them; **They shall also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build, and another inhabit, They shall not plant, and another eat**; For as the lifetime of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My chosen ones shall wear out the work of their hands” (Isa. 65:21–23) “The Agrarian law of the Theocracy, which divided the land equally among all, and prevented that enormous accumulation of landed estate in the hands of the few to the detriment of the many, may reasonably give us a hint how in the future the earth will be occupied by the subjects” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:596).

Life will be *spiritual*. “until **the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high**, And the wilderness becomes a fertile field And the fertile field is considered as a forest” (Isa. 32:15). “And it shall come to pass that, **before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear**” (Isa. 65:24) “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: **I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people**” (Jer. 31:33) “For **the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea**” (Hab. 2:14). “Christ has the Spirit without measure, and it is simply to be faithless to doubt His ability to produce through the

Spirit, thus working in harmony with His will, all the glorious things predicted by this same Spirit” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:72). “The reader is reminded how this view at once completely removes the ungenerous objection urged against us, that we do not make out a spiritual but ‘carnal’ Kingdom. When the King has this Spirit without measure; when He baptizes His associated body of rulers in a large, wonderful measure, and the subjects in a measure indicative of the variety of the Spirit’s ministrations; when the Spirit exerts His Almighty energy in every direction extending even to the material creation; surely the government swayed under such imparted and revealed power, must be also preeminently spiritual. So plain is this, that it needs no additional remarks” (*ibid.*, p. 80). “The wondrous power exerted by this Theocratic ordering in its King and associated rulers, so that it even extends to the deliverance of creation, the final and complete removal of the curse, exhibits a spirituality far beyond our comprehension. A recreative and beneficent force is then at work, which frees groaning nature itself from its load of suffering and corruption” (*ibid.*, p. 464). “Smyth (*Key to Rev.*, p. 352) adds: ‘His reign (Christ’s) must be only spiritual. The days of miracles are past; the Bible is filled; and they are not needed; and Christ can reign as effectually without miracles as with them.’... This is taking a low estimate of the grand results involved in that predicted reign, and we turn away from it with relief, accepting of a better hope, of a reign far more comprehensive and sublime in its effects and consequences” (*ibid.*). “While the power of the Spirit has been manifested in some saints in previous generations, it will be common and abundant in the millennial period” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 309). “...implies that the period of the kingdom will be in some measure inferior to the Dispensation of Grace. This is an area with which many other Dispensationalists would disagree with Chafer. Many Dispensationalists would say that Kingdom Law is not a reinstatement of the Law of Moses, nor is it an intensification of the demands of the Law of Moses. On the contrary, the death of Christ has forever terminated the law so that it can never be reinstated. In the Millennium, there will be a new body of law that can be called the Kingdom Law” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 554). However, *sinners will be born who will need salvation*. “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for **the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed**” (Isa. 65:20). “Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me; and **I will punish** all that oppress them” (Jer. 30:20). “In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge. But **every one shall die for his own iniquity**: every man that

eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge” (Jer. 31:29-30). “And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you and to the strangers that sojourn among you, who **shall beget children among you**; and they shall be unto you as the home-born among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel” (Ezek. 47:22). “I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; and **they shall increase** as they have increased” (Zech. 10:8).

Life will be *holy*. “...when it is fulfilling the Lord’s prayer (the spirit of which even Luther located in the future, so Michelet’s *Life*, p. 343) in causing the will of God to be done on earth as in heaven, it will be seen that such passages as John 1:29, ‘Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,’ etc., are verified on a scale far exceeding the limited view usually taken of them, i.e. confining them more to a provisionary than to an actual realization” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:391).

Life will be *supernatural*. “McClain [in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, p. 235], commenting on the common failing of the amillenarians, incisively states: ‘It indicates the ease with which antimillennialism slips into an attitude of antisupernaturalism in the physical realm. The Old Testament prophets were not hampered by any such dualistic prejudices. Recognizing the hand of God everywhere present in the processes of nature, they saw nothing incredible in the idea of a spiritual Kingdom where intrusions of supernatural power would become the rule instead of the exception’” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 321).

Miraculous events will likely be commonplace. “‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do**; because I go to the Father’” (John 14:12). “...in the fulfillment of the promise (John 14:12) that the believers of Christ shall perform the miraculous works of Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:144). “...the amazing power of these kings and priests... They shall receive the promised Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire. It is for this reason that Jesus promised His disciples that they should perform greater works than He had done while on earth; and that all things that they would ask for would be granted, etc. This has never yet been realized. There was a partial fulfillment in the case of the apostles and their contemporaries, but even then their works did not exceed the miraculous power exerted by the Master... But the time is coming when this same miraculous power shall be given to those who have made themselves worthy of it in a higher degree than ever yet experienced” (*ibid.*, p. 595) “These priests, being all ‘baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire,’ are endowed with supernatural powers.

Hence, now enabled to perform ‘the greater works’ promised, they are admirably adapted by sympathy and ample power to minister to the wants, necessities, etc., of the nations, and to materially aid their Master in mitigating and removing the curse as the Theocratic dominion extends itself. It is not mere imagination to suppose that they will visit, and lay hands upon, the sick and dying, that they will dry up tears of anguish and grief, that they will administer comfort, consolation, mercy, and hope” (*ibid.*, p. 613). “...perform great works... Thus promises which are, on the one hand, perverted by fanaticism and, on the other, form a stumbling-block to unbelief (ridiculing non-fulfillment), are preserved in all their integrity, fullness, and preciousness” (*ibid.*, 3:390). “John 14:12, ‘He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.’... the complete fulfillment of the promise must be found in a future Kingdom such as we find described by the Old Testament prophets” (McClain, *GK*, p. 300). “In other words, we still need on earth the complete fulfillment of the promised ‘greater works’ as they shall be ministered in the coming Kingdom by those who will be reigning with its King” (*ibid.*, p. 301). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom was announced and foreshadowed by Jesus’ miracles in the section *The Kingdom was Announced* of our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom*.)

Angelic visitations will also likely be commonplace. “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31). “And He said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man**” (John 1:51). “And He said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, **hereafter** you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (John 1:51, NKJV) “...angelic communication restored, John 1:51” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:143) “...the uniting, as declared to Nathanael (John 1:51), of the heavenly with the earthly, so that the angels of God shall be seen ascending and descending” (*ibid.*, p. 144) “In the future will be verified Christ’s promise to Nathaniel, Jno. 1:51, ‘Verily, verily I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.’ The futurity is evidenced, not simply from the fact that the past has never witnessed such a fulfillment, but by the ‘hereafter’ and the ‘Son of man’ referring to the period of the Sec. Advent, as seen in Luke 22:69, and Matt. 26:64” (*ibid.*, p. 618). “Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, **hereafter** you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER,

and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN” (Matt. 26:64). “**Hereafter the Son of Man** will sit on the right hand of the power of God” (Luke 22:69, NKJV). “Such angelic presiding over nations, even by ‘the chief princes,’ only indicates how interested the angelic host must be in the development of the ultimate deliverance of the nations from the bondage under which they groan. The past agency insures a continued interest, and such sympathy and aid as may be in accordance with the Theocratic ordering” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 621). “One of the blessed ingredients of future happiness and glory will be the intercourse of the glorified saints with the angelic host. This will prove a never-ending source of blissful enjoyment. To converse with those who witnessed creation, who have been the trusted messengers of God in countless missions of mercy and love, who for ages have had the honor and glory of God at heart, who are so exalted in knowledge, wisdom, and power—this will be a privilege indeed. To familiarly associate with such beings, to visit with them earth or heaven, to be united with them in the strongest ties of a common devotion and communion, to interchange experiences of the past and present, etc., all this is an honor exceedingly great—such as never was found in the most splendid of earthly courts” (*ibid.*). “Owing to rebellion, the angelic hosts, which once shouted for joy at the exhibition of creative energy, withdrew from this world, and only occasionally have they been permitted to reveal themselves to man. But this interdiction, caused by sinfulness, will be withdrawn, for on the restoration of this Kingdom, under the blessed reign of Christ, they shall freely communicate with this earth as Jesus told Nathaniel (John 1:51)” (*ibid.*, 3:446).

Life will be *good*:

Life will be *peaceful*, with *no war* (see our discussion of the fact that there will be no war in the Millennial Kingdom our section *Nations of the Millennial Kingdom* above), *peace among people*, “And the work of righteousness will be **peace**, And the service of righteousness, **quietness and confidence forever**” (Isa. 32:17). “**In that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, shall ye invite every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig-tree**” (Zech. 3:10). “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of **Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass.** And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and **he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth**” (Zech. 9:9-10). and *peace among the animals*. “And **the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and**

the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-9). "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah" (Isa. 65:25). "And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely" (Hos. 2:18). "No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there" (Isa. 35:9) "We cannot spiritualize these words. This was the character of these animals in Eden before the Fall, and in the Ark" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 95). "Once again animals will be tame and snakes harmless" (Showers, *M*, p. 90). "*There Will Be No Carnivorous Animals...* The curse on the animal kingdom likewise will be reversed. No longer will nature be red in tooth and claw; no animals will be carnivorous; rather, they will be herbivorous, as in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:2)" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:563). "And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every **tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good **for food**; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:9). "And the woman said unto the serpent, **Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat**" (Gen. 3:2)**

Life will be *righteous*. "For as the earth bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so **the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations**" (Isa. 61:11).

Life will be *good*. "If this is 'a Gospel dispensation,' the one Coming is only a far greater one, seeing that the goodness of the Kingdom and of salvation is realized in all its preciousness to a far greater extent in the Coming one" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:408).

Life will be *healing*. "Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And **in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of**

darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in Jehovah, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 29:17-19). **“Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.** Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you. Then **the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing;** for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isa. 35:3-6). “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to **bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;** to proclaim the year of Jehovah’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn” (Isa. 61:1-2) “Behold, I will **bring them** from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them **the blind and the lame,** the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall they return hither” (Jer. 31:8). “In that day, saith Jehovah, will I **assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation:** and Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever” (Mic. 4:6-7). “Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee; and **I will save that which is lame,** and gather that which was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth” (Zeph. 3:19). “But **unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings;** and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall” (Mal. 4:2). “The utmost perfection of body is to be enjoyed in the kingdom; this is foreshadowed by the removal of blindness, lameness, deafness, and dumbness” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:90). (See also our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom was announced and foreshadowed by Jesus’ miracles in the section *The Kingdom was Announced* of our chapter *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom.*)

Life will be *free from corruption.* “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that **the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the**

freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:18-23).

Life will be *fair*. “**And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations.** Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war” (Mic. 4:3). “...men, women, and children will not be converted into mere machines to add to others’ wealth; it does not, owing to its Supernatural basis of immortal and glorified rulers, grind down its subjects with taxes to support its governmental machinery” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:597)

Life will be *efficient*. “The knowledge, improvements, inventions, discoveries, etc., of former ages will be adapted to promote the glory of this coming one. The telegraph, steam, printing, telephone, a thousand other things, will be increased in efficiency” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:147)

Life will be *joyful*. “**But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying**” (Isa. 65:18-19). “and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and **everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away**” (Isa. 35:10). “As to man’s social life, at a wedding He provides wine by a miracle, not to sustain mere physical existence, but in order that men might have the physical means of their social enjoyment” (McClain, *GK*, p. 300).

Life will be *enjoyed*. “This is no kingdom of asceticism where the normal impulses of humanity, implanted by divine creation, will be rigorously suppressed” (McClain, *GK*, p. 228).

Life will be *abundant*. “Do not be anxious then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we **drink?**’ or ‘With what shall we **clothe** ourselves?’ For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for **your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.** But **seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you**” (Matt. 6:31-33). “‘The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; **I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly**’” (John 10:10). “Take the promise (Matt. 6:33), ‘Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.’ If

we consider that this was said before the postponement of the Kingdom when the Kingdom was offered on the condition of repentance, we see at once how this would have been fulfilled just as given. For, if the nation had repented and the Kingdom would have been re-established then under the marvellous influence of the Spirit, just as predicted by the prophets, ‘all these things’ would have been added, seeing that under this Spirit’s influence abundance and plenty for all classes is expressly promised. Aside from the grace of God which now even in response to faith so often inchoately verifies the promise, it still points us on when the Kingdom itself shall be attained and there will be no lack, owing to the power and manifestation of the Spirit” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:79). (See also our discussion of the fact that the earth will be productive in our section *The Earth in the Millennial Kingdom* above.)

Life will be *long*. “**There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed**” (Isa. 65:20). “With infant mortality removed, everyone born in the Millennium will live at least until his hundredth year of life... death in the Kingdom will be for unbelievers only” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 382).

And, life will be *glorious*. “And blessed be his glorious name for ever; And **let the whole earth be filled with his glory**. Amen, and Amen” (Ps. 72:19). “**For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea**” (Hab. 2:14). “**But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne**” (Matt. 25:31).

But again, in the Millennial Kingdom, even with all this goodness, *there will still be some sin and death*. “In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge. But **every one shall die for his own iniquity**: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge” (Jer. 31:29–30). “but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips **shall he slay the wicked**” (Isa. 11:4). “No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For **the youth will die at the age of one hundred** And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Shall be thought accursed” (Isa. 65:20). “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of

tabernacles. And it shall be, that **whoso of all the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain.** And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; **there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.** This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16-19). “And she gave birth to a son, **a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron;** and her child was caught up to God and to His throne” (Rev. 12:5). “And **when the thousand years are completed,** Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to **deceive the nations** which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the **war;** the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and **fire came down from heaven and devoured them.** And **the devil who deceived them** was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev. 20:7-10). “...some will die in the Mill. age (comp. Isa. 65:20; Jer. 31:29-30) ...but these passages seem to make death a resultant of sinning... Fausset, *Com.*, Isa. 65:20, explains, ‘the sinner that dieth at a hundred years shall be deemed accursed,’ i.e. ‘his death at so early an age, which in those days the hundredth year will be regarded, just as if it were mere childhood, shall be deemed the effect of God’s special visitation in wrath’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:148) “...this work of entirely abolishing death from the earth is a gradual work; the glorious beginning being seen in the immortal saints, next in the wonderful deliverances of the Jewish nation, next in the astounding blessings bestowed upon the nations rendering allegiance, and lastly in the final outcome, when all wickedness (the entailer of death) is forevermore crushed” (*ibid.*). “Those from both Israel and the Gentiles who go out of the Tribulation period into Messiah’s earthly kingdom will go in unredeemed bodies with an unredeemed nature within them. It will not be the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem who will be charged with the responsibility of repopulating the earth. This will be done by the saved who enter the millennial kingdom in their natural bodies. And the multitudes born to them will be born with an unredeemed, fallen, sin nature within them. Even though they will be living under the benefits of the King’s reign, they will need to be saved” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 316). “The outbreak of sin will be punished by immediate death (Isa. 11:4). Rebellion against the authority of the King will be immediately judged (Zech.

14:16-19)” (*ibid.*, p. 317). “All those born during the millennial kingdom will have opportunity to receive the salvation that the King has provided, and because of fear of judgment and respect for the power of the King they will outwardly live in conformity to His law” (*ibid.*). “...the curse on the earth is only partly lifted as indicated by the continuance of death” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 318). “The Scriptures prophesy that Christ will put to death the wicked during His millennial reign (Isa. 11:4)... there will be death for some people during the Millennium” (Showers, *M*, p. 187). “Those born in the Kingdom will have until their hundredth year to believe. If they do not, they will die in their hundredth year... However, if they do believe, they will live throughout the Millennium and never die. Thus, death in the Millennium will be for unbelievers only. This is why the Bible nowhere speaks of a resurrection of millennial saints. This is why the resurrection of the Tribulation saints is said to complete the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6). It is also clear from the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 that there will be no Jewish unbelievers in the Kingdom; all Jews born during the Kingdom will accept the Messiah by their hundredth year. Unbelief will be among the Gentiles only and, therefore, death will exist only among the Gentiles” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 383). “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with **the house of Israel**, and with **the house of Judah**: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days**, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and **they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them**, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jer. 31:31-34). “During the thousand years Christ will have to rule with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5), some sinners will be judged and die (Isa. 65:20), and He will crush a large rebellion at the end (Rev. 20:7-10)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:559). “*Some Children Born During the Millennium Will Not Believe...* Saved parents can have unsaved children; of those born during the Millennium, some will accept Christ as their Savior, and others will not. Of those who do not, some will go along with His reign outwardly, while others will overtly rebel against it. The latter will be judged and die prematurely (Isa. 65:20) under the rod of iron (Rev. 12:5) with which Christ will crush all opposition. At the end of the Millennium, the

false believers who only followed outwardly will rebel, at the instigation of the devil's release from his prison, only to be destroyed by Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 561). "*Death Will Result From Rebellion and Punishment...* Even though life is lengthened in the Millennium, death will still occur; those who survive the Tribulation will still be mortal. Apparently, though, there will be no death of natural causes—decay, disease, or degeneration. It will be by judgment for rebellion against God (Rev. 12:5; Isa. 65:20) and perhaps by accident. The Millennium is not heaven—it will not be absolutely perfect, but it will be as perfect as it can be on earth with unsaved people still in the mix (Matt. 13:29-30). *The Millennium is not the first chapter of heaven but the last chapter of earth—not the completed victory but the last chapter in the ultimate victory: 'He must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet' (1 Cor. 15:25; cf. 13:10-12).* Nonetheless, the Millennium will be a vast improvement over the world before the Second Coming: There will be no more poverty, sickness, famine, plagues, or war, and, instead, there will be peace, prosperity, and tranquility. "They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9)" (*ibid.*, p. 564). "According to premillennialism, the Millennium will have both mortals and immortals at the same time; some who are already resurrected and some who are not yet resurrected. Those who are resurrected cannot have children (Matt. 22:30), while those who are not yet resurrected can and will (see Isa. 65). The resurrected ones will be perfect and sinless; the others will not" (*ibid.*, p. 593).

Chapter 26: A Final Rebellion

At the end of the Millennial Kingdom, before the final (Great White Throne) judgment takes place and before the Eternal Order is instituted, a final rebellion against the King and His Kingdom will take place.

The Fact of the Rebellion

The final rebellion is noted and described in Revelation chapter twenty. “And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and **Satan**, and **bound him for a thousand years**, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so **that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time**” (Rev. 20:1-3). “**And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone**, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev. 20:7-10). “Within one chapter alone (Rev 20) is the revelation given which asserts that Satan must be loosed for a little season from his thousand-year imprisonment. Mere speculation over why he is loosed is uncalled for. Evidently, it completes the ground upon which divine judgment against this great angel may be imposed. It is to be seen, however, that wars which had ceased when he was bound are resumed, and that those who had lived in the peace and glory of the kingdom are deceived, as people of this age have been; and war follows only to be terminated by supernatural destruction of those armies” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:400). “Gog as the prince and Magog as the people... Apparently the defection against Christ will extend even to some of the subrulers involved in the political government of the world at the close of the millennium” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 331). “...a great number of unregenerate men will be alive at the time of the close of the Messianic Kingdom, all born during the last century of the Millennium” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 511).

Why the Rebellion?

It is puzzling to many how, after a thousand years of idyllic conditions on earth under the righteous and just rulership of Christ and His co-rulers, Satan could manage to deceive the nations again, and why anyone, let alone a large number of people “like the sand of the seashore” would choose to join Satan in this final rebellion. The solution appears to lie in the incorrigible nature of the fallen human heart. “While the astounding revolt on earth is closely related to the release of Satan, as intimated above, it stands much alone as a demonstration that the the millennial age will not have changed the temptable character of the human heart” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:360). “That mankind should again fail under such ideal circumstances and be ready to rebel against Christ at the close of the millennium is the final answer to those who would put faith in the inherent goodness of man” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 319). “Many will be greatly annoyed and irritated by the absolute, righteous rule of Christ and the saints, which will be administered worldwide. They will hope for someone supernatural to appear and lead them in a revolt to overthrow this rule. As a result, these unsaved rebels will flock to Satan when he appears on the earth after the Millennium to lead such a revolt (Rev. 20:7-9)” (Showers, *M*, p. 190).

The Seven Dispensations

The quelling of the final rebellion brings to a close the Millennial Kingdom, the last of the seven dispensations of human history. Having at this point in our study traced the biblical Kingdom and mankind’s relationships to it throughout history in considerable detail, now would be an ideal time for us to take a step back and retrospectively summarize and review these seven dispensations. Doing so should help us to even more completely and satisfactorily conceptualize the outworking of God’s overall Kingdom program in history.

Summary of the Dispensations

Dr. Chafer summarizes the dispensations, or ages of human history, “As to time, the Bible may be apportioned into well-defined periods. These periods are clearly separated and the recognition of their divisions with their divine purposes constitutes one of the important factors in true interpretation of the Scriptures. These divisions of time are termed dispensations, which word is somewhat different than the word age in that the word age is more general, being used of any brief division of time or generation of men, though the word age is rightly used as synonymous with the word dispensation... It is probable that the recognition of the dispensations sheds

more light on the whole message of the Scriptures than any other aspect of Bible study. Often the first clear understanding of the dispensations and God's revealed purposes in them results in the beginning of useful Bible knowledge and in the fostering of a personal interest in the Bible itself... Man's relation to God is not the same in every age. It has been necessary to bring fallen man into divine testing. This, in part, is God's purpose in the ages, and the result of the testings is in every case an unquestionable demonstration of the utter failure and sinfulness of man. In the end, every mouth will have been stopped because every assumption of the human heart will have proven its unwisdom and wickedness by centuries of experience. Each dispensation, therefore, begins with man divinely placed in a new position of privilege and responsibility, and closes with the failure of man resulting in righteous judgments from God. While there are certain abiding facts such as the holy character of God which are of necessity the same in every age, there are varying instructions and responsibilities which are, as to their application, limited to a given period. In this connection, the Bible student must recognize the difference between a primary and a secondary application of the Word of God. Only those portions of the Scriptures which are directly addressed to the child of God under grace are to be given a personal or primary application. All such instructions he is expected to perform in detail. In the matter of a secondary application it should be observed that, while there are spiritual lessons to be drawn from every portion of the Bible, it does not follow that the Christian is appointed by God to conform to those governing principles which were the will of God for people of other dispensations. The child of God under grace is not situated as was Adam, or Abraham, or the Israelites when under the Law; nor is he called upon to follow that peculiar manner of life which according to the Scriptures will be required of men when the King shall have returned and set up His kingdom on the earth. Since the child of God depends wholly on the instructions contained in the Bible for his direction in daily life, and since the principles obtaining in the various dispensations are so diverse, and at times even contradictory, it is important that he shall recognize those portions of the Scriptures which directly apply to him if he is to realize the will of God and the glory of God. In considering the whole testimony of the Bible it is almost as important for the believer who would do the will of God to recognize that which does not concern him as it is for him to recognize that which does concern him. It is obvious that, apart from the knowledge of dispensational truth, the believer will not be intelligently adjusted to the present purpose and will of God in the world. Such knowledge alone will save him from assuming the hopeless legality of the dispensation that is

past or from undertaking the impossible world-transforming program belonging to the dispensation which is to come... Because of imperfect translations, some important truth is hidden to the one who reads only the English text of the Bible. This is illustrated by the fact that the Greek word *aion*, which means an age, or dispensation, is forty times translated by the English word world. Thus when it is stated in Matthew 13:49, 'So shall it be in the end of the world,' there is reference not to the end of the material earth, which in due time must come (2 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 20:11; Isa. 66:22), but rather to the end of this age. The end of the world is not drawing near, but the end of the age is... According to the Scriptures there are in all seven major dispensations and it is evident that we are now living in the extreme end of the sixth. The kingdom age of a thousand years (Rev. 20:4, 6) is yet to come... A dispensation is more or less marked off by the new divine appointment and responsibilities with which it begins and by the divine judgments with which it ends. The seven dispensations are:..." (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%)

Dr. Pentecost summarizes the dispensations, "The rebellion of Lucifer against the authority of God initiated a false kingdom characterized by its lawlessness and independence of God. In order to demonstrate His right to rule, God formed the earth and populated it with rational intelligent beings to whom He could reveal Himself, so that they would submit themselves to His authority because His right to rule and His worthiness to be worshiped would be recognized, thus answering Lucifer's challenge to God. A perfect miniature theocracy existed in the garden, in which God was sovereign; His right to rule was invested in Adam, who was to subject all things to his authority and thus bring all creation into subjection to God. Satan enticed man from obedience to God, and thus introduced his false kingdom into this sphere. God responded to man's disobedience in judgment, expelling Adam and Eve from the garden. A new form of theocratic administration was established. All men were subjected to the law of conscience, through which God ruled. Again, Satan lured men from obedience to conscience and brought the race under his authority. God again judged the race, this time by a flood, thus demonstrating that He alone had the right to rule. God then entrusted theocratic administration to human government, whose function it was to curb lawlessness and punish evildoers, thus providing an atmosphere in which righteous men might live in peace and in subjection to God. But the race rebelled against this form of administration. God demonstrated His right to rule again in judgment, this time scattering abroad over the earth those who had united in rebellion against Him. God chose one man, from whom could spring a great race, and gave him a land for his possession and that of his descendants, in which God would establish a king-

dom. This kingdom was determined by certain eternal, unconditional covenants which God gave to that people: the Abrahamic Covenant that guaranteed the perpetuity of Abraham's descendants, and their right to the land given to Abraham; the Palestinian Covenant that laid down the prerequisites for blessing from God on that covenant people; the Davidic Covenant that guaranteed that one of David's Sons would sit on David's throne and rule over David's kingdom; and the New Covenant that guaranteed God's provision for salvation, a new heart, and the empowerment by the Holy Spirit. That nation forsook God and abandoned God's law, thus rejecting His right to rule. God responded in judgment, giving the northern kingdom over to Assyria and the southern kingdom over to Babylon. This discipline would continue during the centuries that that nation was ruled over by Gentiles, known as the 'times of the Gentiles.' In the fullness of time the promised Messiah, David's Greater Son, came to call that nation to repentance with the offer of Himself as the true Messiah and the offer of the covenanted kingdom. That nation, however, refused to repent and put faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Once again judgment came as the times of the Gentiles continued through the devastation of Titus in A.D. 70. Because of the rejection of the covenanted form of the kingdom by the nation, a new form of theocratic administration was introduced as predicted by Christ in Matthew 13, which has continued through this present age. The church is within this new form of the kingdom. After the translation of all believers out of this earthly sphere into what Christ referred to as 'My Father's house' (John 14:2), God will resume His program with the nation Israel. He will subject them to the disciplines of the period Christ called 'the tribulation, the great one.' As a consequence, multitudes from that nation will repent and turn in faith to Jesus Christ, the Messiah. They will be joined by innumerable multitudes of Gentiles who will be reached during that time with the Gospel of salvation by faith, through blood, because of the grace of God. That period of discipline will end in the catastrophic judgments at the second advent of Jesus Christ back to this earth. By judgment all unbelievers will be removed and Satan will be bound, and Christ will ascend David's throne in Jerusalem, and will institute a kingdom characterized by peace and righteousness in which He rules as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. 'At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father' (Phil. 2:10-11). In subjecting everything to Himself, Jesus Christ is subjecting all things to God, thus demonstrating that Satan is an impostor, his kingdom is a false kingdom, and that God is sovereign and He alone has the right to rule, the right to be obeyed,

and right to be worshiped. The original challenge by Satan that questioned God's authority finds its ultimate answer in the reign of Jesus Christ here on this earth in fulfillment of God's promises and covenants" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 320).

And Jack Kelley, a frequent contributor to the *Rapture Ready* web site, summarizes in his article *The Seven Dispensations*, "Throughout history God has dealt with His people in different ways as part of the process of revealing His character. Each of these dispensations has begun with an agreement between God and man that man subsequently violated, ending the relationship in failure and requiring a judgment from God" (Kelley, *SD*).

Review of the Dispensations

Considering each of the seven dispensations individually:

1. *Innocence*. "1. The Dispensation of Innocence. The duration of this period is unrevealed. It began with the creation of man, was characterized by those conditions which obtained in the time of man's innocence, it includes the sin of man and ends with a divine judgment by which man received a sentence from God and was expelled from Eden (Gen. 1:28 to 3:22)" (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). "1) Innocence... Between the Creation and the Fall of Man God interacted freely and personally with man. Man... while he had agency (the power of choice) he didn't have a sin nature. God placed Adam and Eve in His garden and gave them only one restriction. But they violated this restriction and were expelled from the Garden. Adam, Eve, and the Serpent were all judged, the Creation was cursed, and sin entered the world" (Kelley, *SD*). (See also our chapter *God and Creation*.)

2. *Conscience*. "2. The Dispensation of Conscience. Possessed with the knowledge of both good and evil, man, for about eighteen hundred years, was required to act according to his own conscience—choosing the good and rejecting the evil. His failure is recorded in the history of that period. In this time man became so wicked that the age was closed with the judgment of the flood (Gen. 3:22 to 7:23)" (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). "2) Conscience... Between the Fall of Man and the Great Flood God allowed man's conscience to rule without Divine interference. Because of man's newly acquired sin nature, the result of this was 'the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.' (Genesis 6:5) After repeated warnings, God destroyed all but eight members of the Human race in the Great Flood" (Kelley, *SD*). (See also the *Conscience* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.)

3. *Government*. “3. The Dispensation of Human Government. Continuing more than four hundred years, the history of this dispensation records that man was given the new responsibility of government in the earth with the power of taking human life (Gen. 9:1-8), which power has never been withdrawn. Man’s failure to govern for God and his success in governing for himself is seen in the ungodly assumptions with which the age ended. The divine judgment on this age was the confusion of tongues (Gen. 8:20 to 11:9)” (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). “3) Human Government... from Noah to the Tower of Babel. After the Flood, God allowed man to establish his first system of government. But the people disobeyed God’s commandment to go forth and replenish the Earth, setting about instead to build a great city and a tower to protect themselves from another flood. They also used the tower to study astrology, a corruption of the Gospel that God had written in the stars using the names of twelve constellations. So God gave each of the seventy families of man a unique language that other families weren’t able to understand. This caused confusion and distrust among the people and they drifted apart to be scattered throughout the world, and God destroyed the tower” (Kelley, *SD*). (See also the *Government* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.)

4. *Promise*. “4. The Dispensation of Promise. In this period of more than four hundred years, extending from the call of Abraham to the giving of the law at Sinai, the new nation which began with Abraham is alone in view. By the terms of this dispensation they are under the gracious promise and covenants of Jehovah with varied instructions as to their relation to God, to the land of promise, and as to their walk before God. The period ends with that people in bondage in Egypt from which they are delivered by the mighty hand of God (Gen. 12:1 to Exod. 19:8)” (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). “4) Promise... God set Abraham’s descendants apart as His Chosen People and promised Abraham and Sarah a son through whom He said He would bless the world. But they grew tired of waiting for Him, and they produced a son on their own, calling him Ishmael. Later, when God gave them Isaac, the son He had promised, Ishmael was sent away causing bad blood between Ishmael (Arabs) and Isaac (Jews) that continues to this day” (Kelley, *SD*). (See also the *Promise* section of our chapter *Conscience, Government and Promise*.)

5. *Law*. “5. The Dispensation of the Law. This lengthened period began with Israel’s assumption of the law at Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:8), was characterized by fifteen hundred years of unfaithfulness and broken law, and terminates with the Great Tribulation in the earth. Its course was interrupted by the death of Christ and the thrusting in of the hitherto unannounced

age of the church. Thus the church age, while complete in itself, is parenthetical within the age of the law. At the removal of the Church when the Lord comes again to receive His own, the law age will be resumed and continue for that period known as Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:24-27)—which week is generally conceded to be Seven years.²² Israel's judgments began with her dispersions, were continued in the destruction of Jerusalem and her final scattering among the Gentiles, and will end with that hour of her greatest afflictions in the coming tribulation. The greatest of her sins is the rejection of her Messiah at the first advent of Christ." (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). "5) Law... from Mt. Sinai to Pentecost. After God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He gave Moses the Ten Commandments and offered the Jews the land He had promised to Abraham along with a life of peace and plenty if they obeyed His Law. After two thousand years of vacillating between obedience and rebellion that resulted in them rejecting the Messiah, God finally had enough, expelled them from their land, and dispersed them throughout the world" (Kelley, *SD*). (See also our chapter *The Theocratic Kingdom*.)

6. *Grace*. "6. The Dispensation of the Church. Beginning with the death of Christ and the day of Pentecost, a new responsibility is imposed on all men—both Jews and Gentiles. This responsibility is personal and calls for the acceptance by each individual of the grace of God toward sinners as it has been provided in Christ, with good works as the fruit of salvation. While the primary purpose of God in this dispensation will be perfectly accomplished in the gathering out of the Church, the course and end of this age is characterized by an apostate church and a Christ rejecting world. The judgment will be personal as has been the responsibility. The dispensation

²² In determining the dispensation to which the Tribulation period belongs, it should be observed that it bears no relation to the features of this Church Age, nor has it the characteristics of a dispensation in itself. Though it is the consummation of divine judgment upon all men and their institutions, it is especially Israelitish. The continuity of that Jewish age which began at Sinai is incomplete apart from the events which belong to the Great Tribulation. As stated by Daniel, the seventieth week is required for the finishing of Israel's transgression and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness (Dan. 9:24-27). The transgression to be 'finished' could be no part of this age of grace, but is rather of the preceding age. The fact that the general features which obtain in the Tribulation are similar to those principles which were peculiar to the law age is also conclusive. The sabbath is re-established (Matt. 24:20), the temple worship is renewed—though in unbelief—(Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4), the Old Testament kingdom-hope will again be announced (Matt. 24:14), and the legal principle of merit and reward for endurance will again obtain throughout that brief period (Matt. 24:13). Not only does the law dispensation require the yet future Tribulation period for the execution of those divine judgements which belong to it, but, by the recognition of the sequence connecting these two periods of time, the continuity of purpose is preserved wherein the Messianic, earthly kingdom, which follows the Tribulation, is seen to be both the legitimate expectation and the logical consummation of the dispensation of the law. By so much it may be observed that the present unforeseen dispensation of grace is wholly parenthetical within the dispensation of the law.

of the Church continues from the cross of Christ and the advent of the Spirit to Christ's coming again to receive His own" (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). "6) Grace... The Church Age. No longer requiring that righteousness be earned through obedience to the Law, God imputed His own righteousness to man by grace through faith in the completed work of the Lord Jesus, promising eternal blessing and a place in His own house to all who accept. It was the most outrageously lavish gift ever bestowed, free for the asking. But by the end of the Age of Grace most of humanity will have rejected His gift, choosing instead to live on their own terms, betting that either God doesn't exist, or if He does He'll allow them into His kingdom anyway. After removing the relative few who have accepted His gift so they'll be safe with Him, He'll punish the rest through the most severe time of judgment ever visited on Earth" (Kelley, *SD*). (See also our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*.)

7. *Kingdom*. "7. The Dispensation of the Kingdom. As predicted in all the Scriptures, Christ will return to this earth and reign sitting on the throne of David. In that time Israel's covenants will be fulfilled and her earthly blessings will overflow. However, the age ends with a revolt against God and the judgment of fire from heaven (Rev. 20:7-9). The duration of this dispensation is clearly declared to be a thousand years (Rev. 20:4, 6), or from the second coming of Christ to the new heaven and the new earth. As there was a dateless period before the creation of man in which there was both heaven and earth, so there will be a new heaven and a new earth after all dispensations have ceased" (Chafer, *MBT*, 31%). "The aim of God in the millennial age will be to test man with a last test to see if he will serve and obey Him. He has been tested in innocency, under conscience, under human government, under promise, under law; he is being tested now under distinctive grace. Then he will be tested in an age of righteousness. The test will show whether man under the most favorable of circumstances—with Satan bound and rendered harmless, with a renovated earth, with a harmony present throughout nature, and with the righteous King ruling and governing in righteousness, judgment, and justice—can be found to be well-pleasing in the sight of God. Man will fail, for he will still have the sin nature present with him. Another purpose of the age will be to fulfill God's oath and promise to David... to fulfill all the numberless prophecies of the Old Testament to Israel for her blessing" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 186). "7) Kingdom... the One Thousand Year Reign of the Lord, also known as the Millennium. At its outset Satan will be bound, all unbelievers will be expelled from the planet, the curse will be removed, and God will once again dwell in

the midst of His people” (Kelley, *SD*). (See also our previous chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

“So concludes the series of the periods of human history in which people have been divinely examined under almost every conceivable condition: innocence, conscience, government, promise, law, grace, and the kingdom. In each case they proved (or will prove) that human freedom, left to itself, will always rebel against God. They have also demonstrated that God is always right and that real satisfaction comes only from obeying Him” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:163).

Chapter 27: The Lake of Fire

Before the ultimate end and goal, the Eternal Order, can be inaugurated, sin and death must first be defeated. While many sinners will already have been purged of sin and raised to eternal life at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom (see our discussion of the first resurrection in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*), and while much of the curse on creation will have been lifted during the Millennial Kingdom (see our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*), at the end of the Millennial Kingdom there will still be some mediatorial work yet to be done before sin will have been entirely defeated and before the last enemy, death, will have been brought to nothing (1 Cor. 15:26).

Events in Preparation for the Eternal Order

Events in preparation for the Eternal Order include the translation of the millennial saints, the resurrection of lost mankind, the passing away of the present heaven and earth, and the Great White Throne judgment.

Translation of the Millennial Saints

If the present heaven and earth are to pass away (see our discussion of the passing away of the present heaven and earth in the section *Passing of the Present Heaven and Earth* below), in preparation for the new heaven and earth (see our discussion of the creation of the new heaven and earth in the section *A New Heaven and a New Earth are Created* of our next chapter *The Eternal Order*), it follows that something must be done with the millennial saints who will be alive at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, such that they will not pass away with the passing away of the old earth. For this reason, while the idea cannot be found explicitly in Scripture, some scholars posit a translation or “rapture” of the millennial saints just prior to the passing away of the present earth. “...our inability to explain satisfactorily or decisively certain details respecting the Mill. Age (as e.g. if the righteous Jews, etc., are translated, or whether they die, and if so, when resurrected, etc.)” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:31). “Shall not God then during the ‘Renovation of the Earth by Fire,’ in some manner, not as yet revealed, take off righteous representatives of the Millennial nations that He purposes to save” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 147) “It is assumed, though the Scriptures do not state it, that the millennial saints at the end of the millennium will be translated prior to their entrance into the eternal state and thus will qualify for entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 328).

The Second Resurrection

Scripture is explicit, however, that there is to be a *second resurrection* “after the thousand years have been completed” (Rev. 20:5; the first resurrection having been completed one thousand years prior to this second resurrection). **“The last enemy that will be abolished is death”** (1 Cor. 15:26). “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for **an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth**; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, **those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment**” (John 5:25-29). “And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they **came to life** and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. **The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.** This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years” (Rev. 20:1–6). “...an ultimate resurrection of the wicked... ‘the rest of the dead’... Russell and Barbour endeavor to get rid of the phrase in order to make out their peculiar (Rellyite) restoration of ‘the rest of the dead’ during the Millennial age. As the passage stands, it is utterly and positively antagonistic to their view” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:278). “Some endeavor to discard this verse as unauthorized, in order to make out (so Russell and Barbour, *Three Worlds*, etc.) a distinct and separate resurrection of the heathen at the beginning of the Mill. age, so as to give them another probation, etc. This view of a future probation for heathen, etc., is not new, for such men as Tholuck, Stilling, etc., adopted it” (*ibid.*, p. 290). “Whatever truth there may be in Tholuck’s and Stilling’s theory, it is evident that it can only be realized after

the thousand years, if realized at all. The same is true of Barbour and Russell's view, for the student will notice that their entire argument is purely inferential, being utterly unable to give a direct passage favoring it" (*ibid.*, p. 291). "And I saw **the dead**, the great and the small, **standing before the throne**, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And **the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds**. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:12-15). "Origen... if any man be saved in the Sec. Resurrection only, it is the sinner that needeth the baptism by fire... (Barbour's system is Origen's revived, viz., future salvation of sinners.)" (Peters, *TTK*, p. 243) "... 'the rest of the dead' are the wicked or unbelieving, seeing that the reason why they did not obtain the resurrection is because they were unholy, did not witness for Jesus, and did not reject the worship and mark of the beast" (*ibid.*, p. 272). "This is the time, gloriously, yea, sadly suitable, which God has appointed for 'the rest of the dead to live again,' and behold with their own eyes the glory they have lost by not obeying God—a glory shining forth in the land, in the Theocratic government, in the subjects, in the immortal kings and priests, and in the exalted, enthroned Son of Man. Imagine just such a 'return,' under such circumstances, and then tell us, are 'holy men of old' wrong when they depict the shame, degradation, and unhappiness of the wicked at this period? Imagine Voltaire, Paine, Strauss, and a multitude like them to thus 'return' and see what they ridiculed, and what must then memory and conscience say" (*ibid.*, p. 289)? "Whatever difficulties may exist in relation to the ultimate destiny of the wicked, we need not dogmatize on the subject, or advocate any special view, seeing that such a destiny does not affect the establishment of the Theocracy. But, nevertheless, as that destiny is connected with eschatology, it may be said that we cannot possibly receive the Universalist and Restorationist application of this 'restitution.' Barbour, Russell, Paton (in *Herald of Kingdom, Three Worlds* etc.) make it to include a restoration of all nations (the dead) back to 'their former state' (i.e. a fleshly one), and placing them under a second probation, with the doom of 'the second death' (from which there is no release) before them if unbelieving, etc... Whatever of truth may be in Tholuck's idea of a future probation for heathen, etc., one thing is self-evident, viz., that all such views, dogmatically expressed, are derived from mere inferences, for

no one can find a single passage of Scripture that asserts a resurrection of the heathen dead or wicked dead at the beginning of or during the Millennium... the establishment of the covenanted Theocratic Kingdom. When this is done we may safely anticipate clearer light and a full vindication of God's justice and ways" (*ibid.*, p. 468). "If any Righteous die between the First Resurrection and the Resurrection of the 'wicked' or Second Resurrection, they will rise with the wicked dead at that Resurrection. The words—'Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life' (vs. 15), implies that there will be 'some,' probably very few, Righteous at the Second Resurrection" (Larkin, *DT*, p. 111). "Looking backward from the ages to come, resurrection must be recognized to be as universal as death has been" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:84). "Death, the 'last enemy,' shall be destroyed and that, evidently, by the resurrection of all that have ever lived and died (John 5:25-29; Rev 20:12-15)" (*ibid.*, p. 264). "In Revelation 20:11-15 one of the saddest passages of Scripture is found... Though the Scriptures do not state so directly, it is implied that this is a judgment of the wicked dead who have not previously been raised from the grave" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 332). "John 5:28-29... 'all who are in their graves will hear [the Son of Man's] voice and come out'... Everyone who has died will be physically resurrected in the future" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:267). "Death will be reversed for all human beings. Everyone, saved and unsaved, will be restored in their pre-resurrection body and made undying (immortal)" (*ibid.*, p. 272). "John states emphatically (six times) that there will be a thousand years between the 'first resurrection' and the second one when 'the rest of the dead' are raised (cf. Rev. 20:3-6)" (*ibid.*, p. 273). "Since the body is part of God's image (Gen. 1:27), even in unbelievers (Gen. 9:6; James 3:9), were God *not* to resurrect it forever, He would in effect be conceding victory over it to the devil. However, His Word declares that Christ will reign until He has defeated death (1 Cor. 15:26), and unless physical death is reversed for all people, death will not be completely defeated" (*ibid.*). "And **God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them**" (Gen. 1:27). "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. For **in the image of God made he man**" (Gen. 9:6). "With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse **men, who have been made in the likeness of God**" (James 3:9) "John speaks of the period of both resurrections as an 'hour' (i.e., a long period of time), yet the first resurrection takes only 'the twinkling of an eye' (1 Cor. 15:52). Thus, the remainder of the 'hour' must transpire before the second resurrection" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:273). "Truly, truly, I say to you, **an hour** is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live.

For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for **an hour** is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to **a resurrection of life**, those who committed the evil deeds to **a resurrection of judgment**” (John 5:25–29). “in a moment, **in the twinkling of an eye**, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and **the dead will be raised** imperishable, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:52). “...the unilateral defeat of all death (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:26); this is fulfilled in the resurrection of all persons, saved and unsaved” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 407) “...death will *finally* be defeated by resurrection. Revelation 20:1-6 places the two resurrections as bookends of Christ’s reign: the first (of the saved) at the beginning, and the second (of the lost) at the end of the Millennium” (*ibid.*, p. 490). “Whereas the first resurrection will be composed of believers only, the second resurrection will be composed of unbelievers only. The two resurrections will be separated by one thousand years. Just as the first resurrection is to be in stages (Jesus the firstfruits, the Church saints, the Old Testament saints, and then the Tribulation saints), so the second resurrection will be in stages. The firstfruits of the second resurrection will be the Antichrist, and his death and resurrection have already been described. One thousand years after the resurrection of the Antichrist, there will be the resurrection of all other unbelievers” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 516). “At the time of the second resurrection, the bodies of the unsaved will be resurrected, and the souls of Hell will be removed to be reunited with the bodies. At that time, the Hell portion of Sheol, or Hades, will also be eliminated, because Hell will not be the eternal abode of the lost: the Lake of Fire will be. Hell is a place of torment for the soul only, but the Lake of Fire will be a place of torment for both soul and body” (*ibid.*, p. 519). We would emphasize again that Scripture intimates nothing concerning any resurrection that is to take place *during* the Millennial Kingdom itself, as taught by Jehovah’s Witnesses. Scripture does not speak of any “second chance” after death. Rather, “**it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment**” (Heb. 9:27)

Passing of the Present Heaven and Earth

In preparation for the creation of the new heaven and earth (see the section *A New Heaven and a New Earth are Created* of our next chapter *The Eternal Order*), the present heaven and earth will pass away. “For, behold, I create new **heavens and a new earth**; and **the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind**” (Isa. 65:17).

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35). **“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away”** (Mark 13:31). “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of **the earth**, And **the heavens** are the works of thy hands: **They shall perish**; but thou continuest: And **they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a mantle shalt thou roll them up, As a garment, and they shall be changed**: But thou art the same, And thy years shall not fail” (Heb. 1:10-12). “knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but **the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire**, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But **the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up**. Seeing that **these things are thus all to be dissolved**, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which **the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?** But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Pet. 3:3-13). “The destruction of the earth described, therefore, in 2 Peter 3:10, is at the close of the Day of the Lord, rather than at the second coming, and is properly located at the end of the millennium when all wickedness in the earth will be judged in a final way” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 273). “And **the world is passing away**, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John. 2:17). “And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence **earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them**” (Rev. 20:11). “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for **the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea**” (Rev. 21:1). “A passing

away of the old order will occur at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment. The present heavens and earth, in existence since Genesis one, will be done away with ([Rev. 20] v. 11b). That which was renovated for the Millennium, but polluted all over again with man's last revolt, will now be done away with forever" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 513).

The Great White Throne Judgment

Those raised in the second resurrection will be judged at *the Great White Throne judgment*. **"And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days shall they be visited"** (Isa. 24:22). "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for **an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth**; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, **those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment"** (John 5:25-29) "And inasmuch as **it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment**, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him" (Heb. 9:27-28). "And **angels** who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for **the judgment of the great day"** (Jude 1:6). "And I saw **a great white throne and Him who sat upon it**, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw **the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire"** (Rev. 20:11-15). "The Book of Life will be consulted to see if those who had been in Satan's kingdom were brought into the kingdom of God's beloved Son by faith in Him" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 318). "Although the throne-sitter

is not named, in all probability it is Jesus the Messiah, for it is to Him that all judgment has been given (John 5:22)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 513). “For **not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son**” (John 5:22) “And he said to me, ‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.’ “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, **to render to every man according to what he has done**. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying” (Rev. 22:10-15). “How inquisitors, executioners, defamers, etc. will face their victims, then exalted and glorified, and especially the magnificent King of kings, is clearly and pointedly represented in the Word” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:290). “A final judgment awaits those of all the ages who will not have been saved. To this end they must be raised from the dead after the millennial period. They are to be judged according to their works and are then committed to the lake of fire, which is the second death (cf. Rev. 20:12-15; 21:8; 22:10-15)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:401). “This, the final judgment which consummates the judgment of the cross and the judgment of all people who are unredeemed, occurs at the close of the millennium. These people will be raised for that judgment and will be judged according to their works. These works are a matter of divine record in books which are open at that judgment. The book of life is also in evidence, but probably with a view to demonstrating that no errors have been made and that those gathered before the great white throne have not the gift of God which is eternal life. The doom that awaits them is terrible beyond comprehension; but it is the last word of a holy God respecting sin and all unrighteousness” (*ibid.*, p. 411). “In view of the general tendency to confuse the judgment of the nations with that of the great white throne, the distinctions between them should be observed. At the judgment of the nations three classes are present— ‘sheep,’ ‘goats,’ and Christ’s ‘brethren,’ while at the judgment of the great white throne there is but one class—the wicked dead. In the former the scene is on earth, while in the latter it is in space. In the former the issue is the treatment of the Jew, while in the latter it is the evil works of those being judged. In the former some enter the kingdom at its inception and some go to the lake of fire, in the latter all go to the lake of fire” (*ibid.*). “This judgment scene lends no

support to the fancy that men who reject Christ in this life will have another chance in realms beyond death. The unsaved remain what they were when death intervened and until they stand thus before God's great white throne to be judged according to their works" (*ibid.*, 5:365). "Read carefully Revelation 20:11-15 and you will find no one who leaves the Great White Throne judgment for eternal life. All without exception go into the lake of fire. The book of life is produced to show they never trusted Christ and hence must be in the judgment of condemnation. Then the books of their deeds are brought forth to determine the degree of their eternal punishment. But no righteous are here whatsoever. The passage gives no justification for introducing them here" (Feinberg, *M*, p. 360). "The last judgment spoken of in the Word is that called the judgment of the Great White Throne (cf. Rev. 20:11-15). Its features are well-marked and distinct. The subjects of that judgment are all the unregenerate dead. It will take place after the thousand years of the millennial kingdom and will be preceded by the second resurrection. The assize will be held before the Great White Throne after heaven and earth have fled away. The subjects of the judgment will be judged as to the presence of their names in the book of life and according to their works. The outcome is that all, because their names are not written in the book of life, will be cast into the lake of fire to spend the eternal ages apart from the presence of the triune God and His holy saints" (*ibid.*, p. 361). "...in chapter 4 [of Revelation]... Concerning the judgment throne set in heaven, John says, 'there was a rainbow round about the throne' (4:3), a symbol speaking clearly of bright hope for all who turn to God throughout the entire period. Thus, in the judicial dealings of God with men, there is a definite progression which runs through the ages. During the present age, the period of the Church, the throne is a 'throne of grace' with no mixture of penal judgment (Heb. 4:16 [Let us therefore draw near with confidence to **the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.]); God is not today imputing unto men their trespasses in any formal or judicial sense (2 Cor. 5:19 [namely, that **God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them**, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.]). During the Kingdom age, including the judicial actions by which it will be established on earth, there will be a throne of judgment, but surrounded by a rainbow (Rev. 4:3 [And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and **there was a rainbow around the throne**, like an emerald in appearance.]), thus suggesting grace in the midst of judgment. But when we come to the eternal state, it is prefaced by a throne of pure judgment, a 'great white throne' unrelieved by any color of hope;

the subjects here being ‘the dead’ for whom there can be no hope (Rev. 20:11-15)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 458). “For the saved, on the other hand, there can be no such judgment, because their judgment with reference to sin took place at Calvary. It is a very solemn fact, of course, that the believer’s works must be brought into judgment for reward or loss (1 Cor. 3:12-15), but this will have taken place at some point between the Rapture of the Church and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom; and it will have nothing to do with salvation. Furthermore, since all those saved before the Millennial Kingdom will have a part in the ‘first resurrection,’ and during the Millennium none of the saved will die, there appears to be no reason for any resurrection for saved people afterwards. If there are any of the saved in this final resurrection, nothing at all is said about their destination, whereas that of the unsaved is specifically stated (Rev. 20:15)” (*ibid.*, p. 509). “Significantly, there is here no book of death, for while men are elected to salvation, none are elected to damnation. It is their own choice, not God’s that brings them at last into the place of doom” (*ibid.*). “...a ‘great white throne’ (vs. 11). Encircling this judgment throne there is no ‘rainbow’ of bright hope, as in the case of the pre-Kingdom judgment throne (4:3), bringing salvation to an innumerable multitude (7:9-14)” (*ibid.*, p. 510). “The *purpose* of this judgment is not to determine who is to be lost or saved. This is a matter which must be settled before death. In this respect, all men are always living in a day of judgment, a time when by the grace of God personal destiny is determined by human decision. As our Lord once said, ‘He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God’ (John 3:18, ASV). The purpose of final judgment is to exhibit the character of the judged and award to them ‘according to their works’” (*ibid.*, p. 508). “The wicked are not resurrected until the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 307). “...the judgment of the resurrected wicked dead at the great white throne which takes place in space after the present heaven and earth have been destroyed” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 285). “The purpose of the Great White Throne Judgment is not to determine whether they were saved or unsaved; that is determined forever upon death. The purpose of this Great White Throne Judgment is to determine degree of punishment, because some will suffer more severely than others” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 756). “Ultimately, everyone, unregenerate and regenerate, will be judged by their works” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:408).

The Lake of Fire

Those judged adversely at the Great White Throne judgment will be cast into *the lake of fire*. “Then I saw **a great white throne** and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And **the dead were judged** according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into **the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire**” (Rev. 20:11-15). “this phraseology is intensely Jewish... ‘Let Reuben live in life eternal and not die the second death;’... ‘the second death which the wicked die in the world to come’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:271) “At the conclusion of the millennial reign, Christ will demonstrate His authority not only by consigning Satan to the lake of fire, but also by judging and consigning to the lake of fire all of those who had been a part of Satan’s false kingdom... This will be done at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 318). “The second resurrection will soon give way to the second death in the Lake of Fire, which will be the eternal abode of the lost” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 517).

The lake of fire is the same as Gehenna. “but I — I say to you, that every one who is angry at his brother without cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, and whoever may say to his brother, Empty fellow! shall be in danger of the sanhedrim, and whoever may say, Rebel! shall be in danger of **the gehenna of the fire**” (Matt. 5:22, YNG). “But, if thy right eye doth cause thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast from thee, for it is good to thee that one of thy members may perish, and not **thy whole body be cast to gehenna**. And, if thy right hand doth cause thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast from thee, for it is good to thee that one of thy members may perish, and not **thy whole body be cast to gehenna**” (Matt. 5:29–30, YNG). “And be not afraid of those killing the body, and are not able to kill the soul, but fear rather Him who is able **both soul and body to destroy in gehenna**” (Matt. 10:28, YNG). “And if thine eye doth cause thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast from thee; it is good for thee one-eyed to enter into the life, rather than having two eyes to be cast to **the gehenna of the fire**” (Matt. 18:9, YNG). “Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye go round the sea and the dry land to make one proselyte, and whenever it may happen — ye make him a son of **gehenna** twofold more

than yourselves” (Matt. 23:15, YNG). “Serpents! brood of vipers! how may ye escape from **the judgment of the gehenna**” (Matt. 23:33, YNG)? “And if thy hand may cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee maimed to enter into the life, than having the two hands, to go away to the **gehenna, to the fire — the unquenchable —**” (Mark 9:43, YNG) “And if thy foot may cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into the life lame, than having the two feet to be cast to the **gehenna, to the fire — the unquenchable —**” (Mark 9:45, YNG) “And if thine eye may cause thee to stumble, cast it out; it is better for thee one-eyed to enter into the reign of God, than having two eyes, to be cast to the **gehenna of the fire —**” (Mark 9:47, YNG) “but I will show to you, whom ye may fear; **Fear him who, after the killing, is having authority to cast to the gehenna; yes, I say to you, Fear ye Him**” (Luke 12:5, YNG). “and the tongue [is] a fire, the world of the unrighteousness, so the tongue is set in our members, which is spotting our whole body, and is setting on fire the course of nature, and is set on **fire** by the **gehenna**” (James 3:6, YNG). “*The Lake of Fire* is the same as *Gehenna*. *Gehenna* is the proper name and the *Lake of Fire* is a descriptive name” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 745).

The Fact of the Lake of Fire

Concerning *the reality and the certainty of the lake of fire*, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and **everlasting contempt**” (Dan. 12:2). “And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for **their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched**; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. 66:24). “And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to **be cast into the eternal fire**. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes, to **be cast into the fiery hell**” (Matt. 18:8-9). “Then He will also say to those on His left, **Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels**”” (Matt. 25:41) “And these will **go away into eternal punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matt. 25:46). “And if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be **cast into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched**” (Mark 9:47-48). “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these giv-

en themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the **punishment of eternal fire**" (Jude 1:7). "And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, '**If anyone worships the beast and his image**, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, **he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night**, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus" (Rev. 14:9-12). "And **when the thousand years are completed**, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And **the devil** who deceived them **was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**" (Rev. 20:7-10). "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. **This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire**" (Rev. 20:12-15). "**Outside [Without, ASV] are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying**" (Rev. 22:15). "The place *without* will be the Lake of Fire" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 537). "The Scriptures do not even hint that fallen men who continue impenitent, or that fallen angels, will be rescued from their doom" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:53). "Jesus had more to say about hell than He did about heaven" (Geisler, 3:400).

The Nature of the Lake of Fire

Regarding *the nature of the lake of fire*, “And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for **their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched**; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. 66:24). “Hell is a place where the ‘worm’ never dies (Isa. 66:24; cf. Mark 9:43-48)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:396). “And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into **the eternal fire**. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into **the fiery hell**” (Matt. 18:8-9). “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the **eternal fire** which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’” (Matt. 25:41) “And if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than having your two hands, to go into **hell**, into **the unquenchable fire**, [where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.] And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than having your two feet, to be cast into **hell**, [where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.] And if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into **hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched**” (Mark 9:43-48). “and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will **pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord** and from the glory of His power” (2 Thes. 1:7-9) “If *destruction* [at 2 Thess. 1:7-9] did mean ‘annihilation’ when used of the unbeliever’s post-death state, it would not be ‘everlasting’ destruction, for annihilation is instantaneous; annihilation does not stretch over a long period of time, let alone forever, but only takes an instant and then is over. If someone undergoes everlasting destruction, then they must have an everlasting existence. (Analogously, just as the cars in a junkyard have been destroyed but are not annihilated—they are beyond repair or irredeemable—so the people in hell are not extinguished but are simply irredeemable and irreparable.)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3: 396) “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by **the second death**” (Rev. 2:11). “And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone worships the

beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and **he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night**, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’ Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev. 14:9-12). “And **when the thousand years are completed**, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into **the lake of fire and brimstone**, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**” (Rev. 20:7-10). “And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. **This is the second death, the lake of fire**. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:14-15). “The first death was not the separation of the soul from the body, but rather the separation of the soul from God. All who are born into this world have tasted the first death, and physical death is the result of that first death. But both of these are reversible through faith in Jesus Christ. The soul that was separated from the body will be reunited to the body by resurrection. The soul that was separated from God may be reunited to God by faith in Jesus Christ. However, those who have not experienced the new life in Christ will be eternally separated from God in second death. Even so, they will acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil. 2:11). Thus every member of the false kingdom who had been subjected to the authority of the false king will be brought into subjection to the authority of Jesus Christ” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 318). “Just as physical death is separation of the immaterial part of man from his physical body, so the second death is eternal separation of the wicked from God” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 332). “...*the second death*; the first death is physical death and *the second death* is eternal, spiritual death in the *Lake of Fire* (Rev. 2:11; 20:14; 21:8)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 757). “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in **the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death**” (Rev. 21:8). “John’s descrip-

tion of the new heaven and earth (after the lake-of-fire scene) reveals that the unsaved are still conscious; they are depicted as outside the gate of the heavenly city ([Rev.] 22:15)” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:396). “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into **the city**. **Outside** are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying” (Rev. 22:14-15). “The strange notion that the devil is the king of hell has no basis in divine revelation. God is the King of hell, just as He is the King of everything else in time and space. And because this is so, that everlasting prison-house of the lost will not be the noisy and disorderly place that is sometimes imagined by the popular mind. There is no more orderly place than a well-disciplined prison, even under imperfect human government. There will be no riots in hell. For all those who reject the mercy of God in Christ and recognize no final argument but force, there will be force without stint or limit, the force of a divine government from which there can be no escape, either now or hereafter” (McClain, *GK*, p. 25). “The *Lake of Fire* is associated with fire and brimstone as the source of torment” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 746). “Millard Erickson [*CT*, 1234-35]... ‘If there is one basic characteristic of hell, it is, in contrast to heaven, the absence of God or banishment from his presence. It is an experience of intense anguish, whether it involve physical suffering or mental distress or both. There are other aspects of the situation of the lost individual which contribute to its misery. One is a sense of loneliness, of having seen the glory and greatness of God, of having realized that he is the Lord of all, and then of being cut off. There is the realization that this separation is permanent. Similarly, the condition of one’s moral and spiritual self is permanent. Whatever one is at the end of life will continue for all eternity. There is no basis for expecting change for the better. Thus, hopelessness comes over the individual’” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:408). “‘The second death,’ which is eternal separation from God ([Rev. 20] vv. 14-15)” (*ibid.*, 4:264). “The first death is the separation of the soul from the body... the second death is the separation of the body and soul from God forever” (*ibid.*, p. 393). “Adam and Eve died spiritually the moment they sinned, yet they still existed” (*ibid.*) “Annihilation is not torment but the cessation of torment” (*ibid.*, p. 398).

Regarding *the eternity of the lake of fire*, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to **everlasting life**, and some to shame and **everlasting contempt**” (Dan. 12:2). “Daniel 12:2... Daniel prophesied that some are going to be resurrected to *everlasting life*, and others resurrected to *everlasting contempt*. It is inconsistent exegesis or in-

consistent interpretation to claim that when it speaks of *everlasting life* for the believer, it means immortality, but when it speaks about *everlasting contempt* for the unbeliever, then it is not immortality nor eternal. The same word is used in relation to the believer and the unbeliever in the same verse. One must never interpret the Bible in such a way that the same word in the same verse means two totally different things unless it can be proved by some indication, and there is no such indication in this verse” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 715). “And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into **the eternal fire**. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into **the fiery hell**” (Matt. 18:8-9). “Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into **the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels**”” (Matt. 25:41) “And these will go away into **eternal punishment**, but the righteous into **eternal life**” (Matt. 25:46). “Matthew 25:46 points out that some go into *eternal life* while others go into *eternal punishment*. Again, if the believer receives *eternal life* and that means immortality for them, since Jesus used the same expression for the unbeliever when he speaks of *eternal punishment*, it must also mean immortality for them as well. Like Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:46 uses the same terminology for the unbeliever as for the believer, and therefore it must mean the same thing. Again, it is simply inconsistent exegesis to take the same word and make it mean two opposite things in the same verse” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 715). “And if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into **hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched**” (Mark 9:47-48). “of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and **eternal judgment**” (Heb. 6:2). “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of **eternal fire**” (Jude 1:7). “And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And **the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night**, those

who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’ Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev. 14:9-12). “And **when the thousand years are completed**, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And **the devil** who deceived them **was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**” (Rev. 20:7-10). “Revelation 20:10 points out that even after one thousand years in the Lake of Fire, the Antichrist is still alive in there” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 713). “...the Beast and the False Prophet are still in the Lake of Fire after one thousand years” (*ibid.*, p. 717). “In respect to duration, the penalty continues forever, or as long as the unchangeable guilt endures. As long as the cause for penalty exists, there is reason for it to continue—the same reason which determined its infliction at all” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:280). “Even in the eternal state when God will rule over *all*, sinners will continue to exist in the eternal prison-house of the lost” (McClain, *GK*, p. 246). “William G. T. Shedd [*HCC*, II.414-19]... ‘The punishment inflicted upon the lost was regarded by the Fathers of the Ancient Church, with very few exceptions, as endless... The denial of the eternity of future punishments, in modern times, has consequently been a characteristic of those parties and individuals who have rejected, either partially or entirely, the dogma of infallible inspiration’” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:407).

Occupants of the Lake of Fire

Regarding *the occupants of the lake of fire*, “...the lake of fire, the final destiny of all unsaved” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 332). “*Gehenna* is the eternal abode of the lost, both angels and men... the punishment in *Gehenna* includes both soul and body. That is why *Gehenna* must not be translated as ‘Hell,’ nor should it be equated with Hell” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 745). “The *Lake of Fire* is the eternal abode of all lost ones, both angels and men” (*ibid.*). The occupants of the lake of fire will be: *The beast and the false prophet*, “And **the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet** who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; **these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone**” (Rev. 19:20). “And when the thousand years are com-

pleted, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into **the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also**; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev. 20:7-10). *Satan*, “Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into **the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels**”” (Matt. 25:41) “And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And **the devil** who deceived them **was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone**, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev. 20:7-10). *demons*, “Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into **the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels**”” (Matt. 25:41) “The final judgment of the wicked angels apparently occurs at the same time as Satan’s final judgment when he is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 294). *lost humans*, “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And **all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put** the sheep on His right, and **the goats on the left**. Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... Then **He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink... And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life**” (Matt. 25:31-46). “And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, **‘If anyone worships the beast and his image**, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of

God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and **he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever;** and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’ Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev. 14:9-12). “**And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire**” (Rev. 20:15). “**But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone,** which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8). “**Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying**” (Rev. 22:15). and *death and Hades*. “**Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.** This is the second death” (Rev. 20:14). “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death’ 1 Cor. 15:26)... With the end of this ‘last enemy’ there can be no more any intermediate state; therefore ‘hades’ also is abolished” (McClain, *GK*, p. 512). “Both *Death* and *Hades* are cast into the *Lake of Fire*. *Death* refers to the material part of man, the body; *Hades* refers to the immaterial part of man, the soul and spirit. The *Lake of Fire* is a punishment for both of these” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 745). “...there is no greater or worse death than when death never dies” [quoting Augustine, *City of God*, 6.12] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:352).

Purposes of the Lake of Fire

The *purposes* of the lake of fire are to separate good from evil, to satisfy God’s justice and to glorify God.

Considered individually, the purposes of the lake of fire are:

To separate good from evil. “For just as the old nature of the individual believer will at last be destroyed, even so after the thousand years will the Kingdom be purged of all that needs to be held in restraint by immediate divine control. Thus the future regeneration of society will recapitulate the present regeneration of the individual. Neither grows gradually into a new birth; but each begins and ends with a distinct ‘crisis’ experience supernatural in character” (McClain, *GK*, p. 500). “What frustrates good people is evil, and what frustrates evil people is good. The final solution demands a separation, where there will be no more evil to frustrate good persons and no more good to frustrate evil persons” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:174). “In

hell the tares are separated from the wheat and the evil from the good. This is both useful and necessary. For what frustrates evil is good. Hence, heaven is a place where there is no evil to frustrate good people, and hell is a place where there is no more good to frustrate evil people. The final separation is needed for the triumph of good over evil so that evil can no longer contaminate good" (*ibid.*, 4:344).

To satisfy God's justice. "All human beings are either actively or passively useful to God. In heaven believers will be actively useful in praising His mercy; in hell unbelievers will be passively useful in bringing majesty to His justice" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:344).

And, *to glorify God.* The saved will forever glorify God's grace and mercy; the unsaved will forever glorify His justice. And, the wretchedness of the unsaved in the lake of fire, when compared with the blessedness of the saved in the new Heaven and new Earth, will forever demonstrate the enormity of God's grace (Eph. 2:7).

Why the Lake of Fire is Necessary

The lake of fire is *necessary*. "Let us receive all that is written, observing the same order laid down by the Spirit. If it be asked, Of what practical use or benefit can such a res. unto condemnation and shame be? the answers are various; such as, to vindicate the justice of God; to prove the truthfulness and reality of His representations and mercy; to apportion 'the few or many stripes' that the guilty merit; to fulfill His declaration that all the wicked shall see and acknowledge the Divine power; to show that death itself, as many fondly hope, is no refuge for the sinner; that a res. unto eternal life is the special gift of God through Jesus Christ; to contrast the condition of the res. saints with their own; to root out in the most effectual manner every remnant of evil; to give to the creatures of God, the universe itself, a sublime and abiding idea of the nature and consequences of sin" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:289).

It is necessary...

Because it is unavoidable. "Their [angels'] destiny, like that of fallen unregenerate humanity, is but a normal consummation of their wretched career" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:67). "The second death, being the unavoidable eternal character of spiritual death, is experienced by all who do not come by faith in Christ under the regenerating power of God" (*ibid.*, p. 154).

Because it is just. "It is as certain as the character of God that whatever is imposed will be just and right, and it will be so recognized by all. God will not in this, any more than in any other undertaking, be the author of that which is evil" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:363). "There is no contradiction in God's desir-

ing the good of even those whom He must justly punish, for it is good to punish evil” (Geisler, p. 352). “As for the justice of exercising wrath, it should be remarked that not to punish sin would be unjust. And, since God is eternal, not to punish sin eternally would be an eternal injustice. The sin of the ultimately unrepentant is sin against the eternal God, and a sin against the Eternal is deserving of eternal punishment” (*ibid.*, p. 404). “...analogically, while it may take only an instant to kill someone, the deserved punishment is life in prison” (*ibid.*, 4:341).

Because wrath proceeds from God’s holiness, righteousness and justice. “Wrath, while rooted in God’s essential nature as just, is not an attribute, but an act that flows from His unchanging righteousness” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:397). “It is because of His jealous zeal to protect His own supremacy that God executes wrath on evil” (*ibid.*, p. 399). “J. I. Packer [in *Knowing God*, 154]... ‘As a reaction to sin, God’s wrath is an expression of his justice’” (*ibid.*, p. 404). “He must punish evil or He would not be completely just, and He must punish it eternally, or He would not be eternally just” (*ibid.*, 3:243).

Because of the magnitude of sin against an infinitely holy God. “Sin against the Eternal demands eternal consequence. God is forever just and hence cannot overlook sin forever” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:173). “Any sin committed against God has a certain infinity when regarded from the side of God, against whom it is committed. For Clearly, the greater the person who is offended, the more grievous is the offense. He who strikes a soldier is held more gravely accountable than if he struck a peasant: and his offense is much more serious if he strikes a prince or a king” [quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium of Theology*, p. 183] (*ibid.*, 4:354). “Since God is infinitely great, an offense committed against Him is in a certain respect infinite; and so a punishment that is in a certain respect infinite is attached to it. Such a punishment cannot be infinite in intensity, for nothing created can be infinite in this way. Consequently a punishment that is infinite in duration is rightly inflicted for mortal sin” [quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium of Theology*, p. 183] (*ibid.*). “The fallacy in this conditionalist argument is akin to the claim that punishing someone forever is overkill for sins he committed in a lifetime. This is not overkill because sin against the Infinite has infinite significance and endless ramification. In the same sense, Christ’s finite suffering has infinite significance because of the suffering’s infinite value” (*ibid.*, p. 403).

Because of the duration of sin against God. “God is absolutely holy, and as such He must punish sin. Therefore, as long as people are living in sin and rebellion against God, He must punish them” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:403).

“Charles Hodge [in *Systematic Theology*, III.878]... ‘If the evil of a single sin, and that the smallest, lasts forever, it is in one sense an infinite evil... Relief on this subject is sought from the consideration that as the lost continue to sin forever they may justly be punished forever. To this, however, it is answered that the retributions of eternity are threatened for the sins done in the body. This is true; nevertheless, it is also true, first, that sin in its nature is alienation and separation from God, and as God is the source of all holiness and happiness, separation from Him is of necessity the forfeiture of all good; secondly, this separation is from its nature final and consequently involves endless sinfulness and misery’” (*ibid.*, p. 407). “...since he is in sin for eternity, he is reasonably punished by God for all eternity” [quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium of Theology*, p. 183] (*ibid.*, 4:354). “While a person is still capable of correction, temporal punishment is imposed for his emendation or cleansing. But if a sinner is incorrigible, so that his will is obstinately fixed in sin... his punishment ought never to come to an end” [quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium of Theology*, p. 183] (*ibid.*).

Because God is eternally displeased with sin. “There was no change of view on God’s wrath during the Middle Ages. Like their theological forebears, the medieval Fathers also viewed God as consistently and eternally displeased with sin” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:400).

Because some people are not reformable. “Hell is not for anyone who is reformable” (Geisler, *ST*, 4:340)

Because sinners prefer alienation from God. “...in the words of C.S. Lewis [*PP*, 115-16], ‘I willingly believe that the damned are, in one sense, successful rebels to the end; that the doors of hell are locked on the *inside*. I do not mean that the ghosts may not *wish* to come out of hell... but they certainly do not will even the first preliminary stages of that self-abandonment through which alone the soul can reach any good. They enjoy forever the horrible freedom they have demanded, and are therefore self-enslaved’” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:409). “Unbelievers prefer to be distanced from God in time. Why should we not expect this to be their chosen state in eternity” (*ibid.*, 4:342)? “God still loves even people who are in hell, but they are separated from His love, having refused it in favor of isolation” (*ibid.*, 3:309). “Scripture nowhere describes hell as a torture chamber where people are forced against their will to undergo agonizing pain... a loving God will not torture anyone... unlike *torture*, which is inflicted from without *against* one’s will, torment is self-inflicted *by* one’s own will” (*ibid.*, 4:338). “Torment is living with the consequences of our own bad choices... Everyone in hell will know that the pain he or she suffers is self-induced; hence, the ‘weeping and

gnashing of teeth' (Matt. 22:13; Mark 8:12)" (*ibid.*). "As opposed to softening a hard heart, suffering often has the result of hardening it more" (*ibid.*, p. 341).

Because it is the natural reaction of sinners to God's presence. "The fiery oven is ignited merely by the unbearable appearance of God and endures eternally. For the Day of Judgment will not last for a moment only but will stand throughout eternity and will thereafter never come to an end. Constantly the damned will be judged, constantly they will suffer pain, and constantly they will be a fiery oven, that is, they will be tortured within by supreme distress and tribulation" [quoting Martin Luther, *What Luther Says*, 2:627] (Geisler, *ST*, 4:355).

And, *because annihilation would be inhumane.* "It is not consistent with the character of an all-loving God to snuff out the souls of those who do not do His wishes" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:339) "It is precisely because we are not animals that God does not treat us like them. Annihilating those who do not carry out His will would be unkind and unmerciful, as would be a father who shot his son because the young man grew up and disagreed with him. It is more merciful for God to allow us to choose our own way—even if it is against His will—than to force His will on us" (*ibid.*, p. 346). "Annihilating a human being would violate what God determined is most precious—the gift of freedom to choose one's destiny. Since free will (as part of God's image) is morally good, taking it away would be a moral evil. This is what annihilation would achieve—the eternal destruction of human freedom. Annihilationism has it backward: What is truly inhumane (anti-human) is to destroy a person's humanness" (*ibid.*, p. 407).

Why We Have Difficulty Accepting the Doctrine

We acknowledge the difficulty of accepting the doctrine of eternal punishment. "But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? **The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He?** (I am speaking in human terms.) May it never be! For otherwise how will God judge the world" (Rom. 3:5-6)? "Such an annihilation of the incurably Evil would, we readily confess, appear most acceptable to us" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:425). "There are numerous discomfiting dimensions to the Christian belief in God. God is not only a Father who provides; He is also a Judge who punishes. Christians believe in hell, and yet no one really wishes this to be true" (Geisler, *ST*, 1:581).

We suggest that we have this difficulty...

Because we don't believe the Bible. "We must deduce our theology from the Scriptures, not interpret Scriptures by our preconceived theology or our emotional preferences" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 718).

Because some of our Bible translations are faulty. "Inadequate, if not insincere, translations are published which no Greek scholar can countenance, with the one purpose in view of expunging from the Word of God the eternal character of these awful sufferings... 'that new Bible that has no hell in it'" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:431)

Because we can't fully comprehend God's holiness and justice. "If eternal punishment cannot be comprehended, it should be remembered that infinite holiness and the sin by which infinite holiness is outraged are equally unmeasurable by the human mind" (Chafer, *MBT*, 98%). "Those who resent the idea of eternal retribution are, in fact, resenting divine holiness" (Chafer, *ST*, 4:433). "Concerning God's justice, it is a matter of human opinion that the justice of God would not allow for eternal punishment. The Bible actually teaches otherwise: that the very justice of God requires eternal punishment for those who have rejected the eternal life He has provided for them" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 710). "Any protest against God's wrath is equally an objection against His holiness and justice, from which it flows" (Geisler, *ST*, 2:404). "If God is the ultimate standard for what is morally right (just), then we cannot impose our concept of justice upon Him" (*ibid.*, 4:406).

Because we lack the capacity for a proper evaluation of sin. "Is evil worthy of eternal separation from God? Upon this issue the human mind can throw no light. What the true nature of sin is as valued by God who is infinitely holy, must be accepted in the terms of revelation. Being against God, sin assumes the quality of infinity. Naturally, the inquiry arises, Could God not have elected to save all? To the same end, another inquiry arises, Would He not have been justified in reprobating all? To all such questions, though sincere, no reply is possible. God is proved to be worthy of unquestioning trust, and assurance is given that He is doing what is best. That conclusion will be embraced by all when the task is done" (Chafer, *ST*, 1:247). "Since God is infinite and His goodness unbounded, sin is infinite and its evil character is beyond all human computation. Sin inflicts not only an immeasurable injury upon the one who sins, but is more specifically characterized by the injury it inflicts upon God, the Creator's rights being disregarded, His holy law broken, and His property being damaged through sin" (*ibid.*, 2:249). "No fallen human being can ever attain to an understanding of the holiness of God, and, to the same degree, no fallen human being can attain to the right conception of the sinful nature of sin" (*ibid.*, p.

251). “When the creature knows the evil character of sin as God knows it and the perfection of holiness which sin outrages, then may he sit in judgment on the question of whether eternal retribution of men and angels is consonant with the character of God” (*ibid.*, 4:428). “Charles Hodge [in *Systematic Theology*, III.878]... ‘We are incompetent judges of the penalty which sin deserves. We have no adequate apprehension of its inherent guilt, of the dignity of the person against whom it is committed, or of the extent of the evil which it is suited to produce’” (Geisler, 3:407). “If we had a true spiritual awareness, we would not be amazed at hell’s severity but at our own depravity” [quoting Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 1.109] (*ibid.*, 4:356).

Because we misconstrue God’s wrath. “Ye know this, my beloved brethren. But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for **the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God**” (Jas. 1:19-20). “William G.T. Shedd [in *Dogmatic Theology*, 176]... ‘There is a kind of wrath in the human soul that resembles the wrath of God, and constitutes its true analogue. It is the wrath of the human conscience, which is wholly different from that of the human heart’” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:401).

Because we think suffering is incompatible with a loving God. “Wrath and mercy are not incompatible, since they are exercised toward different objects; wrath is on the unrepentant, and mercy is on the repentant... God is consistently and unchangeably angry with sin and consistently and unchangeably delighted with righteousness” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:404). “God allows plenty of suffering in this world. It is an empirical fact that God and creature-pain are not incompatible” (*ibid.*, 4:346). “God could not possibly have been more merciful” (*ibid.*, p. 347). “If it is inconsistent with God’s love to have man eternally punished, it would also be against God’s love to have man suffer Hell temporarily or to allow man’s misery at the present time” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 710).

Because we think we know better than God does. “For **my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts**” (Isa. 55:8-9). “You will say to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?’ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this,’ will it” (Rom. 9:19–20)? “It ill becomes the wisest of men to speculate even on what God ought, or ought not, to do. Much that is written on these subjects is distinguished for its shocking irreverence” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:248). “When it is dis-

covered that divine judgments for sin reach to eternity, as indeed they do, it ill becomes finite, fallen man to call these judgments into question” (*ibid.*, 2:251).

Because we put human sentiment and reason above the word of God. “With all others of this belief, the restitutionist builds on human sentiment and reason more than upon the Word of God” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:426).

Because we are inclined toward wishful thinking. “Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) taught that any belief based on a mere wish that something be true is an illusion. No loving person would *want* anyone else to suffer in hell forever; however, strong desire to the contrary seems to be a primary impulse in universalist thinking, setting up an implausible and unbiblical system of belief” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:404). “Augustine [in *E*, 99]... ‘It is in vain, then, that some, indeed very many, make moan over the eternal punishment, and perpetual unintermitted torments of the lost, and say they do not believe it shall be so; not, indeed, that they directly oppose themselves to Holy Scripture, but, at the suggestion of their own feelings, they soften down everything that seems hard, and give a milder turn to statements which they think are rather designed to terrify than to be received as literally true’” (*ibid.*, p. 405). “The root of the denial of hell is the wish to avoid suffering—no one wants to suffer, let alone suffer forever. However, this is nothing more than the wish that it be so; the denial of hell, like its cousin universalism, is illusory” (*ibid.*, 4:359). “Anything based on wish-fulfillment is an illusion” (*ibid.*, p. 410).

And, *because we think we’ll be burdened by others’ suffering forever.* “It will not be a burden. Believers are going to be in a perfect, holy state and will not sustain the same relationship to the unsaved as they do now. At that time, they will not feel this burden. They will have the mind of God and will see it from His perspective, not their own” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 711).

Chapter 28: The Eternal Order

With the resurrection of lost mankind, the passing away of the present heaven and earth and the Great White Throne judgment being completed, as discussed in our previous chapter *The Lake of Fire*, only a few (but awe-inspiring) final events in the Kingdom program remain to be completed before the ultimate end and goal of the Kingdom program, the Eternal Order²³, can be inaugurated.

Final Events in Preparation for the Eternal Order

Final events in preparation for the Eternal Order include Christ's handing the Kingdom over to the Father, creation of the new heaven and new earth, and the descending of the New Jerusalem out of heaven to the new earth.

Christ Hands the Kingdom Over to His Father

After the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom has accomplished all of its mediatorial work, *Jesus will hand all things, including the Kingdom and even His own Person, back to God the Father.* “then comes **the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father**, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. **The last enemy that will be abolished is death.** For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, ‘All things are put in subjection,’ it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. And when all things are subjected to Him, **then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all**” (1 Cor. 15:24-28). “Waggoner (*Ref. of Age*) makes this reign of Christ on the throne of the Universe the one that he resigns, 1 Cor. 15:24. But this cannot be so, seeing that God ruling as a Theocratic King does not necessitate the relinquishment of the other, that Jesus acting as Theocratic King never gives up the oneness with the Father or the fulness of the Godhead” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:563) “All members of the Trinity are equal in *essence*, but they do not have the same *roles*. It is a heresy (called subordinationism) to affirm that there is an *ontological subordination* of one member of the Trinity to another, since they are identical in essence; nonetheless, it is clear that there is a *functional subordination*; that is, not only does each member

²³ We use the term “Eternal Order,” rather than “Eternal Kingdom” to differentiate the Eternal Order or Eternal State from the “Universal or Eternal Kingdom” facet of the Kingdom as delineated in our chapter Five Facets of the Kingdom.

have a different function or role, but some functions are also subordinate to others” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:290). “...the orthodox belief that the Son (Christ) is *functionally* subordinate to (i.e. subject to) the Father, though *essentially* equal with Him” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “The reconciliation of the ‘many days’ with the idea of ‘everlasting’ will be found in the fact that, at the close of human history, the Mediatorial Kingdom of our Lord will be merged into the Universal Kingdom and thus perpetuated forever (1 Cor. 15:24-28)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 216). “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after **many days** shall they be visited” (Isa. 24:21-22). “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an **everlasting** dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14). “Ultimately, the power and the authority of the Kingdom must be turned over to God the Father. But this can only occur after every enemy of man is abolished and there is no longer any challenge to God’s rule, authority, and power ([1 Cor. 15] v. 24). For this very reason, the Messiah must rule until every single enemy of man has been placed under subjection (vs. 25). The last of the enemies of man is not Satan, but death itself (v. 26)” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 512).

A New Heaven and a New Earth are Created

The old heaven and the old earth having passed away (see the section *Passing of the Old Heaven and Earth* of our previous chapter *The Lake of Fire*), *God will create a new heaven and a new earth* wherein will dwell righteousness. “For, behold, **I create new heavens and a new earth**; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (Isa. 65:17). “For as **the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah**, so shall your seed and your name remain” (Isa. 66:22). “But **according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells**” (2 Pet. 3:13). “And **I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more**” (Rev. 21:1). “And **He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’** And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true’” (Rev. 21:5). “Of all the final works of God, none

could surpass the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. Though only the angels may have witnessed the creation of the present order, all living creatures will observe the final act of creation” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:401). “A new heaven, and a new earth... The ‘heaven’ and ‘earth’ here undoubtedly refer to the physical universe. The ‘first’ or original universe passes away, and is replaced by a ‘new’ universe. This does not necessarily mean the annihilation of our present world of matter; for the Greek *kainos* may mean new in character rather than in substance. The same term is used of the regenerated believer: he becomes a ‘new creation’ (2 Cor. 5:17, ASV) in a crisis which does not annihilate the personal entity but transforms it” (McClain, *GK*, p. 510). “Most conservative expositors agree that Revelation 21:1-8 has reference to the eternal state, the new heaven and the new earth which will be created after the millennium, and the holy city, the New Jerusalem as it will exist in eternity” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 327). “God will have fulfilled His purpose of restoring the theocracy to the earth through the Kinsman-Redeemer, Jesus Christ. After this purpose has run its full course on earth, God will judge Satan and his forces for eternity, destroy the present heaven and earth, and create new ones for the future eternal state (Rev. 20:7-22:21)” (Showers, *M*, p. 98). “The New Earth is also the destiny of the Church saint, but the Church will remain distinct from Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 440). “Heaven will not be the eternal abode of the believer, as the last two chapters of the Revelation reveal” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 519).

The New Jerusalem Descends to the New Earth

The New Jerusalem will then descend out of heaven to the new earth. “By faith **Abraham**, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for **he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God**” (Heb. 11:8–10). “While the Jerusalem on earth was continually under bondage and subjugated by various forces, the New Jerusalem in Heaven has been eternally free and will always remain so. It was this particular city that Abraham was seeking, according to Hebrews 11:9-10” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 524). “All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have

had opportunity to return. But as it is, **they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their **God**; for He **has prepared a city for them**" (Heb. 11:13–16). "Heb. 11:13-16. It is evident from these verses that the hope which was Abraham's in resurrection had to do with a heavenly city rather than an earthly kingdom" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 326). "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, **the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to **the spirits of righteous men made perfect**, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel" (Heb. 12:22–24). "Hebrews 12:22-24... This important passage teaches that saints of all ages will be in the heavenly Jerusalem" (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 326). "...the *spirits of just men made perfect*, who are the Old Testament saints. They were *just* in their day because they were justified by their faith, but they were *made perfect* at the death of the Messiah" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 525). "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw **the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God**, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them'" (Rev. 21:1-3) "And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, 'Come here, I shall show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**' And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me **the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.** Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. And the material of

the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcidony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And **the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.** And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; and **they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life**" (Rev. 21:9-27). "He is told that he is about to be shown more concerning the Bride of the Messiah (v. 9), namely, the eternal abode of the Bride—the New Jerusalem (v. 10) that will come down to the freshly created new earth from Heaven where it has eternally been" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 527). "...the *Shechinah* Glory of the Lamb, which will lighten all for the Eternal Order. The Gentiles of the earth will walk by means of this light, as well as those who served as kings in the old order. The mention of *Gentiles* shows that the Jew and Gentile distinction will be maintained for all eternity, but there is no mention of any functional difference" (*ibid.*, p. 530). "...nothing of unrighteousness will ever be allowed to enter into the eternal city. All unrighteousness will now be confined in the Lake of Fire" (*ibid.*, p. 531). "And he showed me **a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever**" (Rev. 22:1-5). "It should be noted that the word *month* is used, so some kind of dating system will be present

in the Eternal Order. Since there will be no sun, moon, or night, it will be a radically different dating system than the one in which we presently live” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 531). “The destiny of all the elect, both under the Old and New, is the same” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:158) “...the city New Jerusalem... early Church... hold that it represents a literal city” (*ibid.*, 3:40) “...the whole city being become ‘a holy of holies’” (*ibid.*, p. 44) “The partial particularizing, and the ‘like unto,’ are of such a nature that the reality may greatly exceed even the description” (*ibid.*, p. 46). “...1500 miles square... would occupy more than one-half of the United States” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 146). “...the New Jerusalem, which is not synonymous with heaven” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 231) “The city is to be inhabited by God, by the church, by the redeemed of Israel, and by the redeemed of all ages, together with the unfallen angels. However, this city seems to take her chief characterization from the bride who dwells there” (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 576). “By some interpreters, the New Jerusalem of chapter 21 has been assigned to the Millennial Kingdom of chapter 20. But this view must be rejected for various good reasons: First, it would seriously violate the literary order of the book, by reverting to a description of the Millennium after what is admittedly an account of the last Judgment in 20:11-15, which follows the Millennial Kingdom. Second, in the new condition described by chapter 21 there is neither sin nor death, but in the Millennium both are present. Third, in the language of 20:1-22:5 there is a constantly recurring note of eternal *finality* which would be entirely inappropriate for the Millennial Kingdom which is transitional in character—‘a thousand years’ in length. As to the *order* of events, the conclusion of Alford is sound: ‘The whole of the things described in the remaining portion of the book (21:1-22:5) is subsequent to the general judgment, and descriptive of the consummation of the triumph and bliss of Christ’s people with Him in the eternal Kingdom of God’” [quoting Henry Alford, *New Testament for English Readers*, on Rev. 21:1] (McClain, *GK*, p. 507). “Both Israel and the Church will share in the New Jerusalem upon the New Earth when ‘God will tabernacle among men’” [quoting Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, pp. 57-67] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 440). “...the Shechinah Glory, whose final abode will be in the New Jerusalem” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 528). “...about 1,500 miles long, wide, and high” (*ibid.*). “As for *the wall*, it will measure 216 feet high” (*ibid.*, p. 529) “The New Jerusalem is synonymous with Heaven; they are one and the same. One could also say that the New Jerusalem is now in Heaven, but either way they are in the same locale and are more or less synonymous... If one distinguishes between Heaven and the New Jerusalem, then one can say that believers now go to the New Jerusalem in Heaven, and eventually the New Jerusalem will be placed on

the new earth, when the new earth is created after the Messianic Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 750). “...the new Jerusalem descending from heaven gives prominent recognition to 24 descendants of Abraham, ‘the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel’ and ‘the Lamb’s 12 apostles’ (Rev. 21:2, 12, 14)” (Horner, *FI*, p. 58)!

Description of the Eternal Order

Undoubtedly, many of the realities of the Eternal Order, even if described to us in detail, would be difficult, if not impossible, for our finite minds to grasp. For instance, the very concept of eternity is beyond our comprehension. “The problem as to how time is disposed of in eternity is beyond the penetration of the finite minds” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:216).

Whether the Eternal Order will include a succession of future ages, and/or whether mankind will continue to procreate in the Eternal Order are two subjects concerning which we can now only speculate. “As various writers (e.g. Lord, Judge Jones, Brookes, Bickersteth, etc.) have intimated, these [future] ‘times’ may include successive eras, economies, ascending stages of glory... it is proper for us to avoid giving, what can only be conjecture, any decisive opinion concerning the phraseology which seems to involve a succession of eras in the continuation of a restored world” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:468). “We are satisfied to end the discussion where the Bible ends it, viz., with a portion of the race glorified and the race itself redeemed from the curse, passing on to higher stages of blessedness, and entering into the eternal ages in this happy condition. If Adam forfeited never-ending generations—if this was part of God’s original design—then the restitution will restore and carry it out; but if not, then only that wonderful increase commensurate with God’s design will be produced. Here we stop: that the race is perpetuated after the Advent is true; that this will continue on after the thousand years (which only limits Satan’s binding, etc.), is most certain; that it even may continue on forever may, for aught we know, be also correct (seeing that some language can scarcely be interpreted otherwise), but as to the latter, not feeling positive, we stop with ‘the many generations’ of Isa. 60:15” (*ibid.*, p. 538). “Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of **many generations**” (Isa. 60:15).

However, Scripture does reveal a number of things concerning the Eternal Order that give us at least a basic idea of what that new Order will be like. These things include the facts that:

There will be only one throne rather than two. “And there shall no longer be any curse; and the **throne of God and of the Lamb** shall be in

it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him” (Rev. 22:3) “There are no longer two thrones: one His Messianic throne and the other the Father’s throne, as our Lord indicated in Revelation 3:21. In the final Kingdom there is but one throne, and it is ‘the throne of God and of the Lamb’ (22:3)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 513).

The Jewish/Gentile distinction will continue forever. “And **the nations** shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day for there shall be no night there: and they shall bring the glory and the honor of **the nations** into it” (Rev. 21:24-26) “The mention of ‘Gentiles’ shows that the Jewish and Gentile distinction will be maintained for all eternity” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 819). “The Greek word for *nations* is the term that means ‘Gentiles.’ This again shows that the Jewish-Gentile distinction continues though, there is no functional difference” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 531). “Ryrie [in *Dispensationalism Today*, pp. 146-147] clarifies the dispensational position and provides a balanced view. He points out that such an ‘apparent dichotomy between heavenly and earthly purposes is not actual.’ When Dispensationalists speak of ‘the earthly purpose of Israel,’ they mean that the national promises made to Israel ‘will be fulfilled by Jews during the millennium as they live on earth in *unresurrected* bodies.’ However, Jewish believers who died during ‘the Mosaic age’ and Jewish believers who die today do have ‘a heavenly destiny.’ Jewish believers today ‘are members of the Church, His Body, and their destiny is the same as Gentile believers.’ In the Messianic Kingdom, ‘those Jews who will be living on the earth in earthly bodies... and those who will be born with earthly bodies during the period’ will experience ‘the earthly promises’ contained in the Jewish Covenants. This is all that Dispensationalism means by Israel being an ‘earthly people’ with ‘earthly promises.’ This does not mean that there is no ‘heavenly hope and future for Israel.’ Dispensationalists have always affirmed that ‘the spirits of just men made perfect’ of Hebrews 12:22-23 are the Old Testament saints ‘who have their place in the heavenly city along with the Church of the firstborn ones.’ Just as the Church will be on earth co-reigning with Christ in the Messianic Kingdom, so will Israel be in the heavenly Jerusalem in the Eternal State. Even in the Eternal State, Israel and the Church are kept distinct for ‘distinction is maintained even though the destiny is the same.’ Ryrie’s conclusion is that ‘the earthly-heavenly, Israel-Church distinction taught by dispensationalists is true, but it is not everything that dispensationalists teach about the ultimate destiny of the people included in these groups” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 455). “Even in the Eternal State, the Jewish distinctive will be somewhat maintained though

there is no clear indication if that will mean a functional difference” (*ibid.*, p. 819). (See also our discussion of heavenly vs. earthly hopes in the section *The Identity of the Church: The Church is Not Israel* of our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

The Davidic Kingdom will continue forever. “**If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel** for all that they have done, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 31:36-37). “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever.** The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “**For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain**” (Isa. 66:22). “And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: **his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed**” (Dan. 7:14). “And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and **He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end**” (Luke 1:31-33). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever**” (Rev. 11:15). “And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and **they shall reign forever and ever**” (Rev. 22:5). “And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of **God and of the Lamb** shall be in it, and **His bond-servants** shall serve Him; and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and **they shall reign forever and ever**” (Rev. 22:3-5). “...the covenanted and pre-

dicted Messianic Kingdom at the Sec. Coming of Jesus—some correctly extending it beyond the one thousand years” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:695) “...the thousand years do not limit their reign” (*ibid.*, 2:279) “...the thousand years (which years do not limit the reign, but the binding of Satan and non-resurrection of the wicked)” (*ibid.*, p. 411) “The Kingdom when once established under David’s Son ever exists—His heavens rule and His earth or people are obedient—whatever changes may be introduced after the ending of the Millennial period” (*ibid.*, p. 503). “...the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed emphatically teaches of the Messiah’s Kingdom: ‘Whose Kingdom shall have no end’” (*ibid.*, p. 632). “There is only one passage in Scripture which is supposed to teach the yielding up or ending of the distinctive Messianic Kingdom, viz., 1 Cor. 15:27, 28... this passage, so difficult of interpretation (universally so acknowledged), ought not to be pressed against the testimony of a multitude of other passages, either to the separation of the Christ, or to the removal of His distinctive kingship as the Christ, or to the diminishing of any honor, etc., conferred upon Him... Surely, we introduce nothing so derogatory to the dignity and honor of Jesus, that He forever yields up His inheritance, purchased by His obedience and death” (*ibid.*, p. 634). “But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then comes **the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father**, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For **He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet**. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, ‘All things are put in subjection,’ it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. And **when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him**, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:23–28). “This perpetuity the Jews affirmed when they declared of the Messiah that ‘He abideth forever’ (Jno. 12:34)” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 638) “The multitude therefore answered Him, ‘**We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever**; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man’” (John 12:34)?

God Himself will dwell with mankind. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, **the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and**

He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away” (Rev. 21:1-4). “And there shall no longer be any curse; and **the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it**, and **His bond-servants** shall serve Him; and **they shall see His face**, and His name shall be on their foreheads” (Rev. 22:3-5). “Of all these changed conditions, perhaps the greatest is that at last ‘the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God’ (Rev. 21:3). Even during the glorious millennial reign of Christ with His Church on earth, their actual residence will be in heaven. But in the eternal Kingdom heaven comes down to earth; God dwells with men! At last the long history of temporary theophanies will be done. In the face of Jesus Christ men at last will see the face of God with no hindrance of circumstance or interruption of temporality” (McClain, *GK*, p. 513).

God Himself will provide light. “**The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but Jehovah will be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light**, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended” (Isa. 60:19-20). “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**’ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me **the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her brilliance** was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper” (Rev. 21:9-12) “**And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light**, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. And in the daytime (for **there shall be no night there**) its gates shall never be closed” (Rev. 21:23-26) “**And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever**” (Rev. 22:5). “The sun and moon would give light to the earth until those in the kingdom would no longer need their light because they would walk in the light of God’s glory (Rev. 21:23)” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 31). “Certain privileged individuals down through the course of human history have been given a revelation of the essential glory that belongs to our sovereign God, but

all who are included in that kingdom will dwell in that very glory itself" (*ibid.*, p. 319). "As it was with the Old Testament, in the Eternal Order the *Shechinah* Glory will tabernacle with men, although there will be no Tabernacle or Temple, *per se*" (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 619). "Because the *Shechinah* Glory will be there, there will be no need of the natural light from the sun or the moon, nor the artificial light of the lamp. The *Shechinah* Glory will provide all the light that will be necessary, and all the inhabitants will be able to walk in that light. So it will be for all eternity" (*ibid.*).

God's servants will serve and worship Him. "And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of **God and of the Lamb** shall be in it, and **His bond-servants shall serve Him**" (Rev. 22:3) "No clue is given as to the nature of the service that will be assigned to the members of this eternal kingdom" (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 319). "Individually and corporately, the people who have been satisfied with the riches of His grace will devote themselves individually and corporately to worship, to praise, to thanksgiving, to adoration for the unending ages of eternity. Amen" (*ibid.*, p. 320).

Death will be no more. "**He hath swallowed up death for ever;** and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it" (Isa. 25:8). "For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. **The last enemy that will be abolished is death**" (1 Cor. 15:25–26). "but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who **abolished death**, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10) "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And **death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.** This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:13–15). "And I saw **a new heaven and a new earth;** for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and **there shall no longer be any death;** there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true'" (Rev. 21:1–5). "in the middle of its street.

And on either side of the river was **the tree of life**, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Rev. 22:2). “...death... That which the Bible calls an ‘enemy,’ they designate a friend” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:171). “...the view of early Christians, Reformers, and eminent men in the Church that death is part of the curse—abundantly sustained by Scripture” (*ibid.*, p. 172) “Whatever gain there is in death to the believer, whatever blessedness may await those who sleep in Jesus, etc., all this comes not because death bestows it, but in spite of him” (*ibid.*, p. 173) “...2 Timothy 1:10 and 1 Corinthians 15:25-26, which speak of death as being abolished. However, these two verses deal only with the effects of natural death upon the body. It is the first death—physical death—that is abolished; the second death—eternal, spiritual death—is not. It is the abolishment of the first death that makes resurrection possible, but the second death is going to be eternal” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 714).

Pain will be no more. “He hath swallowed up death for ever; and **the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces**; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah hath spoken it” (Isa. 25:8). “And I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and **He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes**; and there shall no longer be any death; **there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.**’ And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true’” (Rev. 21:1-5). “in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was **the tree of life**, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for **the healing of the nations**” (Rev. 22:2). “The problem of the healing of the nations in Revelation 22:2 is dissolved when it is recalled that the tree of life originally existed in the Garden of Eden before sin came into being and therefore is a normal part of eternity as well. The word translated ‘healing’ can just as well be translated health or benefit which would not necessarily mean more than that the leaves of the tree were beneficial in some way” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 328). “The Greek word translated healing is the source of the modern English word ‘therapeutic.’ The purpose of the leaves is not to heal existing sick-

nesses, for they will not exist in the Eternal Order; rather, they will be for health-giving to the nations. There will be no sickness in the Eternal Order because of the leaves of the Tree of Life” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 531).

Peace will reign. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end**, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even **for ever**. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6–7). “How transcendently blessed will be that holy peace which will yet reign throughout the universe of God! More wonderful, it would seem, will it be than the peace which reigned in the eternal past, since to hold the experience and judgment of sin in retrospect is more conducive to peace than to hold them in prospect” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:371).

Righteousness will dwell. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and **with righteousness from henceforth even for ever**. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6–7). “But, according to his promise, we look for **new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness**” (2 Pet. 3:13). “In the present age, righteousness *suffers*; in the kingdom age, though some may suffer for righteousness’ sake (cf. Matt 5:10), righteousness shall *reign* (cf. Isa. 11:4-5); but in the eternal new heaven and new earth righteousness shall *dwell*” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:366).

And, *the old will never be brought to mind again.* “For, behold, **I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind**” (Isa. 65:17). “It is further declared by Isaiah that the new earth and the new heaven shall so surpass the present, that these will never be called to mind again (Isa. 65:17)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:427).

Such is the glory of the Kingdom.

Section 3: Summary, Conclusion & Applications

Summary of the Kingdom

In summary:

Summary of Section 1: Introductory Considerations

Views of the Kingdom

A wide range of views currently exists within Christendom regarding the identity and nature of the Kingdom of God.

The most common views of the Kingdom can be divided into two camps, based on the two underlying theologies that support them. These two underlying theologies, both of which are orthodox, are *covenant* theology and *dispensational* theology. While dispensational theology is always premillennial in its eschatology, covenant eschatology is divided into three standard eschatological camps: *postmillennial*, *amillennial* and *premillennial*. Therefore, we have a total of four standard eschatologies to compare: covenant postmillennial, covenant amillennial, covenant premillennial and dispensational. Then, there is also a fifth, heretical theology and eschatology that has its own, unique view of the Kingdom, namely, that of Jehovah's Witnesses. Spending some time and effort on this fifth view is worthwhile, too, because Christians are being challenged by it on a daily basis via Jehovah's Witnesses.

But again, the main theological conflict *within* orthodox Christendom today in relation to the Kingdom is between covenant theology and dispensational theology. We would therefore do well to carefully compare these two systems: covenant theology which includes its three different eschatological divisions, and dispensational theology.

While there are numerous secondary differences between covenant and dispensational theology, the two primary areas of disagreement between them relate to their respective understandings of God's covenants (formal agreements) with mankind, and their understandings of God's future purpose for the nation Israel. Covenant theologians believe that God has made one over-arching "covenant of grace" with mankind that spans all generations, that the church is now the "new Israel," and that the nation Israel has no future purpose in God's Kingdom program, whereas dispensationalists recognize eight separate and distinct covenants that God has made with different groups of people at different times, which correspondingly divide human history up into a number (seven) of different *dispensations*, that Israel and the church are always separate in Scripture, and that the nation Israel has a major role yet to play in the outworking of God's Kingdom program.

Covenant theology is based on the idea that God has made one eternal, over-arching covenant, or contract, or agreement, with mankind. This covenant is in the form of a decree of God, made beyond or outside of time, for the salvation of fallen men.

In order to allow Old Testament prophecy concerning Israel to have fulfillment in the church, covenant theology uses a spiritualizing hermeneutic. Covenant theology teaches that the nation Israel has been replaced (or “fulfilled”) by the church, and has little if any future purpose in God’s Kingdom program. If national Israel is to be saved and/or restored at all, it is only as it will be incorporated into the church. In covenant theology, the church is the “new Israel,” and the church is comprised of the elect of all periods of human history. Covenant theology teaches that the Law of Moses is still in effect, at least partially. And, rather than expecting a future, literal, earthly Kingdom, covenant theology recognizes only a “spiritual” and heavenly kingdom.

By definition, *postmillennialism* teaches that Christ will return *after* the millennium, *after* the church has herself established the kingdom of God in the world. Postmillennialism was systematized approximately three centuries ago by the heretical theologian Daniel Whitby. Among postmillennialism’s most influential advocates have been Charles Hodge and Lorraine Boettner. Postmillennialism makes liberal use of a “spiritualizing” hermeneutic. Postmillennialism’s signature teaching is the idea that the world is getting better and better. Postmillennialism teaches that the church is the “new Israel,” and that ethnic Israel will be saved only as it is incorporated into the church. Regarding the Mosaic Law, postmillennialists believe that at least some of the Laws are binding on the church. Regarding the conversion of the world, postmillennialists believe that this will occur prior to Christ’s return. Postmillennialists believe that the millennium *precedes* Christ’s Second Coming.

By definition, *amillennialism* denies that there will ever be a literal, earthly Millennial Kingdom. Amillennialism currently has more adherents than any other eschatological view. Amillennialism depends on the combining of disparate terms (such as Israel and the church) and on a spiritualizing hermeneutic for its defense. It is telling that there have not been produced any signature eschatological works in defense of amillennialism. As does covenant postmillennialism (and covenant premillennialism), covenant amillennialism assumes the existence of an over-arching “covenant of grace.” Amillennialism envisions no future restoration of national Israel. However, because amillennialism does not require the church to convert the world before Christ returns, as postmillennialism does, it is

able to accommodate the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ. Also in contrast with postmillennialists, amillennialists do not expect the conversion of the world prior to Christ's return.

The third eschatological view among covenant theologians is *premillennialism*. Covenant premillennialists believe that Christ will return *prior to* a millennial Kingdom on earth. The most well-known proponent of covenant premillennialism in recent years has been George E. Ladd (1911-1982). Covenant premillennialists believe that national Israel will be restored, *maybe*. Covenant premillennialists believe, as do all covenant theologians, that the church is the "new Israel." While all covenant premillennialists recognize that Christ will return *prior to the Millennial Kingdom*, there is some disagreement among them as to the timing of His return in relation to the Tribulation period, with the majority position being *post-tribulational*. Again, covenant premillennialists believe that national Israel will be restored, *maybe*. However, because they combine Israel and the church, they do not foresee a future literal, earthly, Jewish Kingdom.

The fourth view of the Kingdom is that of *dispensationalism*. The forerunner of modern-day dispensationalism was *chiliasm* or *millenarianism*.

Chiliasm or *millenarianism* in the Christian church dates from the first century. The modern, fully-developed theology of chiliasm, or millenarianism, is known as *dispensationalism*. The term *dispensation* is taken from Ephesians 1:10 in the King James Version of the Bible: "That in the **dispensation** of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" The term *dispensation* is also found at 1 Cor. 9:17, Eph. 3:2 and Col. 1:25 in the KJV (and also in the NKJV). A *dispensation* is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose.

Three men commonly credited with having major roles in the development and systematization of modern dispensationalism are John Darby, C. I. Scofield and Lewis Sperry Chafer. Over the past century, leading proponents of dispensational theology have included L. S. Chafer, Charles Ryrie, John Walvoord, Clarence Larkin, Charles Feinberg, J. Dwight Pentecost, Alva McClain, Arnold Fruchtenbaum and Norman Geisler. Today, almost all evangelical Christians are dispensational to some extent.

The primary hermeneutical principle of dispensationalism is that Scripture should always be taken at face value, and understood literally or plainly, unless there is good reason within the text itself for not doing so.

The three basic teachings of dispensationalism are that the plain, obvious meaning of Scripture is the intended and correct meaning, that Israel and the church are two separate and distinct entities with two individual

(although complimentary) programs, and that the ultimate purpose of all things, including the history of mankind, is not man's salvation but rather God's glory.

Dispensationalists usually identify *seven* dispensations in human history. These seven dispensations are the dispensations of 1. Innocence (from creation to the Fall), 2. Conscience (from the Fall to the Flood), 3. Government (from the Flood to Abraham), 4. Promise (from Abraham to Moses), 5. Law (from Moses to Pentecost), 6. Grace (from Pentecost to the Second Coming), and 7. Kingdom (from the Second Coming to the Final Rebellion).

Dispensationalism is distinguished from all other theologies by its understanding of *Israel*. Dispensationalists are adamant that Israel is not the church. And, dispensationalists understand that Israel is to be restored in the future. Regarding the church, again, dispensationalists keep Israel and the church *separate*. Regarding salvation, dispensationalists believe that in every generation men are saved by grace through faith, but they also recognize that the *content* of their faith differs from dispensation to dispensation. Regarding the Mosaic Law, dispensationalists make a clean break from the Law for Christians. Regarding Christian evangelism, dispensationalists do not believe that it is God's purpose for the church to convert and Christianize the entire world, but rather only to "...take out of them [the Gentiles] a people for His name" (Acts 15:14). Regarding the millennium, dispensationalists are consistently premillennial.

Jehovah's Witnesses' view of the Kingdom is an amalgamation of dispensational and covenant premillennial ideas, with a few unique inventions added, all erected upon a foundation of thoroughly heretical doctrine. Jehovah's Witnesses foresee a literal, earthly Millennial Kingdom to come, but one that's devoid of national Israel. Their Israelology is a unique variant of replacement theology, wherein Israel is replaced not by the historic Christian church, as is normally held by replacement theologians, but rather by their own Jehovah's Witness organization.

The Kingdom in Church History

The chiliastic idea of a future earthly Kingdom with Messiah sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem was first revealed, taught and believed in Old Testament times. Then, as per our contention and as we'll outline later in our section *Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom* below, it was this very same covenanted and promised theocratic, Davidic Kingdom that John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy announced as "at hand" during the early part of Jesus' ministry.

For the first three centuries of her history, the Christian church was almost exclusively chiliastic, or millenarian, or premillennial.

The first ten years of church history were exclusively Jewish.

During Paul's missionary journeys, as he traveled from city to city, he always spoke "to the Jew first." There is no evidence in Scripture (or anywhere else, for that matter) that in Paul's discussions with the Jews, that any controversy ever arose regarding the nature of the Kingdom, something that certainly would have occurred had Paul taught that the Jewish Kingdom hope had been nullified, or that their covenanted and prophesied Jewish Kingdom had now been transformed into a "spiritual" Kingdom. We know of the church's controversies during the biblical period, because they're recorded in the Bible. We know, for instance, about the controversies concerning Gentiles first being allowed into the church at the time of Cornelius (Acts 10) and whether or not Gentile believers were required to be circumcised and observe the Mosaic Law (Acts 15). It is very telling, therefore, that there is actually not a single hint in the entire New Testament of any controversies concerning the eschatological Jewish Kingdom. The only logical explanation for this is that the Jewish eschatological ideas that were current at that time were transferred without controversy from the Jewish expectations of the day, via Jesus and the (Jewish) apostles, into the newborn Christian church.

The majority of theologians and Bible students today would likely agree that of all the eras of the Christian church, the earliest church had the purest doctrine. This is our position, as well. Now, it is indisputable that the first-century church was chiliastic. The Mosaic Law had been abrogated, but not the expectation of the Millennial Kingdom. The first-century church looked forward to the millennial age. She was confirmed in her literal (the first-century church only knew a literal hermeneutic) eschatological expectations by the literal destruction of Jerusalem. Extra-biblical sources indicate that the primitive church was chiliastic. All the evidence from the second century confirms a continuing premillennialism in the church. The eschatologies of the Apostolic Fathers, including those of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Lactantius, Barnabas and Tertullian, were chiliastic.

Opposition to chiliasm, while almost entirely absent the first two centuries of the church's history, began to arise toward the middle of the third century. The principle source of this opposition was the "spiritualizing" (and heretical) Alexandrian school of theology centered in Alexandria, Egypt. A "spiritualized" kingdom was subsequently promoted by Augustine and was used to great self-advantage by the medieval church. This is noteworthy in light of the fact that future apostasy in the church had been predicted by the apostles.

Instruments of opposition to chiliasm, or premillennialism include men's hearts, men's minds, eloquence, scholarship, inadequate views of the Kingdom, philosophy, Platonism, science, naturalism/materialism, the theory of evolution, humanism, liberalism, "tolerance," bigotry, nihilism, cultural development, self-sufficiency, religion, spiritualism, Gnosticism, monasticism, popes, church councils, state churches, established churches, state education, replacement theology, amillennialism, Preterism, deceivers, cults, orthodox ministers, antiquity (particularly regarding pretribulationism), and ultimately, the Antichrist.

Opposition to the primitive chiliastic eschatology began in earnest in the third century, with the "spiritualizing" Alexandrian school (i.e. Clement of Alexandria and Origen). The "spiritualized" kingdom was subsequently accepted and promoted by Eusebius, Jerome, Augustine and the Roman Catholic Church. The "spiritualized" kingdom view held sway throughout the dark ages, and even on through the Protestant Reformation.

Opposition to chiliasm led eventually to rejection by the church of all Jewish elements of the Kingdom. This led to disinterest by, and eventually outright persecution of, the Jews.

Chiliasm was suppressed severely in the dark ages, but was not extinguished entirely as evidenced in Ephraim of Syria and Commodianus.

The Protestant Reformers, while reclaiming and championing the biblical doctrines of *sola scriptura* (by Scripture alone) and *sola fide* (by faith alone), unfortunately failed to also reclaim the biblical doctrine of the Kingdom. Rather than go back to the first century for their doctrine of the Kingdom, as they had with their doctrines regarding the primacies of Scripture and faith, they went back only as far as Augustine, and never progressed beyond Augustine's allegorized, amillennial system of eschatology. However, Martin Luther held a number of correct (biblical) eschatological ideas. For instance, he denied that the church would transform the world. He also believed correctly that the Abrahamic Covenant was still in effect. He believed the second Psalm's fulfillment was yet future, and he looked forward to having a perfected body. Still, he had a limited understanding of the Kingdom. John Calvin also held a number of correct (biblical) eschatological ideas. For instance, he did not expect the Christian church to convert the world, and he counseled his readers to be prepared for Christ's possible coming at any moment. However, he failed to distinguish between Israel and the church. Consequently, he denied a future, earthly, Jewish kingdom.

Due in large part to the Reformers' revitalization of the exegetical use of the grammatical-historical hermeneutic, the centuries following the Protestant Reformation witnessed a resurgence of interest in and serious

study of the Bible in relation to the primitive chiliastic or premillennial eschatology. Well-known premillennialists (or men at least kindly-disposed toward premillennialism) from the post-Reformation period include John Bunyan, Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, John Gill, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, John Darby, Dean Alford, John Charles Ryle, George N. H. Peters, Charles Spurgeon and Sir Robert Anderson.

Semi-chiliastic groups in the history of the United States include the settlers of New England, the Puritans, Pietists, Mennonites, Christadelphians and Russellites (the precursors of Jehovah's Witnesses).

Today, chiliasts or premillennialists are found in all the major Protestant denominations. Dispensationalism is subscribed to today and has been subscribed to in recent history by many of the church's finest theologians and ministers, including C.I. Scofield, Charles Feinberg, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Charles Ryrie, J. Dwight Pentecost, Alva McClain, Herman Hoyt, Harry Ironside, John Walvoord, J. Vernon McGee, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Norman Geisler, John MacArthur, John Ankerberg, Charles Stanley, Chuck Smith, Chuck Missler, Hal Lindsey, Jack Van Impe, Grant Jeffrey, Tim LaHaye, Thomas Ice, Brannon Howse and Andy Woods.

Presuppositions and Premises

This work presupposes that the reader and I (the writer) actually exist and that the world and the things in it are also real. I believe, as conservative Christian theology has taught for centuries, that we human beings exist independently as individuals, not just as figments of some higher being's imagination, or as part of some pantheistic collective consciousness, and that the world around us is also real, and is not an illusion. I believe both we and our world originated in causes outside ourselves, and that we did not and do not "create our own reality." This work also presupposes that God exists. I believe that the God of the Bible, Yahweh or Jehovah, is the only true God. I believe that truth exists, that it is objective and static, is independent of ourselves, and is independent of its manner of presentation. I believe truth is exclusive, that it excludes what is false. I believe that the claim that truth does not exist is self-defeating (as is also the claim that truth cannot be known). I believe that pluralism, which among other things claims that two conflicting truth claims can both be true, is self-defeating because it excludes exclusivism. I believe all truth is divisive and discriminatory, that it always discriminates between truth and error, and that this is a good thing. I believe that all truth is literal truth, that even spiritual truths are literally true. I believe that symbols in Scripture represent literal truths, and that the purpose of both literal and figurative language is to impart lit-

eral truth. I believe that all truth is connected, that it is never contradictory, that it is knowable and communicable. I believe that truth is also fearless; it has nothing to fear from exhaustive investigation.

I believe that the Bible, in its original writings, is a supernatural revelation from God, which makes both Judaism and Christianity supernatural revelations from God. I believe Scripture's claim for itself, namely, that it is the inspired word of God, and that it therefore merits our personal faith. Evidences for the inspiration of Scripture that have been convincing to this writer include Scripture's denunciation of sin, its regenerating power, its neutral and/or negative descriptions of its major players, fulfillment of prophecy, its negative prophecy concerning its major players, and Jesus' confirmation. I therefore believe the Bible is true, that all of it is true, that it is literally true, inerrant, unbreakable, unified, universal, eternal and important. I believe that all of the Bible is important, that Bible doctrine is important, and that the Bible is authoritative and without error. I also believe our present-day Bible corresponds faithfully to the original writings, with correspondence exceeding 99%.

Our premises can be divided into two major categories: those regarding the Bible and those regarding the Kingdom.

The first four of our premises regarding the Bible are further evidences for the inspiration of Scripture. They are the evident specified, or ordered complexity of the Bible's overall Kingdom Plan, the scope and internal consistency of this Plan, the fitness of this plan to achieve its stated goals and the time compression of prophecy. (The time compression of prophecy will be discussed in our section *Biblical Hermeneutics* below.)

Our next set of premises concerns six additional characteristics (in addition to its being *inspired*) of the Bible. These premises are that the Bible is Jewish (having been written entirely by Jews from within a Jewish context), concrete rather than abstract, exclusive (having only one correct interpretation), progressive (the Kingdom plan having been revealed piece by piece over an extended period of time), sufficient (no new present-day revelation being needed) and perspicuous (its main messages being intelligible and understandable).

Regarding Bible prophecy, we maintain that prophecy is a major component of Scripture, that it is important for us to understand, that it is connected with history, and that it will all be fulfilled, whether we believe it or not.

Regarding our apprehension and understanding of the Bible, we recognize that the Bible is complex, detailed and even intentionally obscure on some points (in order to preserve moral freedom, for the safety of believers,

and to set up the nations for destruction). These factors notwithstanding, we suggest that understanding the Bible still is possible, even with certainty. We believe understanding of Scripture will increase as history progresses. In the last days, knowledge will increase and become abundant, and we should expect that study of prophecy will accelerate. And prophecy will surely be most clearly understood as the prophesied events themselves actually unfold. However, our understanding of the Bible will never be entirely complete in this life.

Some things are necessary in order for us to understand the Bible. Some of these necessary things are from God, and some are from us. Necessities from God include spiritual regeneration and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Necessities from us include faith, effort and deep reflection. There are also some things that will be *helps* to us in our endeavor to understand the Bible, one of which is the works of others. It's been well said that "we stand on the shoulders of giants." There are also hinderances to our understanding the Bible. These include the piety and charisma of religious leaders, personal "revelations" and cultic arrogance. But the blessings of understanding the Scriptures are well worth the time and effort expended. The diligent Bible student will be blessed with enhanced faith, motivation for ministry, and enhanced ability to honor God and Christ.

Regarding the Biblical Kingdom of God, which is the major subject of this study, we suggest that the primary *purpose* of the Kingdom is to glorify God. Secondary purposes include the executing of justice, the defeating of evil, the righting of all wrongs, the defeating of Satan and his works, the reconciliation of men to God, the salvation of men from sin and death, the judgment of mankind, the restoration of man's dominion over the earth, the government of the world, the blessing of mankind, and the restoration of all creation.

We suggest that the *people* of the Kingdom consist of three major groups: Jews, Gentiles and the church of God. Paul divided humanity into these three distinct groups even after the Christian church had been formed (1 Cor. 10:32). The Bible deals at length with two elect peoples, namely, Israel and the church, and one non-elect people, namely, the Gentiles. The two elect peoples, Israel and the church, have two things in common: They both depend on the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, for salvation and for the fulfillment of their eschatological hopes, and both of their ultimate purposes are to glorify God.

A Jew is any descendent of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Israel is the subject of most of the Bible. Israel is an elect nation. The nation of Israel as a whole was elected, not just the elect or believing remnant of Israel. We

should be clear, however, that while Israel is an elect nation, not every individual Jew is elected. God revealed Himself in a special way to Israel for a specific purpose. To Israel were given several major privileges including the covenants, the Law, service of God and the Messiah. All the prophets, inspired teachers, Jesus and the apostles were Jews. Indeed, salvation is of the Jews. Israel is not a type, either of the church or of Jehovah's Witnesses, or of any other group. Israel will be the nucleus of the earthly Kingdom. Because the church has a heavenly citizenship, rather than an earthly one, she is immediately differentiated from Israel. While the Bible deals with two elect peoples, Israel and the church, it also deals with one non-elect people, the Gentiles. Gentiles are all non-Israelites. In the Bible, Gentiles, even Gentile converts to Judaism, are never called Jews or Israel. Interestingly, Gentiles are only mentioned in (again, thoroughly Jewish) Scripture as they relate to Israel. Confusing any of these three groups, Israel, the Gentiles and the church, confuses the nature and characteristics of the Kingdom.

Regarding the structure of the Kingdom, we suggest that the structure of the Kingdom is complex, that it has both temporal and spiritual aspects, that it has five major facets, and that it is at its nucleus a Jewish theocracy.

Regarding the Kingdom's relationships to the Bible, the Kingdom of God is the major theme of the Bible, and is the overarching theme of Scripture. We submit that without a correct understanding of the Kingdom, the Bible itself cannot be correctly understood. The Kingdom is the major theme of Old Testament prophecy. The Kingdom is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments. The Kingdom unifies all of Scripture and illuminates all of Scripture. The Kingdom is not missing any of its parts in the Scriptures. However, the entire Kingdom program is not systematized in any one biblical passage. All of the Bible is needed for a complete picture.

Regarding the Kingdom's relationships to theology, first, we must state clearly that we believe that having a correct view of the Kingdom is not a salvation issue. We believe, as do most conservative Christians, in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus alone, plus nothing. Indeed, one can be saved without holding to our doctrine of the Kingdom. In fact, we doubt that many, if any persons have ever had entirely correct, let alone complete views of the Kingdom at the moment of their regeneration (salvation). Neither do we believe that acquiring our view of the Kingdom is necessary for maintaining one's salvation. It is Jesus who keeps us "until that day" (Jude 24, 2 Tim. 1:12). But while we're not saved by or through our understanding of the Kingdom, it is true that our view of the Kingdom does color all our doctrine. We maintain that this doctrine of the Kingdom needs restoration

in our theology. And, we are heartened that, at least to some extent, the correct concept of the Kingdom is being revived in our day. This can be seen by the recent popularity of television programs having to do with “last days” issues, on-line prophecy web sites, prophecy conferences, etc.

Regarding the Kingdom’s relationships to God, first, we should recognize that the Kingdom of God belongs to God. God speaks of the future revived Davidic kingdom as “my kingdom” (1 Chron. 17:11-14). Jesus taught His disciples to pray to the Father, “thy Kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10). That being the case, the Kingdom must be defined by God, not by man. The Kingdom is God’s idea, not man’s. If we are to apprehend the Kingdom, then, it must be communicated to us by God. The Kingdom is the responsibility of God, not man. Its program is to be executed by God, not man. It is also to be justified by God, not man. It is not our place to be “...men thus presuming to set themselves up as the judges respecting what it is right and proper for Jesus to do” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:552). Prophecy concerning the Kingdom will be fulfilled, not naturally, but supernaturally. We can rest assured that Jehovah and His Kingdom will be vindicated in due time. We are thankful that the outworking of this Plan has been graciously foretold to us by God.

In relation to people in general, the Kingdom is universal. We will all find ourselves in relation to the Kingdom one way or another.

In regard to its apprehension, the Kingdom cannot be seen by many. Most people are entirely blind to the future of this world, and it is disheartening to this writer that even so few Christians have caught a clear and vivid vision of the Kingdom. In the main they are either just not interested or are “...blinded to the truth by the generally adopted spiritualizing system of interpretation” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:205). It is ignored by many including many, if not most, pastors. This is largely due to the fact that “Most theological seminaries view the millennium as an unfruitful area for study and tend to suspend judgment on any detailed exegesis of related Scriptural passages” (Walvoord, *MK*, p. 14). The Kingdom is also confusing to many, and it is therefore not discussed as much as it otherwise might be. Therefore, the Kingdom is misunderstood by many.

In regard to its reception, however, this doctrine of the Kingdom *can* be embraced by those with open minds. However, this doctrine of the Kingdom is often met with rejection. It is a tender subject to many. Is willfully ignored and/or rejected by many. It is unpalatable to many, especially to those who would appropriate to themselves the promises given to Israel. It is simply not wanted by many. It is denied by many. And, it is rejected by many. Sometimes this rejection is pronounced. This doctrine of the King-

dom is often ridiculed. The ridiculers sometimes even come from within the church itself. This doctrine is also sometimes scorned. And, at times, it is even persecuted. One reason for people's rejection of this doctrine of the Kingdom is that it dashes human pride. To seekers of truth, the Kingdom should at least be interesting. To these the Kingdom should also be desirable. We point out to these seekers that this Kingdom is also reasonable. Indeed, just such a Kingdom has been envisioned by the world's deepest thinkers. To believers, this doctrine of the Kingdom defines what we should be eagerly anticipating. To believers, it should be appreciated and eagerly anticipated. (We'll discuss in some detail the Christian's proper attitude toward the Rapture of the church in our section *The Rapture of the Church* below.) Logically, this eager anticipation should become more pronounced as the Kingdom draws near.

In relation to theologians, historically speaking, this doctrine of the Kingdom has captured the minds of some of the church's greatest thinkers. We mentioned this briefly in our summary of *The Kingdom in Church History* above. Sadly, however, the Kingdom is being ignored by many. It is often considered to be too simple. It is sometimes unfairly linked with heresy. Nonetheless, despite its common rejection, we counsel our fellow believers that this Kingdom should be berated with caution, lest they be found by God berating His stated Plan. To ministers of the gospel, we suggest strongly that the Kingdom should be preached and taught boldly.

By cults and other false religions, the Kingdom is being counterfeited.

In regard to the nations of the world, the Kingdom will be resisted.

Finally, regarding the Kingdom's relationships to history, the Kingdom explains why the Bible is full of history. The Kingdom also *explains* world history. This can be seen in several different facets. The Kingdom explains that history does have meaning, purposes and goals. The Kingdom explains the design and the divine purposes of history, and it explains how the divine purposes are to be realized. The Kingdom explains that God is the Maker of history via both providence and intervention. The Kingdom explains the origin and progression of evil in the world. The Kingdom explains the need for a cure and the cure for evil in the world. The Kingdom explains why Scripture gives only a brief mention of antediluvian history, and disproportionately great attention to Israel's history. The Kingdom explains the contexts and purposes of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. The Kingdom explains the purposes of the age in which we currently live. The Kingdom explains the goal of history. And, the Kingdom explains the vindication and glorification of God in history.

Biblical Hermeneutics

“Hermeneutics is the study of the general principles of biblical interpretation” (Geisler, *ST*, 1:160).

A discussion of hermeneutics is necessary, especially when attempting to accurately define and describe the Kingdom of God. For instance, consider these two key texts: “And in the days of those kings shall **the God of heaven set up a kingdom** which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but **it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Daniel 2:44–45). and, “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and **the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever**, and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:31–33). How are we to interpret these passages? Are they meant to be taken literally, or figuratively? Is the *plain* sense the *correct* sense when interpreting passages like these? If so, how do we know that?

It is our contention that the plain sense is indeed the correct sense when interpreting these passages and hundreds of other similar passages, and that an unbiased reader would naturally interpret these passages this way, if the “spiritualizing” of Bible texts was not so popular and prevalent. Ideally, our discussion of hermeneutics would hardly be necessary if men were content with taking the vast majority of what they read in the Bible literally, or plainly, but alas, many “experts” tell them that in many, many cases, and especially in cases such as these, while the Bible clearly *says* one thing, it really *means* something else. Therefore, to peel away these ubiquitous, yet entirely unwarranted layers of “spiritualizing” that have been imposed on texts such as these over the years, by men considered to be experts on the Bible, a discussion of hermeneutics becomes necessary.

Before accurately and confidently determining what the Bible really means in its eschatological passages, we should first familiarize ourselves with several characteristics of Scripture that influence our interpretations of these passages.

Regarding characteristics relating to literal versus non-literal passages, as we’ve already mentioned, it is our position that the vast majority of Scripture, including the vast majority of historical and prophetic passages,

are meant to be understood literally. For many people, when reading the Bible for the first time with unbiased and unfiltered vision, it's a major revelation how little of it is actually anything but literal. However, even the staunchest of "literalists" recognizes that the Bible does, on occasion, use figurative, allegorical and/or symbolic language. That being the case, a few things regarding these non-literal genres of Scripture should be kept in mind. Regarding figurative Scripture, it should be recognized that the purpose of both literal and figurative language is always to impart *literal* truth. Regarding allegorical Scripture, we should be aware that whenever allegory is used in Scripture, it is always plainly presented as such. Regarding symbolic Scripture, it should be pointed out that every symbol in Scripture represents something literal. Again, while the Bible does at times use figurative, allegorical and/or symbolic language, it must be kept in mind that these non-literal passages are almost always readily identifiable as such. Therefore, when reading and studying Scripture, our default disposition should be a willingness to receive and understand what is written literally or plainly, unless we encounter clear indicators within the texts themselves that the authors intended that we do otherwise.

Regarding the symbiotic relationship between the Old and New Testaments, dispensational premillennialists emphasize that both the Old and New Testaments are needed. Both the Old and New Testaments present the same Kingdom. The New Testament assumes familiarity with the Old Testament; the New Testament is built on an Old Testament foundation. Without a good understanding of the Old Testament, understanding the New Testament is impossible. The New Testament *confirms* the Old Testament. The New Testament does not contradict the Old Testament. The New Testament does not supersede the Old Testament. The New Testament does not reinterpret the Old Testament. As we'll see below, the New Testament quotes the Old Testament in four different ways, one of which is "literal plus application." An application of an Old Testament passage to a New Testament situation does not "reinterpret" the Old Testament passage; the originally intended interpretation of the Old Testament passage remains intact. The New Testament should not be read back into the Old Testament. On some subjects, the Old Testament is more clear and/or more complete than the New Testament.

The New Testament quotes the Old Testament in four different ways. Because writers of the New Testament sometimes quote the Old Testament in unusual and/or unexpected ways, Covenant theologians will point to this as evidence that we cannot simply accept what the Old Testament says at face value, but rather that we must reinterpret the Old Testament through

the lens of the New Testament. However, this is not the case, as will be seen when we examine the four different ways that the New Testament quotes the Old Testament. The first of these four different ways is *literal plus literal*, as exemplified in Matthew 2:5-6 (regarding Messiah's birth in Bethlehem), which quotes Micah 5:2. In the original context of Micah 5:2, the prophet is speaking prophetically and prophesying that when the Messiah is born, He will be born in Bethlehem of Judah. That is the *literal* meaning of Micah 5:2. When a literal prophecy is fulfilled in the New Testament, it is quoted as a *literal fulfillment*. Many prophecies fall into this category such as Isaiah 7:14 and 52:13-53:12. The second way is *literal plus typical*, as exemplified in Matthew 2:15 ("OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON."), which is a quotation of Hosea 11:1. Matthew does not deny, change, or reinterpret the original meaning of Hosea. He understands it literally, but the literal Old Testament event becomes a *type* of a New Testament event. The third way is *literal plus application*, as exemplified in Acts 2:16-21 (regarding the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh) which quotes Joel 2:28-32. Acts two does not change or reinterpret Joel two, nor does it deny that Joel two will have a literal fulfillment when the Holy Spirit is poured out on the whole nation of Israel. It is simply applying it to a New Testament event because of one point of similarity (the pouring out of the Spirit). The fourth way is *summation*, as exemplified in Luke 18:31-33. In this passage Jesus says the Messiah will go to Jerusalem, be turned over to the Gentiles, the Gentiles will mock Him, treat Him shamefully, spit on Him, scourge Him, and kill Him, but that He will rise again the third day, that all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man may be accomplished. Not one prophet said all this, but the prophets together did say all this. Hence, this is a summation. While the New Testament does quote the Old Testament in these four ways, it is important to point out again that the New Testament does not ever quote the Old Testament allegorically, unless it also states explicitly that it is doing so (as Paul does in the story of Sarah and Hagar in Galatians chapter 4).

In regard to the eclectic composition of the synoptic gospels, we suggest that recognition of this eclectic composition of the gospels is essential in order to reconcile apparent contradictions (such as reconciling being saved by grace alone with not being forgiven unless we forgive others, or reconciling Jesus' saying that all who take up the sword will perish by the sword with His saying later that whoever does not have a sword should buy one) and to understand present-day impracticalities according to their proper contexts (such as the impracticality in this dispensation of always turning the other cheek or always giving to them who ask from us). Also the

Sermon on the Mount, when read carefully, seems to be more legalistic than even the Mosaic Law, differing greatly from the grace teachings of the New Testament. We suggest that the best solution to these apparent contradictions and/or impracticalities in Scripture is the recognition that within the synoptic gospels is an intersection of three separate and distinct dispensations: Law, Grace and Kingdom. First, Jesus was a Jew, born under the Law (Gal. 4:4), and He preached and taught a Jewish audience who were also under the Mosaic Law covenant. Second, He announced an eschatological Kingdom that was to come in the (potentially near) future (Matt. 6:20). Third, after His official rejection by the Jewish leaders in Matthew chapter 12, He foretold, for the first time in the history of the world, a new entity and a new age, the age of the church or of Grace (Matt. 16:18). So, within the synoptic Gospels, and even within just the one book of Matthew itself, we have the confluence of three different dispensations. Therefore, in order to avoid *actual* contradictions in Jesus' *apparently* contradictory statements, we must be careful to first ascertain to which dispensation, and to which people group, each of these statements or commands belongs. The reconciliation comes in the recognition that while all Scripture is written *for* us, not all Scripture is written *to* us. The Sermon on the Mount, for example, was spoken by Jesus, not to the church, which was not yet in existence, but rather to first-century Jews who were on the threshold of the restored Davidic Kingdom, should the required condition of national repentance be met.

In regard to some basic but important characteristics of prophetic Scripture:

It should be understood that prophecy often does not contain a precise chronology. Time is generally compressed in Old Testament prophecy. For instance, prophecies concerning Messiah's career sometimes span two thousand years or more, and contain references both to events that took place at Jesus' First Advent and events that will take place at His Second Advent, without ever intimating that there will be such a span of time between these events. There are several purposes for this time compression, including to give us assurance of the eventual fulfillment of the distant aspects of these near-and-distant prophecies, to insure the literalness of the fulfillment of the distant aspects of the prophecies, to preserve moral freedom and to allow for the rejection and postponement of the Kingdom. It will be observed that even Jesus' prophecies did not contain a precise chronology.

It should also be observed that future events are sometimes spoken of in past or present tense, for emphasis.

Also, since God is both the originator and the fulfiller of Bible prophecy, prophecy will be fulfilled whether believed by us (or by anyone) or not.

Concerning rules for the interpretation of Scripture:

When reading and interpreting the Bible, many Bible interpreters feel compelled to reject the plain sense of the written text in favor of a more allegorical or “spiritual” sense. Because this spiritualizing of Scripture is so common, we need to discuss it, and demonstrate that this “spiritualizing” of the text is almost never warranted. Instead, we suggest strongly that the same basic rules of grammar that we use for interpreting every-day language also apply to Scripture interpretation, and that, generally speaking, the further we stray from these basic rules, the further we stray from the true, intended meaning of Scripture.

We suggest the following basic rules of Scripture interpretation: We should interpret Scripture using the normal rules of language, we should allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, simple problems should be solved before complicated ones, clear passages should interpret obscure ones, doctrine should not be derived from types or parables, we must not interpret Scripture to fit current events; rather, vice versa, and we must not go beyond what is written. We suggest that the truly spiritual interpreters are those who neither add to nor subtract from Scripture.

In order for our interpretation to be correct, it must be systematic, objective, exhaustive, contextual and cultural. And again, the vast majority of the time, it must be literal. For the most part, Scripture should be interpreted in its most plain, simple and obvious sense. As much as any other kind of Scripture, prophecy should be interpreted literally. Nowhere do we find in Scripture that God ever suggested that prophecy should be interpreted less literally than any other kind of Scripture. Unwarranted spiritualization of Scripture, including prophetic Scripture, is not “progress;” it’s counterproductive. Our interpretation must be consistent. Finally, if we consistently follow these rules, the result will be harmonious. In theological terms, this “plain sense” way of interpreting the Bible is called the *grammatical-historical* hermeneutical method.

We offer the following one hundred reasons why the grammatical-historical hermeneutic is the correct hermeneutic, or to say it another way, we offer the following one hundred reasons why the Bible means what it plainly says:

The grammatical-historical hermeneutic (G-HH) is factual, grounding interpretation in fact.

The G-HH is biblical, unlike spiritualization. The G-HH fits biblical history. Is it not true that all biblical history was intended by God to be un-

derstood literally? If so, then why not biblical prophecy, which is only history told in advance?

The G-HH fits fulfilled prophecy. Israel's first three dispersions and first two regatherings were literal. With these five precedents, wouldn't we normally expect Israel's third regathering to be literal, as well?

The G-HH fits the prophecies concerning Jesus' First Advent, the fulfillments of which are all readily available for our inspection, enabling us to determine whether they were fulfilled literally or in some other way. Jesus was born of a virgin, He was born in Bethlehem, He was heralded by a messenger, He was rested upon by the Holy Spirit, He performed miracles, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, He was hated without a cause, He was rejected by the Jews (particularly the Jewish leaders), He was betrayed by a friend, He was sold for thirty pieces of silver, He was silent before His accusers, the shepherd was struck and the sheep were scattered, He was mocked, and He died a humiliating death. Prophecies concerning the details of His death from Psalm 22 were fulfilled literally. At Jesus' crucifixion, He was numbered with transgressors, and was given gall and vinegar to drink. He was buried in a rich man's tomb. He was resurrected. He ascended. And finally, He sat at God's right hand. From these examples it is evident that Christ's first-advent prophecies were all fulfilled literally. If that be the case, then logically, how could we expect Christ's Second Advent prophecies to be fulfilled any other way than literally?

Next, the G-HH is historical. It was the only interpretive method accepted by the church during the first three centuries of her history, it was championed by the reformers, and it interprets history correctly.

The G-HH is acknowledged by orthodoxy. It is accepted by all orthodox Christians on all foundational doctrines other than eschatology. The G-HH is even used (inconsistently) by anti-millenarians.

The G-HH is self-affirming. It is self-evident; it is self-evident to everyone. It is the only method that results in only one possible interpretation. It is the only method not subject to "interpretation." It is self-interpreting, and it allows Scripture to interpret itself. It is self-affirming. It is the only method that is not self-defeating.

The G-HH is natural. It is simple. It allows God to speak to us as plainly and clearly as possible. The G-HH allows Scripture to speak for itself. It allows Scripture to speak in simplicity, and it allows Scripture to be true as written. It doesn't rely on any extra-biblical presumptions. It eliminates the necessity of grafting another (non-literal) sense onto Scripture. It eliminates the necessity of choosing between multiple possible interpretations. However, it is just this simplicity that often makes it difficult to accept.

The G-HH is efficient. It eliminates the need for wasting time and effort on interpretive dead ends. It is also natural. The G-HH is comprehensible. It conforms to the normal laws of language. It allows Scripture to be interpreted with the same hermeneutic used for non-Scripture.

The G-HH is consistent. It allows all doctrine to use the same hermeneutic. It allows all dispensations to use the same hermeneutic.

The G-HH is comprehensive. It is applicable to all of Scripture, allowing for non-literal renderings as required.

The G-HH is universal. The G-HH is understood by everyone, and it makes the Bible understandable to everyone.

The G-HH is Scripture-honoring. It demands strict adherence to Scripture. It allows Scripture to speak for itself. There is only one way for the Bible to speak for itself, and that's when it's taken literally. It confirms the inspiration of Scripture. It accepts Scripture as inerrant. It allows Scripture to be authoritative. It allows all Scripture to be meaningful. It allows Scripture to mean what it says. The G-HH is covenant-honoring. As we'll mention again below, it allows all of Israel's covenants and prophecies to have (eventual) fulfillment. The G-HH is prophecy-honoring. It allows us to accept most, if not all, prophecy at face value. And, because of these characteristics, the G-HH promotes certainty.

The G-HH is God-honoring. It allows God to say what He meant to whom He said it. It allows God to be ethical in His manner of speech. It allows God, not man, to be the determiner of the proper interpretive method. It conveys God's ideas, rather than man's. It allows us to believe that God will fulfill His word as written. It allows God's originally-stated purposes for mankind to be realized. It allows God to accomplish His original purpose in creating man. It allows God's "very good" creation to be restored (we'll explore this idea in our section *A Kingdom Needed* below). It enables God-honoring faith, faith that is based on His revelation to us. And, it vindicates God.

The G-HH is God's people-honoring. It is Israel-honoring; it allows all of Israel's covenants and prophecies to have (eventual) fulfillment. It is Hebrew prophet-honoring. It allows the (inspired) prophets to not be mistaken in their predictions. And the G-HH is apostle-honoring. It allows the apostles to have not been mistaken regarding their Messianic Kingdom hopes.

The G-HH is man-deprecating. It makes God, not man, responsible for determining truth. It makes man, not God, responsible for man's unbelief. It is this writer's opinion that the problem is not that the Bible is unintelligible, but rather that so few people are able (i.e. willing) to receive it. The

G-HH rebukes man's boasting about his impressive knowledge and interpretive skills. It has no need for man to add to the Scripture. It has no need for man to "improve" the Scripture. It has no need for man to interpret the Scripture. It has no respect for man's piety. It exposes prejudice. It makes allegorization unnecessary. It keeps man's imagination in check. It makes philosophy unnecessary. And, it frees us from slavery to allegorical interpreters.

The G-HH is edifying. It is convicting. It is salvific. When the gospel (of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, 1 Cor. 15:1-4) is interpreted literally and believed, salvation results (Eph. 1:13). It brought this writer out of a pseudo-Christian cult (Jehovah's Witnesses) and into saving faith in Christ. It is marvelous. It is an amazing thing to this writer that all his theological studies have led him to nothing other than an ever-deepening satisfaction with the plain sense of Scripture. It is satisfying. It is an ongoing fact that the more fully this writer understands Scripture, the less he finds that he wants to change any of it. It is spiritual. It is this writer's conclusion that the plain sense of Scripture is the ideal vehicle for conveying spiritual truth, and that unwarranted spiritualizing of Scripture is in fact not spiritual at all. It is practical. It makes Old Testament prophecy's and the Revelation's details useful (i.e. for the Tribulation saints in particular). It is likely that the New Testament, particularly Matthew chapters 24 and 25 and the book of Revelation, will be instrumental in opening Jewish peoples' eyes to Jesus' identity during the Tribulation, as Israel witnesses end-times prophecy being fulfilled in extraordinary precision and detail. During the Tribulation, Matthew 24 and 25 and Revelation will come alive!

The G-HH is unifying. It unifies the Kingdom. It also unifies believers.

The G-HH is protective. It safeguards all doctrine. It protects us from Gnosticism. It protects us from delusion, fanciful thinking, liberalism and apostasy. And, it protects us from cults. Cults often know what the Bible says, but they've developed their own creative lines of reasoning as to why it supposedly doesn't *mean* what it *says*. Cults claim that they "know better" than to believe all of the Bible as written; the G-HH demonstrates that theirs is a lethal mistake.

And finally, the G-HH is sufficient. It needs no other, added sense. If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense!

In summary, the grammatical-historical hermeneutic is indeed factual, biblical, in harmony with fulfilled prophecy, historical, acknowledged by orthodoxy, self-affirming, natural, comprehensive, universal, scripture-honoring, God-honoring, God's people-honoring, man-deprecating, edifying, unifying, protective and sufficient. Make no mistake: *Scripture means what*

it says! Israel always means Israel, never the church, and never the Jehovah's Witness organization. If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense. In this way, God is sure to receive the glory, not man. It is His word, inspired and written in such a way that anyone with an open mind and heart can receive and understand it. Regardless of what church magistrates and cultic organizations would tell us, we don't need their "*has God really said*" (Gen. 3:1)? help to "understand" what God has caused to be plainly written. Though sinful man would twist, allegorize and spiritualize away the obvious meaning of Scripture, the Holy Spirit would have us "believe everything that is written" (Acts 24:14), to self-aggrandizing and manipulative man's rebuke, but to our salvation and entrance into the Kingdom, and to God's eternal glory.

Five Facets of the Kingdom

Who, what, why, when and where is the Kingdom of God? Who, what, why, when and where was the Kingdom of God back in ancient times, and who, what, why, when and where is it today? Who, what, why, when and where will it be in the future? Are there multiple Kingdoms of God, or just one? How are we to reconcile passages of Scripture regarding the Kingdom that seem to be contradictory, i.e., how can the Kingdom be both temporal and eternal, both physical and spiritual? In this section, we'll answer these questions by suggesting that while there is only one Kingdom, this one Kingdom has multiple *facets*.

The Kingdom of God is the reign or rule of God. The Kingdom of God in the Bible deals with the rule of God in this world; not in other worlds. The Kingdom of God has both spiritual and physical aspects.

Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum sees the Kingdom of God has having five primary *facets*. "In total, there are five facets. Four of these facets were already known in the Old Testament; the fifth facet is the mystery that is only now revealed in the New Testament" (*FM*, p. 662). These five facets: the Universal Kingdom, the Spiritual Kingdom, the theocratic kingdom, the Millennial Kingdom and the "Mystery" Kingdom, are the subjects of this section.

The first of the five facets of the Kingdom of God is the Universal or Eternal Kingdom. The Universal or Eternal Kingdom can be defined as the universal sovereignty of God. This universal sovereignty applies not only to that of God the Father, but to that of God the Son, as well. God is sovereign over everything, for all time. God is sovereign over nature. His sovereignty affects all people. He is sovereign over nations. He is sovereign over governments. And, He is sovereign over the church.

The second facet of the Kingdom of God is the Spiritual Kingdom. The Spiritual Kingdom can be defined as all the saved people of all dispensations. Time-wise, the Spiritual Kingdom covers all dispensations, including this present dispensation. The Spiritual Kingdom involves individual believers, rather than nations. The Spiritual Kingdom was the focus of Jesus' ministry, and is also the focus of the church's ministry.

The third facet of the Kingdom of God is the Theocratic or Mediatorial/Monarchial Kingdom. The word "theocratic" means "God ruling over men." The Theocratic or Mediatorial/Monarchial Kingdom is the facet of the Kingdom of God that relates to God's ruling over, in and through the nation Israel; it is the theocratic kingdom of Israel. The Theocratic Kingdom is mediatorial because in it God rules men through a mediator. The Theocratic Kingdom is a God-ordained union of church and state. The Theocratic Kingdom will be restored in the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom. The Theocratic Kingdom will be covered in detail in our section *The Theocratic Kingdom* below.

The fourth facet of the Kingdom of God is the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom. The Messianic or Millennial Kingdom is a future, literal, global government administered by Christ from David's throne in Jerusalem. The Millennial Kingdom is not an obscure subject in the Bible; it is a major component in the overall Kingdom program. It is a re-establishment of the Theocratic Kingdom. It is a literal kingdom. It supersedes all other earthly empires. It is future. It is visible and tangible. It is on Earth. It is Jewish, monarchial and theocratic. It is political. It is a union of legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. It is a union of church and state. It is the central theme of the Bible. It is not carnal, and it is not demeaning to Christ. We'll have more to say about the Millennial Kingdom in our section *The Millennial Kingdom* below.

The fifth and final facet of the Kingdom of God is the Mystery Kingdom. The Mystery Kingdom is the present "mystery" form of the Kingdom, commonly known as "Christendom." The Mystery Kingdom includes all the hidden aspects of this present Church Age, an age that was itself entirely hidden from the purview of the Old Testament saints and prophets. The Mystery Kingdom includes both believers and unbelievers. The Mystery Kingdom affirms that the Kingdom of God includes the rule of God in the heart of the believer. The Mystery Kingdom is still a mystery to many people, both to people who are passive or neutral toward the church and the gospel, and also to those who actively oppose the church and the gospel, such as Jehovah's Witnesses. We'll have more to say about the Mystery Kingdom in our section *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)* below.

So, with a modest amount of effort, we're able to discern five distinct facets of God's overall Kingdom program. While these five facets each have as their basic purpose the accomplishing of the will of God, if we are to understand the Bible correctly, it is essential that we keep these five facets clearly delineated in our minds, lest we mistakenly apply Scripture passages and/or theological concepts to one facet, when they actually belong to another. In this way, we will be greatly aided in "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15, NKJV).

Now while these five facets of the Kingdom are each unique and distinct, we should point out too that they do all work in concert to accomplish the one singular overarching purpose of the Kingdom of God, which is to glorify God. The Universal Kingdom glorifies God everywhere, at all times; the Spiritual Kingdom glorifies God through the salvation of men throughout all human history; the Theocratic Kingdom glorified Jehovah on earth through the nation Israel; the Millennial Kingdom, which is to be a restoration of the Theocratic Kingdom, will glorify God on earth for a thousand years via perfect human government and an ideal environment; and finally, the Mystery Kingdom glorifies God now through the salvation of men, and will glorify Him forever by exhibiting the surpassing riches of His grace toward the church in the ages to come (Eph. 2:7).

Summary of Section 2: The Biblical Kingdom

God and Creation

Before the world was, *God* was.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). In these first words of inspired Scripture the eternal God is differentiated from His temporal creation, and God is stated to be the creative cause of everything that has come into existence. In contrast with their eternal Creator, the present "heaven and earth" had a beginning, and they will also have an end (Matt. 24:35).

Because God is invisible to us, whatever we can know about Him must come from either general (i.e. nature) or special (i.e. the Bible) revelation from Him. Thankfully, He has chosen to reveal to us specific information about Himself via inspired Scripture. By examining His written revelation, then, we are able to learn much about Him, including His nature and His attributes.

Regarding God's nature, the Bible presents us with *three eternal Persons*: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Individually, Scripture teaches that each of these three is eternal. Jesus said the Father was "before the world was." Likewise, the Son was also in existence before anything that

came into existence came into existence. (We'll have more to say about the Son's eternality and deity in our section *The King of the Kingdom* below.) According to inspired Scripture, the Holy Spirit is a Person and is also eternal. Now, we also know from Scripture that there is only one God, not three. Scripture therefore presents us with *one God* existing eternally in *three eternal Persons*: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We suggest that this is why Jesus commanded Christians to baptize in the name (singular) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Regarding God's attributes, according to the Bible, God was, is and forever will be holy, righteous, loving, just, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, eternal and immutable.

Knowing God's nature and attributes helps us understand what motivated Him to create *anything*, and more specifically, what motivated Him to create *this* particular world.

Why create *anything*? Is it not true that a holy and loving God, subsisting in three perfect Persons, must have been self-satisfied from all eternity? Yes, this is true. However, because true love is *giving* love (Acts 20:35), it seems reasonable that a loving God might desire to give to someone or something beyond Himself, if that be possible. But in order to do that, He would have to first create that someone or something else. Then He would be able to give to that someone or something many good things: life, love, joy, goodness, peace, etc.

Because Christians were chosen before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), it is evident that before God actually *created* anything, He must have first *envisioned* what He was going to create. It is evident now that His vision included both animate and inanimate things: angels, the cosmos, and man, at least. And if the animate things (angels and man) were to love God in return for His love, they must be given the capability for doing so via free will, true love requiring the ability to freely choose whether to love or not to love.

Since saved persons' names have been "**written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb**" (Rev. 13:8, 17:8), before anything had even been created, we know that this vision included the salvation of men, which necessitates there being something to be saved from, namely sin and death. So, God's vision must have included sin and death, and sin's accompanying judgments and punishments.

As sin and death were envisioned by God before the foundation of the world, so must He have envisioned His ways of dealing with them. Therefore, it is not surprising that God's Kingdom program, through which He would deal with the issues of sin, death, redemption, judgment and pun-

ishment, was also envisioned before anything was actually created. “Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit **the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**”” (Matt. 25:34). This would be the same Kingdom program that would in due time sum up all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth (Eph. 1:9–10). God’s envisioned Kingdom program also included the saved persons of this (church) age (Eph. 1:4; 3:1–11, 2 Tim. 1:8–9).

Now, the question arises, if God had the ability to create any kind of world that He desired, why then did He create *this* world? Why create this world, which is now suffering under the burdens of sin, death and deterioration, when He could have created one that would have remained entirely devoid of these things?

Again, if God had desired to have creatures who were genuinely capable of loving Him (and therefore also capable of *not* loving Him), then He would have had to have created them with free will. And, it may well be that it would have been impossible for God to have created truly free creatures without some of them choosing to rebel. If that be the case, then the rebels may simply be an unavoidable byproduct of free will. In that case, God obviously foresaw that some of His creatures would rebel, and chose to create free creatures anyway, because the net result would still be better than had He chosen not to create free creatures at all.

Also, we know the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). But how could God demonstrate patience without first having wayward creatures with whom He could be patient? Or, in a world without sin, how could God demonstrate grace, mercy, forgiveness, wrath, or justice? May it not be the case that God desires to exercise and demonstrate *all* these attributes, including those that can only be exercised and demonstrated in a world that contains sin? If that be the case, then our world just might be the ideal world, at least for that purpose. Opportunities for God to be glorified for His patience, grace, mercy, forgiveness, wrath and justice would have been missed had our world never fallen into sin. We’ll have more to say on this subject in our discussion of why evil is allowed by God in the section *The Fall* below.

God’s creation includes the cosmos (the heavens and the earth), angels and man.

After creating all things, God pronounced His entire creation *good*.

As part of the creation program, a well-defined dominion was given to man. This dominion was in fact a theocratic Kingdom over all God’s earthly

creation. This Kingdom was God's original purpose for mankind, a purpose that has never been rescinded. This Kingdom extended also over the race of men. This concept is known in theological circles as federal or Adamic headship. That Adam's headship had profound implications for all of future mankind, whether for good or for bad, is made evident in several New Testament passages, such as Rom. 5:12–21, 1 Cor. 15:21–22, 1 Cor. 15:45–49 and Heb. 2:5–9.

God's Kingdom covenant or contract with man in the garden of Eden can be appropriately called *the Edenic Covenant* (Gen. 1:28-30, Gen. 2:15-17). This is the first of eight covenants that God has made with mankind throughout history.

The Fall

As we outlined in the previous section, man was given, via the Edenic Covenant, a Kingdom over all the earth and over all its creatures. However, sin soon entered the world, and the Edenic Covenant was broken.

Before continuing our biblical narrative, we'll take a short detour to explore some foundational ideas related to evil and sin.

First, we'll define and describe evil, and its manifestation, sin.

Evil is the corruption of good. It is a parasite, and has no substance in itself. Without a good host, it cannot exist. Sin is lawlessness, unbelief and pride. Sin is rebellion against and independence from God. Sin is self-centered, and it is self-willed. Sin is irrational, and it is always destructive. Sin is not personally satisfying. And, sin is total, being a total departure from God.

Next, it is important to recognize that evil is not *caused* by God.

And finally, why is evil *allowed* by God? We can't completely fathom all the reasons why God allows evil, but we do have hints. We suggest that evil is allowed by God in order to produce the best possible world. Specifically, evil is allowed by God in order to allow truly free will, to manifest divine grace, to enable creation of the church, to demonstrate that sin doesn't work, to prove that man without God is always a failure, to demonstrate God's hatred of sin, and to enable God to defeat sin.

Who or what is Satan? Is he a real person, or merely a personification of evil? What is his origin, and how did he fall? What is his nature, his attitude, his purpose and his works?

The Bible has much to say about Satan. He is a real person; not just a personification of evil. As was Adam, Satan was created perfect; sin was only "found in" him later. Many scholars believe Ezekiel chapter 28 is referring to Satan when it says, "Thou wast **the anointed cherub** that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God;

thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee**" (Ezek. 28:14-15).

Satan's fall was evidently the result of personal pride (Isa. 14:12-14).

Regarding Satan's nature, he is proud, he is a liar, he is vicious, he is wholly evil, but he is finite and limited in power.

Regarding Satan's attitude, he is arrogant. He is also likely jealous.

Regarding Satan's purpose, his goal is to be like God. He also aims to mar the lives and service of God's people.

Regarding Satan's works, he rules the world. He blinds the minds of the unbelieving. He had the keys of death until the resurrection of Christ.

Satan is not the only angel who fell; there were others who joined him in his enterprise, likely a third of the angels.

What is meant by "the fall of man," and what were its effects?

It is a sad fact of history that our first parents Adam and Eve disobeyed the Edenic Covenant's one prohibitive command, thereby plunging themselves and their progeny into sin and death (Gen. 3:1-24).

It is difficult to overestimate the gravity of man's fall. Man was tested, he was tempted and failed to resist the temptation, so he became a fallen creature. The magnitude of the evil of the first sins was immense. The entire human race was affected.

The results of man's fall are deep and wide. They include:

The Edenic Covenant was broken and came to an end.

We died. The fact that we, the human race, died through Adam's transgression is clear from Scripture. We died spiritually, we died physically, and we died (potentially) eternally.

We became totally depraved.

We became blind, lost and unable to seek God.

We became alienated from God. God became our enemy. We became enemies of God. We became condemned by God.

We lost our stature and inheritance. We lost our stature as the representatives of God on earth. We lost our inheritance of tenant possession of the earth to Satan. We'll have more to say on this in our sections *A Kingdom is Needed* and *The Great Tribulation* below.

The earth was cursed.

Fulfillment of God's ultimate purposes for the race was delayed, at least from man's perspective.

A Kingdom Needed

In light of the things we discussed in the previous section, it should be evident that if humanity is ever to recover from the consequences of the fall,

it is going to take a major and multi-faceted operation. A comprehensive Kingdom program is needed.

The fall resulted in dire and far-reaching consequences, consequences involving such diverse and intractable things as sin and death, Satan, nature, and government of the world. If God's Kingdom is to comprehensively and effectively deal with all the problems existing in all these areas, it is obviously going to have to be a Kingdom whose goals and abilities are far beyond those of mortal men. It is this writer's conviction that we are, both as individuals and as a race, doomed to failure, as Scripture plainly states (John 6:53, Matt. 24:22), without God's direct and supernatural intervention. For us to ignore and/or reject God's graciously revealed Plan, therefore, in favor of our own grossly inadequate personal, societal and global schemes, would reveal our blindness and foolishness in these matters. Genuine regeneration of ourselves and society is beyond our abilities; a Kingdom is needed to do what only God can do.

The more we correctly identify and understand the purposes of the biblical Kingdom of God, the more apparent it becomes that this Kingdom must of necessity be God's undertaking, not man's. This will be seen as we outline in this section the major objectives of the Kingdom of God as they relate to sin, Satan, individuals, mankind as a group, creation, all created beings, and even God Himself.

In relation to sin, God's Kingdom is needed to execute justice, defeat evil and right all wrongs.

In relation to Satan, God's Kingdom is needed to defeat Satan and to destroy his works.

In relation to individuals, the Kingdom is needed to reconcile men to God, save them from sin and death, and meet the deepest desires of their hearts.

In relation to mankind, the Kingdom is needed to judge, redeem, save (rather than abandon), repair, restore, govern and bless mankind, in short, to accomplish God's original purpose in creating man.

In relation to creation, the Kingdom is needed to restore creation. The Kingdom is needed to restore harmony between God and creation. It is needed to restore God's blessing on creation, this blessing entailing the removal of the curse. The Kingdom is needed to restore the earth and nature. The Kingdom is needed to restore all that Adam forfeited. The Kingdom is needed to make the world worth having been created.

In relation to all created beings, the Kingdom is needed to demonstrate to everyone that sin is always wrong, that man, apart from God, even in a

perfect environment is a failure, that God is always right, and that God is the rightful ruler of the world.

In relation to God, the Kingdom will serve to glorify God.

Conscience, Government and Promise

In the section *God and Creation* above, we pointed out that the very first age or dispensation in mankind's history, the age of Innocence, began with a covenant or agreement between God and man, the Edenic Covenant. In this section we'll see that the next three clearly delineated ages or dispensations in human history, the ages of Conscience, [the institution of human] Government, and Promise were also introduced with dispensation-delineating covenants between God and men: the Adamic, Noahic and Abrahamic Covenants, respectively.

Upon Adam's breaking the Edenic Covenant, God inaugurated a new era in human history, the age of Conscience, via the Adamic Covenant.

The Adamic Covenant (Gen. 3:14-19) is the second of the eight covenants that God made with mankind. It articulated God's immediate curses on Satan, man and the earth, but also promised eventual deliverance from these curses via "the seed of the woman" (vs. 15).

Regarding the Adamic Covenant's provisions concerning *Satan*, there would be hatred between Satan and the woman culminating in the hatred between Satan's seed (Antichrist) and the woman's seed (Christ), the serpent would bruise the woman's seed's heel, and the woman's seed would crush Satan's head.

Regarding the Adamic Covenant's provisions concerning *man*, Adam's sin affected the entire human race, the earth was cursed, human diet was to remain vegetarian, work was to be toilsome, and man would die physically.

So, in Genesis 3:15, the very first prophecy in the Bible, the future Mediatorial Kingdom is promised. In the meantime, two kingdoms would now develop side by side on earth: the [Spiritual] Kingdom of God and the rebel kingdom of Satan.

Mankind's history from Eden to the Flood included Jehovah's making garments of skins for Adam and Eve, mankind's expulsion from the garden, increase of wickedness to the point that all of man's thoughts were only evil continually, and the earth becoming filled with violence.

After the age of Conscience was brought to an end by the Flood, God authorized, via the Noahic Covenant (Gen. 9:1-17), the State to punish sin, thereby inaugurating the age of human Government.

At Babel God confused the languages of the people, thereby scattering them throughout the earth.

After the nations were scattered at Babel, God chose one man named Abram, from the land of Ur, and made a covenant with him for the blessing of all mankind. This covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, ushered in the age of Promise or Patriarchs. It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Abrahamic Covenant in the outworking of God's Kingdom program.

The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-18) is the fourth of the eight covenants that God made with mankind, and is the first of five covenants that He made with Israel. It is a foundational covenant in God's Kingdom program.

The Abrahamic Covenant was first made with Abraham, then confirmed with Abraham's son Isaac, then with Isaac's son Jacob (Israel). The Abrahamic Covenant was promised to have fulfillment in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob *personally*, not just in their descendants.

The Abrahamic Covenant promised to Abraham and to his descendants the land of Palestine forever, national identity, blessing, a great name and potential blessing and cursing on other peoples (depending on whether they blessed or cursed Abraham).

The Abrahamic Covenant continued through Isaac, Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel.

The Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed by Moses just prior to Israel's entering the land of Canaan, by Joshua also just prior to Israel's entering the land of Canaan, and by David and Asaph.

The Abrahamic Covenant was developed in the three later unconditional covenants. The land promises were developed in the Palestinian Covenant, the seed promises were developed in the Davidic covenant, and the blessing promises were developed in the New Covenant. We'll have more to say regarding the Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants in the sections *The Theocratic Kingdom* and *Covenants of the Kingdom* below.

The Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed by the Hebrew prophets. It is also confirmed in the New Testament.

The Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional, immutable, irrevocable and eternal.

The Abrahamic Covenant is yet to be fulfilled. It is still in effect, and has not yet been completely fulfilled. It is not to be fulfilled entirely by the Church. It is to be fulfilled literally by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob personally, as well as by Israel nationally. It is to be fulfilled by Christ.

The Abrahamic Covenant is to be received by us by faith, just as it was received by the Patriarchs, the Old Testament saints, the Apostolic Fathers and many others.

In the Bible, the entire history of the world up until Abraham is covered in just eleven chapters, in Genesis chapters one through eleven. Then the pace of the narrative slows dramatically. The story of Abraham alone takes up the next fourteen chapters of Genesis, through chapter twenty-five, then the stories of Isaac and Jacob fill the remaining twenty-five chapters of the book. This God-ordained allocation of textual real estate should give us a hint as to the relative importance of Abraham and his immediate descendants Isaac and Jacob (Israel) to the overall Kingdom program.

Following the frustration of man's first attempt to establish a world state at Babel, and the resultant rise of nationalism through the confusion of language, God turned away from "man" in the collective sense and called out one particular man through whom the divine regal will is to be accomplished on earth.

In Exodus we have the story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, in which it is made evident that Israel as a nation was to play a unique and important role in the outworking of Jehovah's Kingdom program.

The Theocratic Kingdom

Upon the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, Jehovah God established the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the world's first, and one and only theocratic, or God-ruled nation. The legal bases of the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel were the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Palestinian Covenants. Following its establishment at Mt. Sinai, the Kingdom developed via the Israelites' occupation of Palestine and its subsequent theocratic governance by Israel's judges, eventually reaching its heights in the Davidic and Solomonic monarchies.

The Mosaic Covenant was the second covenant that Jehovah made with Israel (the first one being the Abrahamic Covenant). It was made and ratified with the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, immediately after their exodus from Egypt and before their forty-year wilderness wandering.

The primary purposes of the Mosaic Covenant were to sanctify or set Israel apart from all other nations as Jehovah's one and only theocratic nation, and to provide the people of Israel with a rule of life that would be befitting their unique identity.

The Mosaic Covenant is stated in Exodus 20:1-31:18, filling twelve chapters of the Bible. It begins with the Ten Commandments, and consists of a total of six hundred thirteen laws, designed to govern the religious, moral and civil aspects of Jewish life. It also includes seven national feasts or festivals that are described in Leviticus 23:1-44.

The Mosaic Covenant was given to and made with Israel only.

The Mosaic Law was not salvific, but rather was merely a rule of life for the Jewish People, who were already in covenant relationship with God.

The Mosaic Covenant was a conditional covenant.

The Mosaic Covenant was temporary.

The Mosaic Law was fulfilled by Christ, Who was the individual "Israel."

The Mosaic Law was superseded by the Law of Christ.

The Mosaic Covenant did not supersede the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Palestinian Covenant was the third covenant that Jehovah made with Israel (after the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants). It was made by God with the generation of Israelites that were about to enter and possess the Promised Land.

The purpose of the Palestinian Covenant was to answer the question of Israel's ongoing relation to the land promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, in light of the (recently inaugurated) Mosaic Covenant.

The Palestinian Covenant is named as such because the land of Palestine is its major subject.

The Palestinian Covenant is stated in Deuteronomy 30:1-10.

The two main features of the Palestinian Covenant concern Israel's ownership of the land and her world-wide dispersion and regathering.

Regarding Israel's ownership of the land, "And it shall come to pass, **when** all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou** shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and **shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey** his voice... **Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it**; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers" (Deut. 30:1-5).

Regarding Israel's world-wide dispersion and regathering, "And it shall come to pass, **when** all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and **thou** shalt call them to mind **among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah**

thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deut. 30:1-5).

The Palestinian Covenant was given to and was to be fulfilled literally by Israel.

The Palestinian Covenant is unconditional, still in effect, and eternal.

The Theocratic Kingdom of Israel was established for a number of clearly-defined purposes and with a God-ordained structure. It was established miraculously by God, and it passed through several developmental stages before reaching its zenith of glory in the Davidic/Solomonic monarchy.

A theocracy is a nation ruled by God.

The purposes of the Theocratic Kingdom were to commence God’s earthly rule, to reveal God to all of humanity, to judge Israel, to bless all of humanity and to glorify God.

As to its structure, the Theocratic Kingdom had Jehovah as its invisible King, it was a Jewish nation, it was mediated by Moses, it was the Kingdom of God, and it had the civil and priestly functions separated.

The Theocratic Kingdom of Israel was established by God’s choice, miraculously. The miraculous nature of Israel’s establishment can be seen in Israel’s very existence, in Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, and in Israel’s initiation at Sinai. Israel’s miraculous establishment is proof of Israel’s theocratic nature.

The Theocratic Kingdom developed through Moses’ administration and through Israel’s occupation of Palestine, and it continued to develop through the period of the Judges.

The judges were directly chosen by God. They were invested with regal functions and were given a special enduement of the Spirit. The judges possessed no dynastic rights. They were genuine mediators of the divine rule. Conditions under the judges were not ideal.

Development of the theocracy continued through the Davidic Monarchy. This monarchial form of the Kingdom was foreseen in the plan of God. The errancy of Samuel’s sons encouraged the request by the elders of Israel for a king. The main defect with the monarchial idea was that Israel wanted to be “like all the nations.” The period of greatest monarchial glory was under the kingships of David and his son Solomon.

Looking forward now eschatologically, it is important to realize that the ancient Davidic monarchy was not merely typical of the future Millennial Kingdom, but was the actual Theocratic Kingdom itself. It is this very Davidic throne/Davidic Kingdom that is to be restored in the millennium.

The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom

As we noted in the previous section, the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel attained its greatest monarchical glory under the kingships of David and Solomon. But alas, that glory was not to last.

The decline of the Kingdom began with Solomon's personal failures. Soon, under the leadership of Solomon's son Rehoboam, Israel ruptured into two separate kingdoms. The Kingdom's decline fulfilled Samuel's predictions. The desire to be like the surrounding nations was a major cause of the decline. The Hebrew prophets prophesied during the decline (and also, long before its actual occurrence, the theocracy's downfall had been prophesied).

Ultimately, after the theocracy had declined to the point of no return, the Kingdom fell.

Soon after Ezekiel was shown Israel's apostasy in stark detail and the Shekinah glory departing the temple, the Kingdom fell to the Babylonians.

The departing of the Shekinah glory from the temple was a significant event. The Shekinah glory departed slowly, in four stages, as though reluctant to leave. The departure was permanent; the Shekinah glory was not to be restored in the second temple.

Finally, the theocracy was removed.

The causes of the theocracy's fall were the imperfection of its people and the imperfection of its leaders.

Once the theocracy fell, the world no longer had a theocratic nation. Instead, the world, including Israel, would now be dominated by Gentile (non-Jewish) powers, until a future time at which the Kingdom would again be restored to Israel.

The Hebrew prophets and Jesus Himself spoke of a limited period of time during which Israel would not have a king and the world would be ruled by Gentile nations. Jesus spoke of this period as the "times of the Gentiles."

The times of the Gentiles were seen by the prophet Daniel in considerable detail.

As to definition, the times of the Gentiles is a temporary period of time ordained by God during which Jerusalem, Israel and the world are to be dominated not by a theocratic Jewish Kingdom, but rather by a succession of Gentile powers. The Theocratic Kingdom does not exist during these times. The times of the Gentiles is one of two intercalations in the Kingdom program for Israel, the second intercalation being the Church Age.

One purpose of the times of the Gentiles is to demonstrate the nature of rulership by fallen man and the necessity of rulership by God. A second purpose is to prepare Israel for the Kingdom.

The times of the Gentiles encompass a long period of time (over 2600 years and counting as of this writing), during which a number of significant prophesied events are to take place.

The times of the Gentiles began in 587-586 B.C. with Jerusalem's seventy-year Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah's seventy years).

In Daniel chapters two and seven, the succession of Gentile world powers is portrayed as four sections of a great statue (as seen by man) and as four wild beasts (as seen by God) respectively. These four Gentile powers were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, with a revived Rome prophesied for the very end of the times of the Gentiles.

When Jeremiah's seventy years were almost completed, thinking that the Kingdom would soon be restored to Israel, Daniel prayed for understanding regarding the restoration of the theocracy. The answer to Daniel's prayer came in the form of an explanation from the angel Gabriel to the effect that although Jeremiah's seventy years were about to expire, the Kingdom would not be restored to Israel for another seventy *sevens* of years, or four hundred ninety years.

The seventy weeks (Dan. 9:24-27) were decreed upon the Jews and upon Jerusalem.

The seventy weeks were decreed to complete six things: 1. to finish transgression, 2. to make an end of sins, 3. to make reconciliation for iniquity, 4. to bring in everlasting righteousness, 5. to seal up vision and prophecy, and 6. to anoint the most holy" (Dan. 9:24).

These seventy weeks are weeks of years, not weeks of days.

These seventy weeks began with the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem in 444 or 445 B.C.

Daniel's seventy weeks are divided up into four sections: Seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, "after" the sixty-two weeks, then the final seventieth week.

The first seven weeks, or forty-nine years, were for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

The next sixty-two weeks, or sixty-nine weeks (four hundred eighty-three years) total, end with the arrival of Messiah the prince, fulfilled at Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

After the sixty-two weeks, which is after the (total) sixty-nine weeks, Messiah was to be cut off, and the city and temple destroyed. This cutting-off of Messiah and destruction of the city were to occur *after* the sixty-ninth week, but *before* the seventieth week.

We know that the seventieth week did not immediately follow the sixty-ninth week because the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. occurred at a time beyond such a contiguous seventieth week.

Although we can readily identify in history the event prophesied to occur at the end of the sixty-ninth week (arrival of Messiah), and the two events prophesied to occur after the sixty-ninth week (Messiah cut off and the city and temple destroyed), we cannot identify in history any of the events prophesied for the seventieth week. This strongly suggests that there must be an unspecified gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks.

It is not uncommon for time gaps to occur in Bible prophecy.

The time gap has enabled the creation and building of the church.

The time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks was likely not disclosed clearly for the sakes of enabling human freedom regarding the Jews' acceptance or rejection of Jesus as Messiah at His First Advent, and not unnecessarily depressing the Jewish eschatological hopes.

In theory, had the first-century Jews accepted Jesus as Messiah, Daniel's sixty-ninth week could have been followed immediately by the seventieth week.

Even with the time gap, God can still deal with Israel in some ways during this period.

Daniel's seventieth week is packed with prophetic significance. Especially is this seen when it is recognized that most of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Revelation chapters six through nineteen fit within the week.

We'll deal at length with the contents of Daniel's "seventieth week" prophecy in the section *The Great Tribulation* below. Here, in this section, we will be covering only a few basic points, concerning the the timing of the seventieth week and identification of its two main characters. This will help prepare us for our more detailed summary later.

First, regarding the timing of the fulfillment of Daniel's seventieth week, this writer is convinced that there is an irrefutable line of argument that proves that Daniel's seventieth week has not been fulfilled in the past, and that it therefore must necessarily find fulfillment in the future. This line of argument is as follows: 1. Daniel placed the abomination of desolation in the middle of his seventieth week (Dan. 9:27). 2. Jesus placed the abomination of desolation in the future (admittedly, the future from standpoint of the time at which He gave the prophecy), *at the time of the Great Tribulation* (Matt. 24:15-21). 3. In the same passage, Jesus said that *immediately after the tribulation of those days*, the Son of Man would come on

the clouds of the sky with power and great glory (Matt. 24:29-30). Now, 4. The Son of Man has not yet come on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. Therefore, 5. The Great Tribulation, which *immediately precedes the Son of Man's coming* in glory has not happened yet and, therefore, 6. The abomination of desolation, which *immediately precedes the Great Tribulation* ("the abomination of desolation... *then* there will be a Great Tribulation,' Matt. 24:15-21), has not happened yet. Therefore, 7. Daniel's seventieth week, which features the abomination of desolation at its midpoint, has not happened yet. This line of argument also proves that 8. Since all commentators concede that Daniel's sixty-ninth week was fulfilled at Jesus' First Advent, there must therefore be a (almost two thousand-year-long now) time gap between Daniel's sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks.

Next, we identify the "prince that shall come" (Dan. 9:26) as the Antichrist, not the Christ.

And finally, we emphasize that the "covenant with many" (Dan. 9:27) is a covenant, not with the church, but with Israel. As Paul clearly taught, the church is a "mystery" not seen at all in the Old Testament (Eph. 3). We'll examine this "mystery" characteristic of the church in detail in the section *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)* below.

The end of the times of the Gentiles was foretold by Jesus. In fact, in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew chapter twenty-four, Jesus gave a detailed composite sign that would be identifiable in world events at the time the times of the Gentiles were about to expire. We'll have more to say on this composite sign of the end of the times of the Gentiles in the section *The Great Tribulation* below.

Finally, the times of the Gentiles will be terminated by Christ's Second Advent.

The duration of the times of the Gentiles is unknown, because the duration of the intercalary Church Age is unknown. We can say in summary, though, that the times of the Gentiles span from the beginning of Jerusalem's Babylonian captivity in 586 or 587 B.C. to the time of Christ's future (as of this writing) return. This time period encompasses Jeremiah's seventy years of captivity, the period from the end of the captivity to the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 B.C., Daniel's first sixty-nine weeks which ended with Jesus' presentation of Himself to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the entire Church Age which ends with the Rapture of the church, the time gap, if there is one, between the Rapture of the church and the beginning of Daniel's seventieth week, and Daniel's seventieth week itself. This will be, at least, a *finite* period of time.

Now, because of the unknown length of the Church Age, we can be sure that anyone who claims to have calculated the exact duration of the times of the Gentiles (as Jehovah's Witnesses claim to have done through their convoluted, grossly assumptive interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's "seven times" of Daniel chapter four) are badly mistaken. The end of the times of the Gentiles is yet future, and will be evident to all when it transpires, at the unmistakable, visible return of Israel's Messiah (Rev. 1:7). At that blessed time, Jerusalem's trampling by the Gentiles will end (Luke 21:24) and God's restored Davidic, Theocratic Kingdom of Israel will "come" (Matt. 6:10).

Even during the times of the Gentiles, wherein the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel lies dormant, Israel is to be preserved as a people.

Even with the theocracy's fall, its restoration is promised. The same theocratic, Davidic kingdom that was overthrown will be restored. The Shekinah Glory will return to the temple. The Jews will be perfected, and they will have a perfect King. The theocracy will be supernaturally restored. The theocracy will be restored only in Israel; not in any other group. Jehovah's theocratic earthly government has always been and always will be through the nation Israel. All other would-be usurpers of the Kingdom are doomed to failure, whether they be the church, Jehovah's Witnesses or anyone else. The theocracy will be restored in God's due time. Misunderstanding the timing of the Kingdom's reestablishment has led to bad theology, with tragic consequences, both in the church and in groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. The church has had its crusades and its dominion theology; Jehovah's Witnesses have only 144,000 "spiritual Israelites" going to heaven, a "great crowd" of unregenerated souls clinging to an unbiblical (for this Church Age) "earthly hope," and severe shunning and ostracism of those few who do manage to find their way out of the Watchtower maze into "the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13). All of these tragedies could have been entirely avoided through a correct understanding of the time and nature of the restoration of the Kingdom.

We'll discuss the details of the restoration of the Kingdom in the sections *The Second Coming of the King*, *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom* below.

Covenants of the Kingdom

Essential to our understanding of God's Kingdom program is our understanding of the eight covenants that God has made with mankind. These eight covenants form the legal and prophetic foundations of the biblical Kingdom of God.

The covenants serve to determine the fundamental form and responsibility of life in each dispensation, and also form the foundation of all prophecy, helping us to correctly interpret and understand prophecy.

At least three characteristics are common to all eight of the biblical covenants. First, the covenants are presented and worded such that they are easily understood. Second, the covenants are to be understood literally. Third, the covenants always have an earthly focus.

However, there is one characteristic that is not the same for every covenant, namely, the characteristic of *conditionality*. Each covenant is either *conditional* or *unconditional*, and it is essential that we determine whether each covenant is conditional or unconditional, if we are to correctly understand the relationships between it and the other covenants, and the outworking of the covenants in history. A *conditional* covenant is a covenant whose fulfillment is conditioned upon man's obedience. Two of the eight covenants of the Bible are conditional: the Edenic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant. An *unconditional* covenant is a covenant whose fulfillment is dependent only upon God, and whose fulfillment is independent of man's obedience or disobedience. It should be recognized, however, that unconditional covenants may (and sometimes do) contain conditioned blessings. Six of the eight covenants are unconditional: the Adamic Covenant, the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Palestinian or Land Covenant, the Davidic Covenant and the New Covenant.

God has made a total of eight covenants with mankind.

Three of the eight covenants were made with mankind in general. They are the Edenic, Adamic and Noahic Covenants.

The first of these three covenants made with mankind in general, the Edenic Covenant, was conditional. In the Edenic Covenant Adam and Eve's idyllic life in the garden was conditioned on their obedience to the covenant. They disobeyed the covenant's one prohibitive condition by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thereby breaking the covenant. Then, as promised in the Edenic Covenant, in the very day that they ate from the forbidden fruit, they died spiritually and also began to die physically. They were then dismissed from the garden and forbidden reentry.

The second of these three covenants made with mankind, the Adamic Covenant, was unconditional. In the Adamic Covenant the serpent was cursed, and a seed was promised that would one day bruise the serpent's head. Also, the earth was cursed, Eve was told that childbearing would now be painful, and Adam was told that he would return to the dust from

whence he came. All of these features of the Adamic Covenant were unconditional; they depended upon God alone for fulfillment.

The third of these three covenants made with mankind in general, the Noahic Covenant, was also unconditional. In the Noahic Covenant Noah was promised that the earth would never again be deluged by a global flood, and the State was given authority to punish sin. These features of the Noahic Covenant were unconditional, being parts of the unconditional Noahic Covenant.

The other five of the eight biblical covenants were all made exclusively with Israel. They are the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants. If we are to understand the biblical Kingdom program correctly, it is essential that we keep in mind that these five covenants were made by God with Israel, not with Gentiles.

One of these five covenants with Israel, the Mosaic Covenant, was conditional.

At Mount Sinai, Jehovah made the Mosaic Covenant with Israel. It was comprised of six hundred thirteen laws, designed to govern the religious, moral and civil aspects of Jewish life. The Mosaic Covenant is stated in Exodus 20:1-31:18. As it has been well said elsewhere, the Old Testament is the record of Israel breaking the Mosaic Covenant. Hence the need for its replacement by the promised New Covenant.

The other four covenants made with Israel, the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenants, were unconditional. Again, the unconditionality of these four covenants is essential for us to keep in mind if we are to understand the Bible and its overall Kingdom program correctly.

Israel's four unconditional covenants all share several important characteristics: They present us with an outline of God's Kingdom program. They bind God to a specific course of action. Together, they promise seven things to Israel: 1. a nation forever, 2. a land forever, 3. a king forever, 4. a throne forever, 5. a kingdom forever, 6. a new covenant, and 7. abiding blessings. Again, these seven things are unconditional. They were given to and are to be fulfilled literally by Israel. They were given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob personally, not to their seed only. They are still in effect. They are to be fulfilled by Christ. And, they are eternal.

The first of Israel's four unconditional covenants is the Abrahamic Covenant. In the Abrahamic Covenant God unconditionally promised to Abraham and to his descendants the land of Palestine forever, national identity, blessing, a great name, and potential blessing and cursing on other peoples. We discussed the Abrahamic Covenant in the section *Conscience, Government and Promise* above.

The second of Israel's four unconditional covenants is the Palestinian Covenant. In the Palestinian Covenant, as the Israelites were poised to enter the promised land, Jehovah unconditionally confirmed eternal ownership of the land of Palestine to Israel, while at the same time conditioning the Israelites' enjoyment of and blessing in the land on their repentance and obedience. We discussed the Palestinian Covenant in the section *The Theocratic Kingdom* above.

The third of Israel's four unconditional covenants is the Davidic Covenant. It was made by Jehovah with king David for the purpose of securing on earth an eternal Davidic house, throne, king and kingdom.

The Davidic Covenant is stated in Second Samuel (2 Sam. 7:12-19, 24-29) and First Chronicles (1 Chron. 17:11-27), and is reiterated in the Psalms (Ps. 89:1-4, 27-37) and in the Hebrew prophets.

The Davidic throne is also David's son Solomon's throne, but it is not to be occupied by Solomon's seed. In identifying David's throne, we should recognize that David's (earthly, and never equated with God's throne) throne is not God's (heavenly) throne. Since the beginning of the times of the Gentiles in 587 B.C., the Davidic throne has not been occupied. However, it will be occupied again after the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Davidic Covenant is an amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant. It is to be interpreted literally. David's throne and Kingdom are to be restored, not to be created from scratch.

The Davidic Covenant has not yet been fulfilled. It is to be fulfilled by Christ. It is to be fulfilled in His humanity. It was given to Israel and is to be fulfilled literally by Israel in the Millennial Kingdom. The Davidic Covenant is unconditional and irrevocable. It is confirmed in the New Testament. It is still in effect. And, it is eternal.

The fourth of Israel's four unconditional covenants, and the last of the Bible's eight covenants with mankind is the New Covenant.

The New Covenant is stated in Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-37; 32:37-42; 33:6-9) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 11:17-21; 16:60-62; 36:25-27; 37:26-28).

The New Covenant will take Israel's sins away. It will also provide for the building of the Millennial Temple.

The New Covenant was made with Israel. It is an amplification of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, not of the Mosaic Covenant. It is unconditional. It is confirmed in the New Testament. It is still in effect. It is now having partial fulfillment in the church, and it is to have future fulfillment in Israel. And, it is eternal.

The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy

In Hebrew prophecy God's theocratic Kingdom program is laid out both in broad outline and in remarkably fine detail. To acquire an accurate and awe-inspiring picture of the Bible's eschatological Kingdom, the Bible student has therefore only to read the Hebrew prophets with an open mind, an eye toward the future and a willingness to receive the prophets' messages as written. When the Hebrew prophets are read without preconception and without prejudice, their overall Kingdom program is unmistakable: After being scattered throughout the world for "many days," Israel is to be regathered back to her land, reconstituted as a nation, threatened by her surrounding nations, purged, defended by Messiah, regenerated, ruled by Messiah, and greatly blessed, both spiritually and materially. Concurrently, the Gentile nations are to be dealt with by God on the basis of their treatment of Israel.

The Kingdom is promised in the historical books, in the Psalms and in the prophets. In the corresponding chapter of this book, *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*, I present several hundred passages from the Old Testament which I've collected in my own personal Bible reading, in my effort to obtain for myself an accurate and impartial picture of the future Kingdom. It would be my first choice for the reader to make his or her own similar personal collection of Bible verses pertaining to the Kingdom, via his or her own personal Bible reading. This way, from reading *all* the passages in these books, the reader would, I believe, arrive at his or her own conclusion, as I have, that the verses that I've (and he/she will have) collected are indeed (almost exhaustively) representative of the Old Testament's Kingdom message.

Again, in summary, when taken at face value, Hebrew prophecy clearly and consistently promises a future, theocratic, Davidic, Jewish Kingdom. Major components of this prophesied Kingdom include a global regathering of the scattered Jewish people back to the land of Palestine, all nations of the world gathered for war against Israel, Israel's defeat of these nations (with supernatural and spectacular help from above), the purging and spiritual regeneration of the Jews, judgments of both Jews and Gentiles, resurrection of David, Daniel and "many" others, and Messiah's reign over Israel and the world from David's throne in Jerusalem. Concurrently, the Gentile nations are also to experience purging and blessing. And noteworthy, especially in light of Jesus' (Matt. 13) and Paul's (Eph. 3) "mystery" teachings, the Christian church is not at all identifiable in any of these Hebrew prophecies.

First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom

If we are to make proper sense of the opening chapters of the New Testament, wherein we find John the Baptist and Jesus declaring publicly to the Jewish nation that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” it is essential that we first understand the then-prevailing Jewish understanding and expectation of the Kingdom. What was the Jewish mindset at that time? What did the first-century Jews understand the Kingdom of God to be? And therefore, what kind of Kingdom were they expecting?

In contrast with the more abstract and metaphysical spiritualities of much of pagan religion, the Jewish mindset, both ancient and modern, is more concrete than abstract. This is due largely to the simple fact that the spirituality of the Jewish Bible (the Old Testament) is more concrete than abstract. The Bible is a written record of a literal history of a literal people; a history consisting of concrete events in real time such as the Jewish God Jehovah’s creation of the material world, the literal Garden of Eden, the Flood, Abraham and his literal seed, the exodus from Egypt, the tablets of stone, the wilderness wandering, the land of Palestine, Judea, Jerusalem, the temple, the Davidic throne, the Babylonian captivity, etc. Therefore, a spiritual-only kingdom, as exemplified in pagan spiritualities, such as transcendentalism, Platonic dualism and Gnosticism, divorced from the physical world, would not have been expected or even envisioned by a first-century Bible-believing Jew.

The first-century Jews understood the Kingdom exactly as covenanted and promised to them in their Hebrew Scriptures.

They understood the Kingdom as *covenanted*: literal and earthly.

And they understood the Kingdom as *promised*: literal and earthly.

The first-century Jews did not understand the Kingdom to be a spiritual-only kingdom.

Now, as we approach our study of the Kingdom in the New Testament, it is important for us to understand that the Theocratic Kingdom, dependent as it was on the Davidic kingship, was not in existence in the first century. As we saw in the section *The Fall of the Kingdom* above, with the Babylonian captivity of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., which commenced the times of the Gentiles, the theocratic, Davidic Kingdom had gone into remission. Subsequently, Daniel’s first sixty-nine weeks (Dan. 9:25), which commenced at the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 B.C., and which were to run for six hundred eighty-three years, ending with the arrival of “Messiah the prince” (Dan. 9:25, KJV), would be in effect until Messiah’s formal presentation of Himself to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in the year 32 B.C. Con-

sequently, the restored Theocratic Kingdom had not been offered by God to the Jewish nation prior to the first century.

Regarding Christ's First Advent and the Jewish expectations associated with it, two things should be kept in mind: First, relatively few Old Testament prophets refer to the First Advent of Christ. Second, the first-century Jews did not know that Christ would have two advents.

So then, just what were the first-century Jews expecting? Obviously, they were expecting the Kingdom as they understood it, which was the Kingdom covenanted and promised to them: a literal, earthly, Jewish theocracy.

Even today many religious Jews are *still* expecting a literal, earthly, Jewish Kingdom.

It is our contention that, contrary to much popular opinion, the first-century Jews were not mistaken in their understanding of the Kingdom and in their Kingdom expectations. On the contrary, we contend that this Jewish understanding of the Kingdom is *assumed* in the New Testament, and that without acknowledging this assumption, the New Testament, and particularly the message preached in its opening chapters by John the Baptist, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy in the synoptic gospels, namely, that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," cannot be understood correctly or satisfactorily.

Announcement and Offer of the Kingdom

Early in the first century, at a time when faithful Jewish believers were anticipating a restoration of the Davidic Kingdom, John the Baptist and Jesus arrived on the scene preaching to Israel, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Before getting into the details of the content of the message preached by John the Baptist and Jesus, it will be helpful for us to first review some relevant introductory considerations concerning our written Bible.

Concerning the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, it is important for us to recognize the continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament, and to notice that the New Testament does not so much *define* the Kingdom as it does *confirm* it. We discussed these points in the introductory section *Biblical Hermeneutics* above.

As we study the Kingdom in the four gospels, it will be helpful for us to keep in mind each book's unique purpose. Matthew's purpose is to confirm Jesus' messianic credentials to a Jewish readership. Mark's purpose is to confirm Jesus as Jehovah's servant, as the One with sufficient power and ability to fulfill His will. Luke presents Jesus as the Son of Man Who is des-

ted to fulfill the covenants. John presents Jesus as the Son of God, the rejected, crucified and resurrected Savior of the world.

The New Testament opens with the announcement by John the Baptist that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Also before getting into the details of John the Baptist’s and Jesus’ announcement and offer of the Kingdom to Israel, it is interesting for us to note first that while John the Baptist was announcing the Kingdom to Israel, and immediately before Jesus also began to announce and offer it to Israel, the kingdom of the world (*this world*) was offered by Satan to Jesus.

And, it is a deeply meaningful introductory fact that the Kingdom of God was announced and offered only to Israel.

The Kingdom was announced to Israel in a number of different ways by a number of different people:

The Kingdom was announced by Jesus’ First Advent.

The Kingdom was announced by Jesus’ genealogy.

The Kingdom was announced at Jesus’ birth.

The Kingdom was announced by John the Baptist. It is our contention that John the Baptist was not mistaken, but rather had a correct conception of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom was announced by Jesus’ baptism.

The Kingdom was announced by Jesus. We’ll say more about this below.

The Kingdom was announced by others. It was announced by two blind men, by a blind beggar, by Philip and Nathanael, by Peter, by those who wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him King, by another two blind men, and by children in the temple.

The Kingdom was announced by Jesus’ transfiguration.

And, the Kingdom was announced and foreshadowed by Jesus’ miracles.

The Kingdom was not only *announced*; it was also *offered* to Israel.

The Kingdom was announced and offered by Jesus.

The Kingdom was announced and offered by Jesus’ Person: Jesus came, not to write theology, but to fulfill Scripture. The Kingdom was offered to Israel in the Person of Jesus. Jesus presented Himself as King of Israel to Jerusalem.

And, the Kingdom was announced and offered by Jesus’ preaching. Again, Jesus preached only to Israel. As to the content of His preaching, Jesus preached the Kingdom: He preached the same Kingdom message that John the Baptist had preached. He preached, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” and that “the time is fulfilled.” He preached the gospel

of the Kingdom. He preached the Kingdom of God. He preached that the Kingdom of God (the King Himself) was in their midst. He preached that He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets. He taught that Jerusalem is the city of the great king. He taught His followers to pray for the Kingdom to come. He taught His followers to seek first the Kingdom. He taught that one must be born spiritually to enter the Kingdom. He taught that Gentiles will participate in the Kingdom. He taught that a nobleman would travel far away to secure a Kingdom, then return. He taught that in the regeneration, His disciples will sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. He taught that there would be a wedding feast. And, He confirmed that the Christ is the son of David.

The Kingdom was also announced and offered by the twelve.

And, the Kingdom was announced and offered by the seventy.

It is an interesting and relevant fact that some caution was exercised in the preaching of the (political) Kingdom, apparently so as not to stir up unnecessary trouble with the governing authorities.

So, exactly what was this Kingdom that was preached first by John the Baptist, then by Jesus, then by the twelve and the seventy? It is a curious fact that the Kingdom preached was never clearly defined by the preachers. We contend that the Kingdom preached, announced and offered, was the previously covenanted and prophesied Jewish Kingdom.

It is revealing that the Kingdom message preached by John the Baptist, Jesus and Jesus' disciples stirred up no controversy with the Jews.

And, it is a noteworthy fact that the prevailing Jewish conception of the Kingdom (see the previous section *First-Century Expectation of the Kingdom*) was never *corrected* by John the Baptist, Jesus or the apostles. This Kingdom message was not an accommodation to the Jews. The message was not of a spiritual kingdom only. The message was both soteriological and eschatological. It was a genuine offer of the Kingdom to Israel. However, the offer was subject to acceptance or rejection by the Jews.

Rejection of the King

At Jesus' First Advent, with Jesus on the scene, personally announcing and offering the Kingdom to Israel, a decision was required on the part of the nation. But alas, the first-century Jews were morally unprepared to make the correct decision. Ultimately, the nation chose to reject Jesus as King. The Pharisees ascribed Jesus' powers to Satan; they sinned against the Holy Spirit.

After His rejection, Jesus' ministry changed in several ways. First, His self-identification changed. It changed from Messiah to silence (then later back to Messiah). Second, the purpose of His miracles changed. It changed

from authenticating His messiahship to training His apostles. Third, the people for whom He performed His miracles changed. They changed from the masses to those with faith. Fourth, the people whom He invited changed. They changed from the nation Israel to individual tax-gatherers and harlots. Fifth, His message changed. It changed from “The Kingdom is at hand” to silence regarding His Messiahship (then later to “I am the Son of Man”). His message also changed from the announcement and offer of the Messianic Kingdom to the formation of the church (then later to His return and the accompanying fulfillment of Israel’s covenants). Sixth, His style of preaching changed. It changed from blessing to rebuking. And seventh, His method of teaching changed. It changed from plain speech to parables.

Postponement of the Kingdom

It is a generally undisputed fact of history that the first-century Jewish community in Israel rejected Jesus as their Messiah and King (see the previous section, *Rejection of the King*). That being the case, following Jesus’ rejection, what happened to the covenanted and prophesied (and announced and offered) Kingdom? Did God at that point cancel the entire Kingdom program? Many Christians would answer that no, the Kingdom program was not then *cancelled*, but that it was instead *transformed* in some way. Our contention, however, is that the theocratic Kingdom program was neither cancelled nor transformed, but rather only *postponed* until Jesus’ Second Coming.

Without an understanding of the Kingdom’s postponement, much of Scripture will simply not make sense (for example, Jer. 23:5–8). Without incorporating the postponement of the Davidic Kingdom into our eschatology, Scripture intended for application to the Tribulation period or to the Millennial Kingdom dispensation will likely be incorrectly applied to this Church dispensation (for example, Luke 1:30–33). When we overlook the postponement, and deny the future, literal fulfillment of the Jewish Kingdom prophecies, we are forced to “spiritualize” (alter) Scripture in order to maintain its truthfulness. This destroys the precision of Scripture. As a result, the biblical, Old Testament idea of the covenanted and prophesied Kingdom is lost.

It should be recognized that it was not disclosed in the Old Testament that Christ would have two advents. Instead, the events of both advents were combined in the messianic prophecies. In a similar manner, we suggest that neither was the postponement of the Kingdom, which was to span the same period of time as that transpiring between these two advents, disclosed in the Old Testament.

The idea of postponement of prophetic fulfillment is not foreign to the Bible; there were prior postponements, for instance, the Israelites' forty-year delay in occupying the promised land.

If the Kingdom was postponed at Jesus' First Advent, as we contend, then the Kingdom obviously could not have come prior to the first century. We contend that the Kingdom had not come prior to Jesus' First Advent, during Jesus' First Advent, just prior to Jesus' ascension, just after Jesus' ascension, in the epistles, or even yet today.

The Kingdom was offered to Israel by Jesus at His First Advent, but due to Jewish unbelief, it was postponed until Jesus' Second Advent.

The postponement of the Kingdom is stated and/or indicated in numerous passages of Scripture (for example, Matt. 21:43, Matt. 23:37-39, Mark 13:34-37, Luke 13:34-35; 19:11-28; 21:24, Acts 1:6-7). Considered collectively, these passages, especially when examined in conjunction with all the Old Testament covenants and prophecies, clearly indicate the fact of a postponement of the Kingdom.

The cause of the postponement was, generally speaking, Israel's sinfulness and refusal to repent, and specifically, the nation's rejection of Jesus as Messiah.

Consequences of the Kingdom's postponement include Israel's blindness and trampling, the destruction of Jerusalem, the scattering of the Jews throughout the world, the nation's dormancy, and an extension of the times of the Gentiles.

God's objectives of the postponement include Jesus' vindication (Jesus has been vindicated, is being vindicated even now, and will be further vindicated in the future), Israel's punishment, the introduction of an interim facet of the Kingdom (the church) and the gathering of the members of the church.

All things considered, with all these divine objectives being met, it should be evident that the postponement of the Kingdom was not failure.

Contrary to much popular opinion, the Kingdom was not *transformed* at Jesus' First Advent. The theocratic Jewish Kingdom was not transformed into a spiritual kingdom, or into the intermediate state (of the dead), or into the church, or into anything else. Any such transformation of the Kingdom would have been loudly protested by the first-century Jews.

Before confirming again what the Kingdom is, we'll first outline what it is not. The Kingdom is not the gospel of the Kingdom. The Kingdom is not repentance, faith, obedience or union with Christ. The Kingdom is not personal, present salvation. The Kingdom is not a spiritual reign of God in the heart. The Kingdom is not only a spiritual kingdom. The Kingdom is not Je-

sus' present authority. Jesus is not reigning as messianic King now. Jesus is not sitting on David's throne now.

The Kingdom is not the Watchtower Society. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus (a.k.a. Michael the archangel) returned invisibly in the year 1914, and that he at that time sat on David's throne (in heaven) and began ruling the earth, with the Watchtower Society serving (at least since 1918) as God's visible earthly organization. The facts that Jesus did not return in 1914 (Rev. 1:7) and that the Watchtower Society preaches a false and unbiblical gospel (that of Jehovah's established [since 1914] kingdom) (Gal. 1:8-9) prove their "present kingdom" belief unfounded. Instead, the Watchtower kingdom is no more secure than any of the other Christ-rejecting kingdoms that are in line for crushing by the stone of Dan. 2:44 at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation, in preparation for the genuine messianic, Davidic Kingdom.

The Kingdom is not the intermediate state of the dead; it is not "going to heaven when we die."

And finally, the Kingdom is not the church. Because over the centuries this is idea that the church is the Kingdom of God has been such a common and deeply-seated misconception within Christendom, it is worthwhile examining it in some detail. Our arguments as to why the church is not the Kingdom are: First, the Bible nowhere states that the church is the Kingdom. Second, Jesus' farewell discourse does not mention the Kingdom. Third, Jesus is not King of the church. Fourth, the church does not fulfill Israel's covenants. It is especially evident that the church does not fulfill the Davidic Covenant. Fifth, the church does not fulfill Israel's promises. (First, the church has never been authorized to fulfill the Kingdom promises. Churches can only assume and attempt to usurp Kingdom power in this dispensation by allegorizing the Kingdom promises. And second, the church is not capable of fulfilling Israel's promises.) Sixth, the church lacks an ordered and duly recognized Kingdom government. Seventh, the church was established in a time of peace, not in a time of (as prophesied for the establishment of the Kingdom) upheaval. Eighth, the church is preparatory to the Kingdom. Ninth, church members today are heirs, not possessors or reigning kings of the Kingdom. Tenth, church members today are suffering, not reigning. Eleventh, the church cannot be reigning during these "times of the Gentiles." Twelfth, the church's gospel is not the gospel of the Kingdom. And thirteenth, the church does not establish the Kingdom in the world.

So then, if the Kingdom is not the gospel, repentance, faith, obedience, personal and/or present salvation, union with Christ, the reign of God in

the heart, a spiritual kingdom, Jesus' present authority, the Watchtower Society, the intermediate state of the dead, or the church, then what is it? We contend that the Kingdom is today what it has always been, namely, a (future) literal, earthly, theocratic, Jewish Kingdom. Again, the Kingdom has not been transformed, but merely postponed.

Reaffirmation of the Kingdom

Even after Jesus had been rejected by the Jewish leaders in Matthew chapter twelve, He still spoke of an earthly, future theocratic, Davidic, Jewish Kingdom. Jesus still spoke of Jerusalem's future acceptance of Him and the concurrent ending of the times of the Gentiles. He still had a personal zeal for the Jewish temple. He spoke of the age to come which had a specific eschatological meaning in the contemporary Jewish mind. In His Olivet discourse (Matt. 24-25; Luke 21 and Mark 13), Jesus gave numerous indicators that God was not yet finished with Israel. In fact, the entire discourse concerns Israel. In this Olivet discourse, Jesus spoke of the end of the age. He listed the signs that would indicate that the Kingdom is near. He spoke of the abomination of desolation, linking it with Judea and Daniel's prophecy. He spoke of the Great Tribulation, which Jeremiah and Daniel identified with the Jewish nation. He prophesied that the gospel of the Kingdom would be preached to all the nations. He prophesied concerning the coming of the Son of Man, which coincides with Daniel's Kingdom prophecy. He prophesied concerning the gathering of the elect, using the same language used in the Palestinian Covenant and in Zechariah for the prophesied future gathering of the Jews back to the land of Palestine. Jesus confessed to being King of the Jews. He spoke of future drinking of the fruit of the vine in the Kingdom. And, He spoke of future authority in the Kingdom.

Others also spoke of Jesus' future Kingship and/or Kingdom. The soldiers at the time of Jesus' arrest recognized Him as King of the Jews. The Jews at the time of Jesus' trial likewise knew what it would mean Kingship-wise if Jesus were the Messiah. Pilate also, at least mockingly, recognized Jesus' Kingship in relation to the Jews. The chief priests, scribes and elders did likewise. The penitent thief on the cross expected Jesus to come in His future Kingdom. Joseph of Arimathea was waiting for the Kingdom of God. And, the men on the road to Emmaus were hoping that Jesus was going to redeem Israel.

The Kingdom is reaffirmed in the events of the Acts of the Apostles. It was reaffirmed in the reoffer of the Kingdom to Israel. The Kingdom was also reaffirmed by the believers' selling of their property. And, the Kingdom was also reaffirmed by the transitional differences between the early and

later chapters of Acts: It was reaffirmed in the transition from Jewish Kingdom expectations to Gentile church life. And, it was reaffirmed in the transition from public miracles to the absence of public miracles.

The Kingdom is also reaffirmed by the testimony of the apostles in the Acts of the Apostles: It was reaffirmed by the apostles just before Christ's ascension. The Kingdom was reaffirmed by Peter: It was reaffirmed by Peter on the day of Pentecost. And, it was reaffirmed by Peter before the Sanhedrin. It was reaffirmed by James at the Jerusalem conference. The Kingdom was reaffirmed by Paul: It was reaffirmed by Paul in Thessalonica. It was also reaffirmed by Paul before Agrippa. And, it was reaffirmed by Paul before the leading Jews in Rome.

The Kingdom is reaffirmed in the New Testament epistles by Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude.

The Kingdom is reaffirmed in all of Paul's epistles except Philemon: in Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus and Hebrews (if authored by Paul). In Romans Paul lays out an extensive description of Israel's past, present and future, particularly in chapters nine through eleven. In First Corinthians Paul exhorts the Christians at Corinth to eagerly anticipate the future "day of our Lord Jesus Christ," at which their resurrection and translation is to take place, and their subsequent reigning as kings with Jesus. In Second Corinthians Paul again encourages the saints at Corinth to look forward to "the day of our Lord Jesus" and their raising with Him. In Galatians Paul affirms that the Abrahamic Covenant has not been nullified. In Ephesians Paul speaks of this age and of the ages to come (in which God will show the surpassing riches of His grace toward the church in Christ Jesus) and the administration suitable to the fulness of the times, wherein all things in the heavens and upon the earth will be summed up in Christ. In Philippians Paul eagerly anticipates "the day of Christ," when the Savior will come from heaven and transform believers' bodies so they conform to His glorious body. In Colossians Paul says that when Christ is revealed, Christians will also be revealed with Him in glory. In First Thessalonians Paul has much to say about Jesus' future coming, the Rapture of the church and His delivering the church from the wrath to come. In Second Thessalonians Paul describes the last-days apostasy, the removal of the restrainer, relief for those who are afflicted, the gathering of the saints in Jesus and their glorification in Him, the revealing of the man of lawlessness, the day of the Lord with its destruction of the unbelievers, and the slaying of the man of lawlessness. In First Timothy Paul mentioned the future appearing of Jesus. In Second

Timothy Paul referred to Jesus as a descendant of David, referred to His appearing and His Kingdom, and anticipated reigning with Him. In Titus Paul anticipated the “blessed hope” and the appearing of Jesus’ glory. In Hebrews the writer (Paul?) of the book made references to the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Hebrew prophets, the new covenant with Israel, Jesus’ Second Coming, the world to come in subjection to the Son of Man, the powers of the age to come, and the kingdom that believers are to receive that cannot be shaken.

James exhorted the heirs of the kingdom to be patient until the coming of the Lord.

Peter was highly eschatologically-minded. In First Peter, Peter exhorted his fellow partakers of the glory that is to be revealed to fix their hope completely on the grace to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus. Similarly, in Second Peter, Peter exhorted believers to be holy in conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God.

John, in First John, warned that Antichrist and the day of judgment are coming, and exhorted believers to abide in Jesus, so that when He appears, they may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame.

Jude exhorted believers to wait anxiously for the mercy of Jesus, and to look forward to standing in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.

The Kingdom was reaffirmed by John in the book of Revelation. (For the many Scripture citations, see our corresponding chapter *Reaffirmation of the Kingdom*.)

The King of the Kingdom

Every kingdom is composed of a throne (authority to rule), a king and subjects. We’ve already covered in some detail, in the section *Covenants of the Kingdom* above, the *throne* of the Theocratic Kingdom of God, namely the Davidic throne. We’ve also touched upon the *subjects* of the Theocratic Kingdom, namely the regenerated nation Israel and the saved Gentiles that survive the Great Tribulation. (We’ll cover these subjects of the Kingdom in greater detail in the sections *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom* below). Now in this section we’ll turn our attention to the *King* of the Theocratic Kingdom, the theanthropic Person who is destined to occupy the Davidic Throne, namely, Jesus the Christ. Whereas regenerated Israel is the *nucleus* of the Theocratic Kingdom, Jesus the Christ, as He reigns from His Davidic throne in Jerusalem, is the very *focal point* of the Kingdom.

The King of God’s Kingdom has two major responsibilities: to redeem and to reign. If this redeeming and reigning are to be perfectly effectual, the

Kingdom's Priestly King Himself must be perfect and capable of accomplishing all that is required of Him. As we outline in this section, Jesus the Christ is uniquely qualified and fully equipped to accomplish every goal and purpose of His Kingship. In His deity and in His humanity, in His submissiveness, incarnation, innocence, obedience, character, perfection, miracles and suffering, Jesus is eminently qualified to be King of the Kingdom. He is the perfect Messiah.

Jesus' qualifications for Kingship are found both in His deity and in His humanity.

As *God*, Jesus possesses the power and authority requisite for the theocratic Kingship.

There are sufficient evidences in Scripture to prove beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus possesses full deity. In summary: He is the creator and sustainer of all things, He is the Savior and giver of things of God, He has authority to forgive sins, and is the judge of all. He is all-seeing, all-knowing and omnipresent. He was eternally preexistent. He never changes. It is proper to serve Him, pray to Him, give glory to Him and worship Him. He is not an angel; He is Lord, sovereign with His Father, the Son of God, God (as is His Father) and Jehovah.

Jesus is from everlasting (Mic. 5:2). He was in the beginning (John 1:1). He is before all things (Col. 1:17). He had glory with the Father before the world was (John 17:5). He existed in the form of God (Phil. 2:6). He was God (John 1:1). He is the Firstborn of all creation (for all things were made by Him and for Him; Col. 1:15-16). Through Him are all things (Heb 1:2). All things were made by Him (Col. 1:16). God attributes Jehovah's creative works to Him (Heb 1:8, 10). All things were created by Him and for Him (Col. 1:16). He made man in His own image (Gen. 1:26, 27). The Father sent Him (John 6:57). He sought not His own will, but that of His Father who sent Him (John 6:38). The way was prepared for Jehovah, then Christ came (Matt. 3:3). He was Immanuel—God With Us (Matt. 1:23). All the angels of God worship Him (Heb. 1:6). The magi worshiped Him (Matt. 2:11). He is the Son of God (John 10:36). He who has seen Him has seen the Father (John 14:7-9). The Father was greater than He (spoken by Jesus in His humanity; John 14:28). He could do nothing of Himself (John 5:19). He did nothing of Himself (John 8:28). His Father gave Him the words which He spoke (John 12:49). (In His humanity) He knew not the day nor the hour of the end (Matt. 24:36). A cured blind man worshiped Him (John 9:38). He would raise up His body (John 2:19, 21). No one has greater love than Him (John 15:13). He was one with the Father (John 10:28-33). The Jews believed, and the apostle John wrote, that He made Himself equal with God

(John 5:18). He forgives sins against God (Luke 5:24). He gave men power to be born of God (John 1:12-13). Those in the boat worshiped Him (Matt. 14:33). His eleven disciples worshiped Him (Matt. 28:16-17). The Father's name has been given to Him (John 17:11-12). He is heir of all things (Heb. 1:2). God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:24). He raised His body from the dead (John 2:19-21). He ascended to His God (John 20:17). He appeared in the presence of God (Heb. 9:24). He sat down at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19). God highly exalted Him (Phil. 2:9). God glorified Him (Acts 3:13). He is not an angel (Heb. 1 & 2). He was made better than the angels (Heb. 1:4). God made Him Lord and Christ (John 2:36). All men should honor Him as they do the Father (John 5:22-23). He is the First and the Last, as is Jehovah (Isaiah 44:6, Rev. 1:17-18). In Him dwells all the fullness of the Deity in bodily form (Col. 2:9). He is the exact representation of God's nature (Heb. 1:3). He is above all (John 3:31). He sustains all things (Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3). He is eternal Father (Isaiah 9:6). He is Mighty God (Isaiah 9:6). All things that are the Father's are His (John 16:15). All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Him (Matt. 28:18). The Father has given Him power over all flesh (John 17:2). He is mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5-6). He is in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18). He is Lord of lords (Rev. 17:14). "Whoever calls upon the name of Jehovah will be saved" applies to calling on Him (Rom. 10:9, 11-13). And, He is the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb. 13:8).

As *man*, Jesus identifies with humanity and qualifies for the Davidic throne. Jesus is as much fully human as He is fully God. He became human at His incarnation. He was resurrected bodily. He is human today. And, He will be human during His reign as Davidic King.

As both God and man, Jesus possesses deity and humanity combined.

While holding fast to all that we've said above, we readily admit also that our fully fathoming Jesus' Person in our finite and (presently) imperfect state is not possible.

Also requisite for Jesus' Kingship is His submissiveness.

For Jesus to become fully man, thereby acquiring eligibility for the Davidic throne, His incarnation was required. As to the timing of the incarnation, it was prophesied to occur while the temple was still standing. It occurred during the middle age of the world. As to the ethnicity of the incarnation, Messiah is a Jew. Jesus' ethnic connection to the Jewish race ensures the race's preservation and blessing, not only in the Jewish Person of Christ, but also in the believing Jewish remnant. As to the wonder of the incarnation, it is marvelous. Yet as wonderful as Jesus' First Advent was, His Second Advent will be immensely more glorious.

As to the purpose of the incarnation, it is multi-faceted. However, we must be careful to restrict the purposes of the incarnation to those explicitly taught in Scripture, lest we mistakenly attribute purposes of Jesus' Second Advent (such as reigning from David's throne) to His First Advent. One purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God to man. A second purpose was to provide atonement for sin. A third purpose was to reveal the gospel. A fourth purpose was to prepare a suitable King/High Priest for the Kingdom.

Jesus' fitness for the Kingship required His innocence.

His obedience to the Father was also required.

His character is befitting a theocratic King. His character was, in fact, developed and demonstrated to the extent of perfection, thus qualifying Him to be a perfect King.

Also demonstrating His fitness for Kingship were His miracles.

And finally, His suffering qualified Him to be a sympathetic and merciful King/Priest.

The career of Jesus, including His incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, glorification, present session and return perfectly prepares Him for the proper exercise of His Kingship.

Jesus' incarnation provided His identification and solidarity with humanity and prepared the human body that would qualify Him to sit on David's throne.

His life, including His perfect observance of the Mosaic Law, His fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, His teaching and His miracles also prepared Him for theocratic Kingship. He observed the Mosaic Law perfectly. He fulfilled the Law and the Prophets. He taught regarding the Kingdom and the intervening Church Age. His miracles demonstrated that He had the supernatural ability required to usher in and administer the Kingdom.

Jesus' death fulfilled the legal requirement for justifying sinners. His death was foretold in the Old Testament; it was therefore inevitable. Regarding the timing of Jesus' death, it was determined by Jesus. The purpose of Jesus' death was to render God propitious toward sinners. The accomplishments of Jesus' death are many. First, it confirmed Israel's continuing role in the plan of God (it was Jewish blood that was shed on Calvary). Second, it made atonement for sin. Third, it abrogated the Mosaic Covenant. And fourth, together with His resurrection, it is the basis upon which all Kingdom promises depend. The value of Jesus' death is infinite.

Jesus' burial was prophesied by Him and is an integral component of the gospel.

Jesus' resurrection was foretold in the Old Testament. It became a fact of history in the New Testament. It was a bodily resurrection. Together with His death, Jesus' resurrection is the basis upon which all Kingdom promises depend.

Jesus' ascension translated the Son of Man from earth to heaven. The purpose of the ascension was to exalt the Son of Man, so Jesus could sit with the Father on His throne, so Jesus could prepare a home for His bride, and so Jesus could intercede for His bride.

His career included His glorification.

All power and authority were given to Him.

Regarding His present session, He is Head of the church, High Priest, Mediator and Advocate.

Jesus' career also includes His return. We'll discuss His return in the section *The Second Coming of the King* below.

And finally, He will exercise His power and authority at His Second Coming. We'll discuss this exercising of His power and authority in the section *The Second Coming of the King* below.

Throughout His career Jesus holds in turn the three offices of Prophet, Priest and King.

In Scripture Jesus is given a number of unique *titles* that are descriptive of His Person and His past, present and future work.

He is Immanuel.

He is the Son of God.

He is the Son of Man.

He is the Son of David.

He is the Lamb of God.

He is the Lion of Judah.

He is the Messiah, Christ. By definition, Messiah or Christ means "anointed one," that is, one anointed to be King. "Christ" is a title regarding the office; not the Person. The title was clearly understood in Jesus' day, but has since then lost much of its original meaning. The title is related to the restored Theocracy. Satan's temptation was addressed to Jesus' Christship. The title was understood correctly by Peter. It had political ramifications for Jesus. It was not used publicly until after Christ's death. The title was understood and taught correctly by Paul, and was understood correctly by the early church. The title assisted with the conversion of the Jews. When Jesus returns, He will return as the Christ. Jesus will reign in the Millennial Kingdom as the Christ. The body of Christ will reign with the Christ. Jesus is not yet in possession of the position indicated by the title.

The title should produce in believers reverence and respect for “the Christ.” And, those who use the title correctly now will be criticized.

Jesus is the King of the Jews.

And, He is the Morning Star.

Jesus exhibits glory at every stage of His theocratic career. He had glory before the world was, He exhibited glory at His incarnation, He has glory now in heaven, and He will exhibit great glory at His Second Coming and in the Millennial Kingdom. While the Kingdom of God is glorious in all its facets and in all its details, the source and focal point of the Theocratic Kingdom’s glory is its actualizing God, Savior, Prophet, Priest and King. We therefore recognize *Jesus the Christ Himself* as the quintessential Glory of the Kingdom.

The biblical accounts of Jesus’ Person and work (His career including His incarnation, life, death, burial and resurrection) are truthful. Jesus was neither deceived nor a deceiver. He was not an invention of His disciples, and the gospel accounts of His life were not concocted by later writers.

The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)

As we suggested in the section *Postponement of the Kingdom* above, upon the first-century Jews’ rejection of Jesus as Messiah, the covenanted and prophesied Theocratic Kingdom was neither annulled nor transformed, but rather merely *postponed*. Now, if the covenanted and prophesied Davidic Kingdom was postponed; if the Kingdom was not inaugurated at Christ’s First Advent and must instead wait for inauguration until His Second Advent (see the section *Inauguration of the Kingdom* below), then what is to be made of this intervening time period between His two advents, the (so far) nearly two millennia-long age in which we now find ourselves? With the Jews for the most part scattered throughout the world and the Theocratic Kingdom on hold, has God revealed any specific purpose of His for this intervening period? Indeed He has. In fact, the intervening, interim facet of the Kingdom that has taken center stage in this age, the Mystery Kingdom, is in many ways the most gracious and marvelous facet of them all.

In this section we will define the Mystery Kingdom, identify its major player (the church) and explore its mysteries.

As previously defined in the section *Five Facets of the Kingdom* above, the Mystery Kingdom is the present “mystery” form of the Kingdom, commonly known as “Christendom.”

The primary player within the Mystery Kingdom is *the church*. Therefore, for a correct understanding of God’s overall Kingdom program, proper identification of the church is essential.

Contrary to much popular opinion, the church is not Israel, nor is the church the Kingdom.

That the church is not Israel should be obvious from a plain, "literal" reading of Scripture. However, because the church is so often confused with Israel, both by many within the church and by many if not most heretical groups (such as Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe their "anointed remnant" is the new Israel), and because this misidentification is such a determining factor in many peoples' conception of the Kingdom, we will discuss the church's non-identification with Israel here.

The church is not "Israel." That the church is not Israel is evident from a number of factors: First, in the Bible, "Israel" always refers to literal Israel. Second, a careful examination of the seventy-three occurrences of the word "Israel" in the New Testament makes it plain that the term always means natural, ethnic Israel. Third, the Bible never identifies the church as "Israel." Fourth, in the Bible, "tribes" always refers to literal tribes of people (there are nine occurrences of "tribes" in the New Testament). Fifth, the primitive church did not identify the church with Israel. Sixth, the church has no genuine nexus with Israel. Seventh, the church does not replace Israel: The church is not "new Israel." The church is not "spiritual Israel." The church is not "the Israel of God." The church is not a race. The church is not a nation. The church is not Mount Zion or Jerusalem. The church does not receive the fulfillments of Israel's promises. The church is not the wife of Jehovah. In the Bible, Israel is "the wife of Jehovah." The church, on the other hand, is the bride of Christ. The church and Israel have differing relationships to Christ. The church and Israel will have differing roles in the Millennial Kingdom.

The Church is not the Kingdom. See our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom is not the church in the section *Postponement of the Kingdom* above.

So then, if the church is not Israel and the church is not the Kingdom, then what is she? She is an entirely new entity. The church can be defined as an assembly of persons, the "body of Christ," the members of which have each been joined to Christ through Spirit baptism. The church is a spiritual seed of Abraham. She is the bride of Christ. She is an organism, not an organization. Some groups, including the Roman Catholic Church and the Jehovah's Witnesses, claim to be the one and only visible, catholic/universal church (or organization), but these groups are in error. The church is not a visible organization, but rather an invisible organism. She is an exclusively blessed entity. She is the pillar and support of the truth. She is not limited to only those who espouse a particular eschatological view. She is identifi-

able: She is identifiable by her correct doctrine, by her exhibition of the fruit of the Spirit, and by her non-exhibition of cultic exclusivity. And at this point in time, she is not yet perfect.

In Scripture, the church is said to be a *mystery*. This mystery was revealed to Paul. The church is called a mystery because it was not foretold in the Old Testament. As is so also with the other Old Testament prophets, the church was not foreseen by Daniel. There are four elements that comprise the mystery of the church: that Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body of Christ, “Christ in you,” the Rapture, and the bride of Christ.

The purposes of the church can be divided into two broad categories: those having to do with the current (Church) age in which we now live and those having to do with the future ages.

The current purposes of the church and of this Church Age, which when understood correctly correspond perfectly with today’s observable realities (these purposes are now being fulfilled), are important to understand. The current purposes of the church in this Church Age are: to give man an opportunity to avail himself of God’s grace, to save men by grace, to gather the elect, to call out from the Gentiles a people for God’s name, to espouse a bride to Christ, to incite the Jews to jealousy, to select and prepare kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom, to develop Christians’ character and to demonstrate that God’s purposes do not fail. It is not the purpose of the church in this Church Age to entertain herself and others, nor is it to Christianize the nations.

The ultimate (and future) purposes of the church are to be Christ’s wife, to exalt redeemed men and to display the infinity of God’s grace.

The career of the church on earth involves the chronology of the Church Age, developmental details of the church and the fact that God is gathering the church now.

While the Bible does not offer a precise or detailed chronology of the Church Age, it does present several overviews of the age, with certain events and circumstances serving as milestones. These events and circumstances include: The members of the church were chosen before the foundation of the world. The church was foreseen by Jesus (it was still future at Jesus’ time). The “keys of the Kingdom” were given to Peter. The church began at Pentecost. The duration of the Church Age is from Pentecost to the Rapture of the church. No detailed chronology of the Church Age is given in the Bible. Rather than resulting in the conversion of the world, the last days of the church are to be days of apostasy, unbelief, wickedness, self-sufficiency, lukewarmness, sleepiness and failure. And, the Church Age concludes with the Rapture of the church.

Many of the developmental details of the church are outlined in the “Mystery Kingdom” parables of Matthew chapter thirteen and in the letters to the seven congregations of Revelation chapters two and three.

In Matthew chapter thirteen, immediately following Jesus’ rejection by the Jewish leaders in chapter twelve, Jesus outlined the new, never-before-disclosed “Mystery” facet of the Kingdom that was now to transpire during the time period between His rejection and His Second Coming. These “Mystery Kingdom” parables are found primarily in Matthew chapter thirteen, with some additions and some duplication in Mark and Luke. The “Mystery Kingdom” parables are those of The Sower, The Seed, The Tares Among the Wheat, The Mustard Seed, The Leaven, The Hidden Treasure, The Costly Pearl, The Dragnet and The Householder.

In Revelation chapters two and three the resurrected and glorified Jesus gave seven individually-tailored messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Some dispensational scholars believe that in addition to the messages’ immediate references to the seven named churches in the first century, these seven churches also represent seven various “kinds” of churches found in all periods of church history, and/or seven discernible sequential periods of time in church history. Whether the seven represented “kinds” of churches are chronologically contemporaneous or sequential or both is a matter of debate. This writer tends toward the “both” view, especially with the present-day advantage of hindsight and also with the increasing manifestation of “Laodicean” characteristics in today’s professing church. The seven churches are the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

As of this writing, as we find ourselves within the time period of the “Mystery Kingdom,” and also within the uniquely blessed and gracious Church Age, God is gathering the church *now*.

This Church Age, unique among all the ages of world history, possesses and exhibits a number of distinct dispensational characteristics: It was planned from eternity. It is disconnected from the previous and the following dispensations. It is characterized by the bodily absence of the King. It is centered in Jesus’ sacrificial death. It is characterized by primarily spiritual (rather than material) blessings. It exhibits spiritual unity among the genuinely regenerated. It features no centralized, authoritative church government. It is marked by suffering. It contains a mixture of good and evil, truth and error. It is free from coercion by God. It is devoid of angelic manifestations. It is devoid of spectacular miracles. In its self-preservation is enjoined. And, it exhibits a conspicuous silence of God.

The Rapture of the Church

The Church Age, which was in Old Testament times a yet-to-be-revealed “mystery” in relation to God’s theocratic Kingdom program with Israel (see the previous section *The Mystery Kingdom (the Church)*), fittingly concludes with a mystery: the Rapture of the church. The Rapture is the church’s “blessed hope” (Titus 2:13), and should be eagerly anticipated by every member of Christ’s body.

The Rapture can be defined as Christ’s “catching up” into the air of all those in Him, whether dead or alive, at the end of the Church Age. Those alive at that time will be caught up together with all those who had previously died in Christ who will at that time be (bodily) resurrected, so the entire church will be raised up, glorified, and forever be with her Head, Bridegroom and Lord. The Rapture is defined primarily in three passages of Scripture: 1. “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also**” (John 14:1-3) 2. “Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality**” (1 Cor. 15:51-53). 3. “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord**. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

In order to correctly identify the Rapture, it is important for us to carefully distinguish what it is from what it is not, especially in relation to Christ’s Second Coming.

If by Christ's Second Coming we mean specifically Jesus' future visible return to earth (see the section *The Second Coming of the King* below), the Rapture is not Christ's Second Coming. It is instead a separate event which is to occur before and in preparation for the Second Coming. Some scholars identify the Rapture as the first *stage* of a two-stage Second Coming.

The Rapture and the Second Coming were revealed to the prophets separately. These two events are always spoken of separately in Scripture; never together.

There are numerous distinctions between the Rapture and the Second Coming, including their timing, participants, direction of travel and results (see our corresponding chapter *The Rapture of the Church* for several scholars' lists of these seventeen or more distinctions).

The participants in the Rapture will be all and only members of the church, both dead and alive.

While the Rapture, as part of the "mystery" church program, is not found in Old Testament prophecy, some scholars do find in the Old Testament some possible *types* of the Rapture. However, since most these possible types are not confirmed to be such in the New Testament, they should be received as speculative only. Enoch was taken up without seeing death. It's interesting that he was also the first one to prophesy of Christ's Second Coming. Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Lot was removed from Sodom before destruction came upon the city. Rebekah, Isaac's bride, appears to be a type of the church in several particulars. Asenath became Joseph's wife before the famine/tribulation. Moses' wife Zipporah was given to him after his rejection and before the Israelites' tribulation in Egypt. Daniel was not on hand during the time of testing when Nebuchadnezzar had set up an image for worship on the plain of Dura (as the church will not be on hand when the false prophet demands universal worship of Antichrist). And, the traditional Jewish wedding appears to be an exceptionally fitting and detailed type of the wedding of the church to Christ.

The Rapture of the church, being one of the most supernatural and momentous events in all of world history, has purposes both for the church and also for those left behind.

The purposes of the Rapture for the church include saving the church, closing the Church Age and preparing the church for the Kingdom.

The first major purpose of the Rapture is to save the church. To this end, the Rapture will transfer the church from earth to where Jesus is, as per Jesus' desire. It will deliver the church from God's wrath. And, it will deliver the church from persecution.

The second major purpose of the Rapture is to close the Church Age.

The third major purpose of the Rapture is to prepare the church for the Kingdom. To this end, the Rapture will transform (glorify) the church. The Rapture will transform the church from flesh and blood to otherwise, from non-spiritual to spiritual, from natural to supernatural, from imperfect to perfect, from unholy to holy, from mortal to immortal, and from lowly to glorious. But even after the transformation, the church will remain finite.

The Rapture will introduce the church to God, face-to-face.

The Rapture will facilitate the judging and rewarding of the church: Soon after the Rapture, the church will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. There believers' works will be judged, and individual believers will consequently suffer loss and/or be rewarded according to their deeds. Faithful believers will be rewarded with: Jesus' confession of his name before His Father and His angels; keeping from the hour of testing; the morning star; entrance into the New Jerusalem; names written upon him: the name of Christ's God, the name of the New Jerusalem, Jesus' new name; crowns (five): 1. the imperishable crown (for those who achieve victory in the spiritual life), 2. the crown of rejoicing (for soul-winners), 3. the crown of righteousness (for those who have kept the faith, doctrinally and morally, and who have loved His appearing), 4. the crown of life (for those who endure trials and for those who suffer martyrdom), 5. the crown of glory (for those who feed the sheep); a dwelling place in the New Jerusalem; being made a permanent pillar in the temple of God; sitting down with Christ on His throne; authority in the Millennial Kingdom; authority to eat from the tree of life in Paradise; keeping of his name in the book of life; immunity from the second death; and ability to glorify God.

The Rapture will prepare rulers for the Kingdom.

And, the Rapture will facilitate the marriage of the Lamb.

The purposes of the Rapture for those left behind include witnessing to those left behind, confirming the literal hermeneutic for the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, unrestraining the Antichrist, and reverting God's earthly program back to Israel.

The Rapture of the church possesses several signature characteristics. It is a mystery, miraculous, awesome, bodily, invisible to unbelievers, instantaneous, as a thief in the night, and unexpected by most people.

The timing of the Rapture is a subject of considerable and lively debate. Even among premillennialists there are differences of opinion concerning the precise timing of the Rapture. Because Scripture does not explicitly state, in unambiguous terms, exactly when the Rapture is to occur in relation to the Tribulation period (for our discussion of the Tribulation period see the next section, *The Great Tribulation* below), the matter is left to

careful inductive study, and ultimately, of course, to actual occurrence. At the time of this writing, the majority of premillennialists, and nearly all dispensationalists, hold the *pretribulation* (the Rapture occurs *before* the Tribulation) position. A minority hold the *posttribulation* position, and an even smaller minority hold the *midtribulation* (or its variant, “pre-wrath”) position. In this section we will outline some of the many evidences and lines of reasoning that have led this writer to the conviction that the *pretribulation* position is the correct one.

The Rapture of the church is to occur: After the signs of the end of the age begin to take place, “at the last trumpet,” at the end of the Church Age, before the Millennial Kingdom, before the resurrection of Revelation 20:4, and before Christ’s Second Coming. The Rapture must occur before Christ’s Second Coming because: 1. The church is already in heaven when Christ returns, 2. No translation of living saints is mentioned at Christ’s Second Coming, and 3. At Christ’s Second Coming, Christ returns *with* the church; not *for* her.

Posttribulationism, which teaches that the Rapture occurs *after* the Tribulation, has been the majority view throughout church history and remains the majority view in the church today. Evidential facts contrary to *posttribulationism* include: 1. The hermeneutics of *posttribulationism* are highly questionable, 2. *Posttribulationism* is not an “older” teaching than *pretribulationism*, 3. *Posttribulationists* disagree amongst themselves on major details, 4. *Posttribulationists* often ignore details that are unfavorable to their position, 5. *Posttribulationists* cannot explain why the church must endure the Tribulation, 6. *Posttribulationists* are often historicists, rather than futurists, 7. *Posttribulationism* is not explicitly taught in Scripture, 8. Paul specifically refutes *posttribulationism* in Second Thessalonians chapter two, 9. *Posttribulationism* usually mistakenly places all “elect” and “saints” in the church, 10. *Posttribulationism* usually ignores the distinction between the church and Israel, 11. *Posttribulationism* has trouble identifying the 144,000, 12. The church is not found on earth in any of the Tribulation passages, 13. Revelation does not describe a triumphant church going through the Tribulation relatively untouched, 14. Many if not most Tribulation saints will be martyred and resurrected; not translated, 15. The Rapture is not mentioned in any of the Second Coming passages, 16. The Rapture does not fit the analogy with those “taken” in Noah’s flood, 17. Tribulation survivors are needed to participate in the post-tribulation judgments on earth, 18. Tribulation survivors are needed to populate the earth after the Tribulation, 19. The *posttribulation* resurrection of the Old Testament

saints does not include the church, and 20. Posttribulationism destroys imminency.

Midtribulationism, which teaches that the Rapture occurs *at the midpoint* of the Tribulation, while having considerably fewer adherents than either posttribulationism or pretribulationism, still has its adherents. Midtribulationists place the seventh trumpet of Revelation at the midpoint of the Tribulation, and identify this trumpet as the “last trumpet” for the Church Age, resulting in a midtribulation Rapture. However, the seventh trumpet of Revelation is not the last trumpet in Scripture. Also, midtribulationism confuses Israel and the church and overlaps their two programs. And, like posttribulationism, midtribulationism destroys imminency.

The Rapture occurs at the beginning of the Day of the Lord. It occurs before or at the signing of Antichrist’s 7-year covenant with Israel. This is because the signing of the covenant marks the beginning of Daniel’s seventieth week (Dan. 9:27), which in turn marks the beginning of the Tribulation. By definition, a pretribulation Rapture occurs before the beginning of the Tribulation. The Rapture occurs before God reverts primary attention back to Israel.

It is our conviction that the Rapture is *pretribulationist*.

In his book *The Rapture Question*, Dr. John Walvoord lists *Fifty Arguments for Pretribulationism*. For a reproduction of his list, please see our corresponding chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.

Expanding on Dr. Walvoord’s list, we suggest another thirty evidential facts in favor of pretribulationism. Some of these facts were mentioned in Walvoord’s list; others are new. 1. Pretribulationism is based on a literal hermeneutic, 2. Pretribulationism is held to by the most careful premillennial scholars, 3. Pretribulationism allows a harmony of the Scriptures relating to the Rapture and the Second Advent, 4. Pretribulationism allows for the possibility of a good number of years before the Tribulation, 5. The removal of the church is needed to unrestrain the Antichrist, 6. The removal of the church results in the Tribulation, 7. The Tribulation concerns the Gentile nations and Israel; not the church, 8. The Tribulation is the time of Jacob’s (Israel’s) trouble; not the time of the church’s trouble, 9. The church is not destined for wrath, but for deliverance from the wrath to come, 10. The church is counseled to pray that she might escape “these things” that will come upon all the earth-dwellers, 11. The faithful church is to be kept *from* the global hour of testing; not *through* it, 12. The church is frequently and consistently told to look forward to Christ’s coming for her, not to tribulation, 13. The church belongs to the day, not to the night, 14. Paul comforted the Thessalonians with the Rapture hope, a hollow hope if

the Tribulation and martyrdom must come first, 15. Paul did not comfort the Thessalonians with the idea that their deceased loved ones had escaped the church's coming Tribulation, 16. The Thessalonians feared that there might be a delay between their Rapture and the resurrection of their loved ones, 17. Paul comforted the Thessalonians with the thought that no, they had not missed the Rapture, nor had the day of the Lord yet come, 18. The Corinthians were encouraged to conduct themselves in view of the Rapture; they were not counseled to prepare for the Tribulation, 19. The Rapture of the church is not found in any of the Tribulation passages, 20. The church is not found on earth in any of the Tribulation passages, 21. The church does not appear within any of Daniel's seventy weeks, 22. The church does not appear in Matthew chapters twenty-four or twenty-five, 23. The church is not part of the "Day of the Lord," 24. The descriptions of the Tribulation saints are not descriptions of the church, 25. The twenty-four elders are seen in heaven just prior to and during the Tribulation, 26. The "tabernacle" of God is seen in heaven during the Tribulation, 27. Time is needed for the judgment seat of Christ and the giving of rewards, the Marriage and the Marriage supper, 28. The Lamb's bride is seen in heaven with Christ before He returns, 29. At His return, Jesus is seen as the bridegroom (already married), and 30. Historically, God has delivered His people from tribulation.

The timing of the Rapture is unknown and imminent.

The duration of the Rapture, i.e., just how much time will elapse during the rapture process, including the Lord's descending from heaven, the dead in Christ rising first, then the living being caught up together with them in the clouds and meeting the Lord in the air, Scripture does not specify. However, Scripture does specify that the bodily "change" from perishable to imperishable, from mortal to immortal, will be instantaneous, "in the twinkling of an eye."

The Rapture of the church is an imminent event; one that could actually occur at any moment. However, as prophesied, the twenty-first century professing church is largely profoundly asleep concerning her imminent "catching up." It is therefore a major purpose of this study to encourage those apparently few believers in the church "with ears to hear" to wakefulness and expectancy concerning our Lord's promised return for us.

Scripture, as exemplified in the forty passages quoted in our corresponding chapter *The Rapture of the Church*, is exceptionally plain and clear regarding the proper attitude of the Christian toward the Rapture of the church. We should be watching for and eagerly anticipating Jesus' return for us!

The effects on the Christian of the proper attitude toward the Rapture (as connected with the broader Second Coming) are deep and wide. They include sanctification, love for the brethren, encouragement for ministry and zeal for evangelism.

Who today has the proper attitude toward the Rapture? This writer suggests that pretribulational premillennialists' biblical, wakeful and expectant attitude toward Christ's imminent coming for the church identifies them as being among Christ's genuine sheep, and also provides strong circumstantial evidence that their eschatology is correct.

The Great Tribulation

Soon after the Rapture of the church (see the previous section) will follow seven years of tribulation on earth, the last half of which Jesus described as "a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall" (Matt. 24:21).

The fact of the Tribulation is stated in numerous Bible passages, including Deut. 4:30, Jer. 30:4-7, Joel 2:1-11; 3:14-17, Amos 5:18-20, Zeph. 1:7-13, Matt. 24:3-14, Mark 13:19-20, 1 Thes. 5:2-4, Heb. 12:26, and Rev. 6:1-19:6. There are remarkably parallel and confirmatory accounts of the Tribulation period in Matthew chapter twenty-four and Revelation chapter six.

Some historicist theologians believe that many of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen, events which futurists (such as this writer) place in the future, have already been fulfilled in the past, and therefore have no reference to the future. They come to this conclusion by equating the content of Luke chapter twenty-one with that of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen, then demonstrating that several of the events of Luke chapter twenty-one (i.e. the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.) have already been fulfilled. They conclude then that the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen must also have already been fulfilled in the past, as those of Luke chapter twenty-one have been. Futurists, on the other hand, point out that there are substantive differences between Matthew (and Mark) and Luke, making it possible therefore that while many of the events of Luke twenty-one have indeed already been fulfilled in the past, all of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen still may very well await future fulfillment. Personally, by examining the three "parallel" passages in Matthew, Mark and Luke, this writer has found no substantive differences between Matthew and Mark, but has identified no less than sixteen substantive differences between Matthew (and Mark) and Luke. It is therefore this writer's conclusion that while many of the events of Luke chapter twen-

ty-one have indeed already had fulfillment in the first century, it is entirely possible that all of the events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen still await future fulfillment (during the Tribulation period).

The purposes of the Tribulation regarding the church are different from the purposes regarding the nations of the world. The purposes of the Tribulation regarding the church are nonexistent. The purposes of the Tribulation regarding the nations of the world are several.

Regarding Israel, as God's first-born, Israel is to receive "a double portion." The purposes of the Tribulation in regard to Israel are to scourge the nation, to purge the nation of evildoers, to end the nation's rebellion, and to bring about Israel's national salvation.

The purposes of the Tribulation in regard to the Gentile nations are to allow evil to have its highest-ever manifestation among them, to test them, to teach them righteousness, to bring them to repentance, and to purge them of their evil rulers and people.

Characteristics of the Tribulation include deception, darkness, sin, absence of love, anti-Semitism, persecution, progressive, extensive and severe wrath, and destruction.

Thankfully, the Tribulation period is to occur only once in human history. The timing of the Tribulation is future, after the end of the Church Age, before the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom, before Christ's Second Coming, after the beginning of the Day of the Lord, and after the Rapture of the church.

The duration of the Tribulation period is exactly seven years, as it is concurrent with and bracketed by Daniel's seventieth week. This seven-year duration is confirmed by identifying two successive three and one half year periods in the book of Revelation. The "beginning of birth pangs" is the first three and one half years of the seven-year Tribulation. The "Great Tribulation" is the final three and one half years of the seven-year Tribulation. The Great Tribulation is to be "cut short." It ends with Christ's return. The chronology will be understood clearly after the Tribulation begins.

Sociologically, the Bible's description of the Tribulation involves a global government, a global economy and a global religion, all centered in "Babylon."

The global government of the Tribulation begins with a ten-nation confederacy, progresses (or rather digresses) to a seven-nation confederacy, then culminates at the Tribulation's midpoint in a world dictatorship under Antichrist.

The economy of the Tribulation will culminate in world socialism.

The religion of the Tribulation will have three consecutive stages. Initially, the “woman Babylon” will head the global religion. At the midpoint of the Tribulation, the “woman Babylon” will be destroyed by Antichrist. Finally, the Antichrist himself will be worshiped as God.

The characters of the Tribulation period can be divided into two broad categories: evil and good.

The *evil* characters of the Tribulation period include Satan, demons, the Antichrist, the false prophet, the apostate church (Babylon the Great) and lost mankind.

Antichrist is an actual person; not merely an idea or an influence. Some scholars envision for him a miraculous conception. He is imbued with Satanic power.

Events in Antichrist’s career include, in sequence: Antichrist arrives on the scene, he is identified, he is judged by God, he is revealed, he receives his power from Satan, he conquers nations, he confirms a covenant with Israel, beginning the Tribulation, he recovers from a fatal wound, he is accompanied by a false prophet, he performs miracles, he deceives the whole world, he breaks the covenant with Israel at the mid-point of the Tribulation, he presents himself as God in the temple at the mid-point of the Tribulation, he blasphemes God, he is worshiped, he rules absolutely, he persecutes Israel, he is conquered and killed by Christ at His appearing, and finally, he is resurrected and thrown alive into the lake of fire.

The *good* characters of the Tribulation period include the 144,000, the two witnesses and the Tribulation saints.

It is prophesied and therefore expected that anti-Christian ideologies will increase in popularity and influence as the Tribulation period draws near. These ideologies include humanism, liberalism, “tolerance” and spiritualism.

While the primary focus of the Kingdom during this Church Age has been on gathering the kings and priests for the future Kingdom, other events have been transpiring in preparation for the Tribulation (which is in turn preparation for the Millennial Kingdom). Events in preparation for the Tribulation include the destruction of the second Jewish temple and the dispersion of the Jews, the trampling of Jerusalem by the Gentiles, the preservation of Israel as a people, the regathering of Israel to the land in unbelief, the reestablishment of Israel as a nation, war, widespread godlessness and apostasy in the church.

Events just prior to the Tribulation include the Rapture of the church (which is, as of this writing, the next event on the prophetic calendar), a possible time gap between the Rapture and the Tribulation, removal of Is-

rael's blindness, God's sending a delusion on the unbelievers, the apostasy, Israeli wars, building of the Tribulation temple, arrival on the scene of Antichrist, identification of Antichrist and revealing of Antichrist (removal of the Restrainer).

Regarding a possible time gap between the Rapture of the church and the Tribulation, some scholars see the beginning of the Tribulation immediately following the Rapture of the church (with no time gap in between), while others see a time gap, or interval, of anywhere from a day or two to seventy-five or more years between these two events.

Regarding Israeli wars, it seems evident from Scripture that one or more regional Middle Eastern wars will precede the final global campaign of Armageddon. Some Bible scholars see only one such war (the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog/Magog war), while others see two (the Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 war, then the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog/Magog war). While some scholars place these wars within the period of the Tribulation itself (or at least within the time interval between the Rapture of the church and the Second Coming), others see the possibility of one or possibly even both of these conflicts preceding the Tribulation, and possibly even preceding the Rapture of the church.

The eighty-third Psalm is a prayer to Jehovah on behalf of the Jews who are surrounded by enemies, that He would protect them from these enemies' threats of annihilation. It is of interest that all the countries mentioned in this Psalm are those that immediately surround Israel: Edom, Moab, Gebal and Ammon being in present-day Jordan, the capitol of the Hagarites being Damascus in Syria, Amalek being immediately south of Israel, Philistia being Gaza, and Tyre being in Lebanon. For this reason, some prophecy students understand Jehovah's answer to this Psalm/prayer to be a separate war that precedes the Ezekiel 38/39 Gog/Magog war, setting the stage for that later invasion. Some students see Isaiah chapter 17 as Jehovah's answer to the Psalm 83 prayer. One notable feature of Isaiah 17 is the complete annihilation of the city of Damascus.

In Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, Ezekiel prophesies the Gog/Magog war. In this war, a coalition of larger and more geographically distant nations including Russia and Iran attacks Israel at a time when the Israelites are dwelling in "unwalled villages," seemingly at relative peace (possibly as a result of the previous Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 war). In this war, Israel is greatly outnumbered by her enemies, and would most certainly have perished but for Jehovah's supernatural intervention.

Regarding the building of the Tribulation temple, it may take place before the Tribulation, or it may take place during the first half of the Tribulation. It must take place before the midpoint of the Tribulation, however, in

order to make possible Antichrist's midtribulation desecration of the temple.

As per Daniel 9:27, the events of the first half of the Tribulation begin with Antichrist's confirming a seven-year covenant with Israel and conclude at the Tribulation's midpoint with the "abomination of desolation." These events commence with the seven "seal" judgments of Revelation chapter six (and continue with the first six "trumpet" judgments), which, as we suggested earlier, coincide with the "beginning of birth pangs" which precede the "abomination of desolation" in Matthew chapter twenty-four.

Considering these events individually:

Antichrist confirms a covenant with Israel.

The Lamb takes the title deed of the earth, and prepares to evict the usurpers of His realm.

Elijah prepares Israel.

The two witnesses prophesy for 1260 days (3.5 years), are killed, resurrected and translated.

The 144,000 are sealed. Particularly because the identity of the 144,000 is central to the theology of Jehovah's Witnesses, it is important for us to discuss their proper identification. Specifically, we would emphasize: The 144,000 are sealed at and/or toward the beginning of the Tribulation (Jehovah's Witnesses and many Covenant theologians teach that the 144,000 have been sealed throughout the past two thousand years of church history). They are literal Jews (Jehovah's Witnesses and many Covenant theologians teach that they are "spiritual Jews," i.e. [mostly Gentile] "anointed" Christians). They are "first fruits." Their existence is in harmony with the broader doctrine of the Jewish remnant: 1. The Jewish remnant always exists, 2. The remnant has not always been easily identified, and 3. The remnant will believe in Immanuel. The 144,000 will proclaim the gospel to the nations during the Tribulation period. And, the 144,000 will enter alive the Messianic Kingdom.

With the opening of the seal judgments, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse begin their rides.

Seal 1: Antichrist conquers.

Seal 2: War.

Seal 3: Famine.

Seal 4: Death.

Seal 5: Martyrs.

Seal 6: Cosmic disturbances.

Seal 7: Silence in heaven, prayers, thunder, lightning, earthquake.

The seventh seal judgment contains the seven trumpet judgments.

Trumpet 1: Hail, fire, blood, one third of earth burned up.

Trumpet 2: A fiery mountain thrown into the sea; one third of the sea destroyed.

Trumpet 3: A star falls from heaven; one third of fresh water spoiled.

Trumpet 4: One third of the sun, moon and stars darkened, an eagle proclaims woe.

Trumpet 5: Locusts torment men for five months.

Trumpet 6: Four angels released, one third of mankind killed by two hundred million horsemen.

Ecclesiastical (“Mystery”) Babylon the Great falls.

The great multitude is saved.

There shall be no more delay.

The middle of the Tribulation is clearly delineated by Daniel’s “abomination of desolation.”

The middle of the Tribulation features a number of pivotal events. Considered individually:

Satan is cast out of heaven to the earth.

Satan gives the earthly kingdom to Antichrist.

Antichrist blasphemes God.

Antichrist seats himself in the temple, claiming to be God.

Antichrist breaks the covenant with Israel.

The “Great Tribulation” begins.

Antichrist rules absolutely.

Israel is persecuted.

Israel is exiled from the land.

Israel is gathered at Bozrah.

The mark of the beast (666) is implemented.

With the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God is finished.

The last half of the Tribulation features a number of events that bring to a climax the time of Jacob’s (and the world’s) trouble.

Considered individually:

The holy city is trampled for forty-two months.

“This good news of the Kingdom” is preached.

Angelic proclamations are made. Three angelic proclamations take place in Revelation chapter fourteen: 1. An eternal gospel. 2. The fall of Babylon the Great. 3. A warning against worshiping the Antichrist.

Saved people are seen.

The marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven.

The seven bowl judgments result in unprecedented destruction on earth:

Bowl 1: Into the earth: Sores are inflicted upon those who have the mark of the beast.

Bowl 2: Into the sea: The sea becomes blood; everything in the sea dies.

Bowl 3: Into the fresh water: The water becomes blood.

Bowl 4: Upon the sun: Men are scorched with fire.

Bowl 5: Upon the throne of the Antichrist: His kingdom is darkened.

Bowl 6: Upon the Euphrates river: The river dries up, preparing the way for the kings from the east for the campaign of Armageddon.

Bowl 7: Upon the air: A massive earthquake occurs, the city splits, cities of the nations fall, Babylon the Great is remembered, islands and mountains disappear, and great hailstones fall.

Israel survives.

Israel's will is broken.

Israel's blindness is removed.

Israel recognizes Jesus as Messiah.

Israel repents.

Israel receives an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Israel is forgiven and regenerated (saved).

Israel is judged.

Israel is purged.

Israel pleads for Christ's return.

All nations gather against Israel.

The campaign of Armageddon commences.

The city (political and economic) Babylon the Great falls.

The Second Coming of the King

The Second Coming of the King is the focal point of Bible prophecy. At Christ's Second Coming, Jesus and His bride will be spectacularly revealed to the world, Satan's kingdom will be defeated and the world will be prepared for the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom.

The fact of the Second Coming is evident from Scripture: from the Pentateuch, from the Hebrew prophets, from the gospels, from the Acts of the Apostles, from the epistles of Paul, Peter and John, and from the Revelation.

The Second Coming of the King is a necessary and important event in the overall Kingdom program.

The Person of the Second Coming is the very same Jesus who came the first time.

Certain titles of the King are particularly applicable to Him at His Second Coming. These titles include the bridegroom, the Son of Man and the Son of David. As the (already married) bridegroom, Jesus is husband of the

bride (the church). As the Son of Man, Jesus is the “last Adam,” the new head of the human race. As the Son of David (and as the Messiah, the Christ, the Lion of Judah, the King of the Jews and the King of Kings), Jesus is the rightful heir to David’s throne.

The purposes of the Second Coming are numerous, with each purpose being related to the Kingdom in some way. These purposes are: to reveal Christ, the angels and the King’s bride (the church) to humankind, to save Israel, to defend Israel and to end her persecution, to conquer the Antichrist, to conquer Antichrist’s army, to dash the nations to pieces, to bind Satan, to crush iniquity, to regather Israel to her land, to judge Israel, to judge the nations, to purge all unrepentant sinners from the world, to save the world, to end the times of the Gentiles, to rule the world, to restore the Theocratic Kingdom, to inaugurate the Millennial Kingdom, to achieve world peace, to complete the work that Christ initiated at His First Coming, to fulfill the covenants and prophecies, and to fulfill God’s purposes for the earth and for man.

Because the Second Coming is an entirely supernatural event, the characteristics of the Second Coming are those of an event far beyond the scope and capabilities of mortal man. Specifically, the Second Coming of the King is designed by God, possible, necessary, certain, desired, swift, personal, literal, bodily, visible, glorious, supernatural, forceful, efficacious, and unexpected by most people.

As of this writing, the timing of the Second Coming is, in light of our discussion above, yet future. It is to occur in the last days, at the end of the age, before the millennium, and immediately after the Tribulation.

Regarding the possibility of knowing the time of the Second Coming, the day will be known once the Tribulation begins. However, the hour will not be not known until it arrives.

The location of the Second Coming is Bozrah.

The destination of the Second Coming is Israel/Jerusalem.

The events of the Second Coming include: The Father gives the Kingdom to Christ, cataclysmic events occur, all the angels worship the first-born, the sign of the Son of Man appears, Christ appears in the sky, Christ defeats Antichrist and his army (He defeats Antichrist’s army at Bozrah), and Christ sets foot upon the mount of Olives.

The church, the Tribulation saints and lost mankind will have differing attitudes toward the Second Coming. For the church, the (pretribulation) Rapture is her blessed hope (Titus 2:12-13). Therefore, the Scriptures admonish her to be primarily expectant of her imminent Rapture, as distinct from the subsequent Second Coming. For the Tribulation saints the Second

Coming will mean the end of tribulation and persecution and the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. Therefore, the Tribulation saint should be ready and expectantly on the alert for that day. For lost mankind, the Second Coming will be an unexpected day of terror, judgment and defeat.

Inauguration of the Kingdom

Between the Second Coming of the King and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, several events will transpire in preparation for the Kingdom. These events include Antichrist's resurrection and casting into the lake of fire, the binding of Satan, Israel's regathering to the land in belief, the gathering and judging of the Tribulation survivors, Israel's possession of the land, the first resurrection and the marriage feast of the Lamb. Since this section deals with the resurrection of the dead (at least the first resurrection, which *precedes* the Millennial Kingdom; we'll cover the second resurrection, which *follows* the Millennial Kingdom in the section *The Lake of Fire* below), we will also cover in this section the intermediate state of the dead: the temporary state that intervenes between death and resurrection.

As the dust settles from the horrific Tribulation period and the glorious Second Coming, earth's new rulers and subjects will be preparing for the Millennial Kingdom.

Regarding the duration of this preparatory period, seventy-five days transpire between Christ's return and the commencement of the Millennial Kingdom.

Events in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom include: Antichrist is resurrected and cast into the lake of fire, Satan is bound, and Israel is regathered to the land in belief.

Before the Millennial Kingdom begins, survivors of the Tribulation must be gathered and judged, to produce the inaugural subjects of the Kingdom and also to ensure that only saved individuals enter the Kingdom.

Jewish survivors of the Tribulation are to be judged prior to the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. While Dr. Fruchtenbaum sees Israel's judgment being completed *during* the Tribulation itself, others, including Drs. Chafer, Pentecost, Walvoord and Ryrie, see a judgment for Israel *following* the Tribulation, as placed in the chronological sequence of this section. But regardless of the *timing* of the judgment, all of these scholars are in agreement regarding the *fact* of the judgment.

Gentile survivors of the Tribulation must also be judged as to their fitness for entry into the Millennial Kingdom. The surviving Tribulation believers are rewarded with entry into the Millennial Kingdom. Unrepentant sinners are punished with eternal fire.

At the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom Israel will at long last possess the entire promised land. The basis of the possession of the land is The Abrahamic Covenant. The extent of the possession will be “increased.” The reason for the possession is for God’s sake.

Before discussing the first resurrection, we’ll first take a look at the intermediate state of the dead (the state of existence between death and resurrection).

The intermediate state of *believers* is one of disembodied yet conscious bliss and rest while awaiting future bodily resurrection. Old Testament saints experienced this bliss and rest in the righteous compartment of Sheol/Hades; New Testament saints experience this bliss and rest in Paradise, in heaven itself.

The intermediate state of *unbelievers* is one of disembodied yet conscious torment in the unrighteous compartment of Sheol/Hades while awaiting future bodily resurrection.

The first resurrection is the (bodily) resurrection of the righteous. It occurs prior to the Millennial Kingdom, in stages. It includes the resurrections of Christ, the church, Tribulation saints and Old Testament saints.

As is true of all biblical resurrections, the first resurrection is a bodily resurrection. The first resurrection is distinct from glorification. It is distinct from the second resurrection. It is to occur “On the last day.” It is the time of reward. It is for the purpose of raising up kings and priests for the Millennial Kingdom. It includes the resurrection of the church, which is accomplished at the Rapture. It includes the resurrection of the Tribulation saints. It includes the resurrection of Israel’s Old Testament saints. And, it may include the resurrection of godly Gentiles.

We should point out, because Jehovah’s Witnesses teach otherwise, that Scripture does not mention any resurrection as occurring *during* the Millennial Kingdom itself. Neither the Witnesses’ Millennial Kingdom resurrection hope nor their associated millennial “second chance” doctrine have any Scriptural support. Instead, the plain teaching of Scripture is that “it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment” (Heb. 9:27).

The Millennial Kingdom will be inaugurated with the celebratory marriage feast of the Lamb.

The Millennial Kingdom

The Millennial Kingdom is the capstone of God’s theocratic Kingdom program. It is the goal and the end result of the four unconditional Jewish covenants, and the subject of hundreds of Hebrew prophecies. It is the Kingdom for which Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Indeed, the Millen-

nial Kingdom is the foreordained consummation of all biblical and human history.

Belief in the Millennial Kingdom is the inevitable result of acceptance of a literal or “plain sense” understanding of Israel’s covenants, Old Testament prophecy, Jewish tradition and Jesus’ teachings.

The Millennial Kingdom is not the ultimate, desired end in itself (the ultimate, desired end being the Eternal Order), but rather a means to an end.

The timing of the Millennial Kingdom is after Jesus’ Second Coming. Some speculation has been offered that the Millennial Kingdom might possibly coincide with the seventh millennium of man’s existence.

The duration of the Millennial Kingdom is, by definition and by Scripture, one thousand years. However, the Kingdom will extend beyond the one thousand years.

The Millennial Kingdom will be glorious, encompassing the earth, the human race, the government of mankind, nations, culture and life.

The earth will return to a paradisiacal, Edenic state, as originally purposed by God, the earth will be renovated, the curse will be removed, visible light will be increased, and the earth will be productive.

The human race will be rejuvenated. It will be saved, will constitute the subjects of the Kingdom, and will be populous.

In the Millennial Kingdom mankind will enjoy perfect government. The government will be global, it will be pervasive, Israel will be politically supreme, Jehovah will visibly reign as King from Jerusalem in the Person of Messiah, and believers will reign with the Christ.

There will be two branches of government: Jewish and Gentile.

The Jewish people will enjoy perfect government and political supremacy on the world stage. The chain of command in the Jewish government will be: Jesus the Messiah the King -> David -> The Twelve Apostles -> Princes -> Judges and Counselors -> Israel -> Gentiles.

The Gentiles will also enjoy perfect government. The chain of command in the Gentile government will be: Jesus the Messiah the King -> The Church and the Tribulation Saints -> Kings -> Gentile Nations.

Positionally, Israel will be over the Gentiles.

The rulers will be ideal and perfect rulers.

Believers will be priests with Christ.

The government will be a union of church and state. It will be supernatural, lawful, righteous and just, and it will be balanced.

Both Israel and Gentile nations will exist in the Millennial Kingdom. While they will have differing roles in the Kingdom, they will both enjoy God's blessings under idyllic conditions.

Israel, God's chosen nation, will be regenerated and restored. She will be prosperous, with her covenants fulfilled and Jerusalem rebuilt and exalted. Her people will be God's witnesses and ministers to the Gentiles.

Specifically, the mountain of Jehovah's house will be raised up, the millennial temple will be built, a sacrificial system will be instituted, a millennial river will flow from the temple, Jewish feasts will be observed, Israel's borders will be enlarged, the Jews will be in the land forever, and Israel's covenants will be fulfilled.

Israel's life and culture in the Millennial Kingdom will be spiritual. Israel will be regenerated, reconciled to God, restored, united, forgiven, healed, exalted, righteous, sinless (?), holy, spiritual, joyful and peaceful.

Israel will be populous. The land will be productive. Israel will be prosperous and glorious, and Israel will be God's witnesses and ministers to the Gentiles.

In the Millennial Kingdom, along with Israel, Gentile nations and individuals will also be in existence. Some Gentiles will survive the Tribulation and the subsequent "sheep and goats" judgment, thus enabling them to populate the Millennial Kingdom. Gentile nations and individuals will therefore be in existence throughout the Millennial Kingdom. The Gentile nations will recognize and acknowledge Israel's preeminence in the Kingdom. The Gentiles who observe Israel's glory will tell other nations of Israel's blessedness. The Gentiles will serve Israel. Some Gentiles will help build the millennial temple and some will serve in it.

The Gentiles will be populous, and they will be blessed. And, the Gentiles will worship the King; they will observe the Feast of Tabernacles. In the Millennial Kingdom, there will be no war between nations.

Culture in the Millennial Kingdom will be diverse.

Lifestyles in the Millennial Kingdom will likely be largely agrarian. Life will be spiritual, holy and supernatural. Miraculous events and angelic visitations will likely be commonplace.

Life will be good. It will be peaceful, with no war, with peace among people, and peace among the animals. Life will be righteous, healing, free from corruption, fair, efficient, joyful, enjoyed, abundant, long and glorious.

However, in the Millennial Kingdom, even with all this goodness, there will still be some sin and death.

A Final Rebellion

At the end of the Millennial Kingdom, before the final (Great White Throne) judgment takes place and before the Eternal Order is instituted, a final rebellion against the King and His Kingdom will take place.

The final rebellion is noted and described in Revelation chapter twenty.

It is puzzling to many how, after a thousand years of idyllic conditions on earth under the righteous and just rulership of Christ and His co-rulers, Satan could manage to deceive the nations again, and why anyone, let alone a large number of people “like the sand of the seashore” would choose to join Satan in this final rebellion. The solution appears to lie in the incorrigible nature of the fallen human heart.

The quelling of the final rebellion brings to a close the Millennial Kingdom, the last of the seven dispensations of human history.

In brief review, the seven dispensations are the dispensations of 1. Innocence, 2. Conscience, 3. Government, 4. Promise, 5. Law, 6. Grace and 7. Kingdom. For summaries of these dispensations, see our corresponding chapter *A Final Rebellion*.

“So concludes the series of the periods of human history in which people have been divinely examined under almost every conceivable condition: innocence, conscience, government, promise, law, grace, and the kingdom. In each case they proved (or will prove) that human freedom, left to itself, will always rebel against God. They have also demonstrated that God is always right and that real satisfaction comes only from obeying Him” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:163).

The Lake of Fire

Before the ultimate end and goal, the Eternal Order, can be inaugurated, sin and death must first be defeated. While many sinners will already have been purged of sin and raised to eternal life at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, and while much of the curse on creation will have been lifted during the Millennial Kingdom, at the end of the Millennial Kingdom there will still be some mediatorial work yet to be done before sin will have been entirely defeated and before the last enemy, death, will have been brought to nothing (1 Cor. 15:26).

Events in preparation for the Eternal Order include the translation of the millennial saints, the resurrection of lost mankind, the passing away of the present heaven and earth, and the Great White Throne judgment.

If the present heaven and earth are to pass away (see below), in preparation for the new heaven and earth (see our summary of the creation of the new heaven and earth in the next section *The Eternal Order*), it follows that

something must be done with the millennial saints who will be alive at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, such that they will not pass away with the passing away of the old earth. For this reason, while the idea cannot be found explicitly in Scripture, some scholars posit a translation or “rapture” of the millennial saints just prior to the passing away of the present earth.

Scripture is explicit, however, that there is to be a second resurrection “after the thousand years have been completed” (Rev. 20:5; the first resurrection having been completed one thousand years prior to this second one).

In preparation for the creation of the new heaven and earth (see our next section *The Eternal Order* below), the present heaven and earth will pass away.

Those raised in the second resurrection will be judged at the Great White Throne judgment.

Those judged adversely (and most dispensational scholars believe that *all* of those participating in the second resurrection will be judged adversely) at the Great White Throne judgment will be cast into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire is the same as Gehenna.

The lake of fire is real and certain.

Regarding the nature of the lake of fire, it is a lake of hot, unquenchable fire and brimstone. It is eternal.

The occupants of the lake of fire are the The Antichrist, the false prophet, the devil and his angels, and lost mankind.

The purposes of the lake of fire are to separate good from evil, to satisfy God’s justice and to glorify God.

The lake of fire is necessary. It is necessary because it is unavoidable, because it is just, because wrath proceeds from God’s holiness, righteousness and justice, because of the magnitude of sin against an infinitely holy God, because of the duration of sin against God, because God is eternally displeased with sin, because some people are not reformable, because sinners prefer alienation from God, because it is the natural reaction of sinners to God’s presence, and because annihilation would be inhumane.

We acknowledge the difficulty of accepting the doctrine of eternal punishment. We suggest that we have this difficulty because we don’t believe the Bible, because some of our Bible translations are faulty, because we can’t fully comprehend God’s holiness and justice, because we lack the capacity for a proper evaluation of sin, because we misconstrue God’s wrath, because we think suffering is incompatible with a loving God, because we think we know better than God does, because we put human sentiment and reason above the word of God, because we are inclined toward wishful

thinking, and because we think we'll be burdened by others' suffering forever.

The Eternal Order

With the resurrection of lost mankind, the passing away of the present heaven and earth and the Great White Throne judgment being completed, as summarized in the previous section above, only a few (but awe-inspiring) final events in the Kingdom program remain to be completed before the Eternal Order can be inaugurated.

Final events in preparation for the Eternal Order include Christ's handing the Kingdom over to the Father, creation of the new heaven and new earth, and the descending of the New Jerusalem out of heaven to the new earth.

After the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom has accomplished all of its mediatorial work, Jesus will hand all things, including the Kingdom and even His own Person, back to God the Father.

The old heaven and the old earth having passed away (see the summary of the Passing of the Old Heaven and Earth in the previous section *The Lake of Fire*), God will create a new heaven and a new earth wherein will dwell righteousness.

The New Jerusalem will then descend out of heaven to the new earth.

Undoubtedly, many of the realities of the Eternal Order, even if described to us in detail, would be difficult, if not impossible, for our finite minds to grasp. For instance, the very concept of eternity is beyond our comprehension.

Whether the Eternal Order will include a succession of future ages, and/or whether mankind will continue to procreate in the Eternal Order are two subjects concerning which we can now only speculate.

However, Scripture does reveal a number of things concerning the Eternal Order that give us at least a basic idea of what that new Order will be like. These things include the facts that there will be only one throne rather than two, the Jewish/Gentile distinction will continue forever, the Davidic Kingdom will continue forever, God Himself will dwell with mankind, God Himself will provide light, God's servants will serve and worship Him, death will be no more, pain will be no more, peace will reign, righteousness will dwell, and the old will never be brought to mind again.

Conclusion

At the end of his work *The Theocratic Kingdom* George Peters concludes, “Thus, by God’s grace, we have passed over the great, leading Biblical doctrine of the Kingdom of God—a Kingdom covenanted, established, overthrown, predicted, preached, postponed, and finally gloriously re-established under the mighty Theocratic King. We have, logically and consecutively, traced the Kingdom of God, finding it based upon the covenants, instituted in an initiatory form, modified in the Davidic incorporation, overthrown for man’s sinfulness, tendered to the elect nation, but rejected, postponed to the period of the Sec. Advent, and finally re-established with great power and glory by David’s Son and Lord. In it is found an incorporated perfected humanity insuring success, a human society under divine guidance, a civil and religious government under a Theocracy, a satisfactory completion of redemption, a triumphant conclusion of history and of God’s perfected Purpose in ‘the Christ.’ We have honored the Word of God, by our constant appeal to it, as the all-sufficient and infallible rule of faith and practice, and trust that (comp. Luther’s and Augustine’s declarations as given by Dr. Sprecher in *Groundwork of Theology*, p. 119) our deductions and teaching from the Scriptures may tend to an increased love for and study of the Bible; and that they be measured by the standard of truth, accepting only of that which stands the test. Our argument exalts Jesus ‘the Christ,’ in that it brings Him forth distinctively as the covenanted Messiah, who is yet to fulfill the covenanted mercies promised to the fathers, and who is yet to reveal Himself as the Redeemer of the world in the inauguration of a government such as is pre-eminently adapted to the wants of a burdened creation. It honors the past, present, and future work of the Lord Jesus, and enters heartily into the consideration of the things pertaining to His glory, with the joyful hope of seeing and participating in the same; it reverences the oath-bound covenants, the prophetic utterances, the faith of the ancients, with the pleasing anticipation of realizing in happy experience the blessed things promised, predicted, and believed. The Kingdom embraces all our desire—the King, the Princes, the Angels, the restored Jews, the admiring Gentiles, the released Creation, the Millennial gladness, the Eternal Ages, and God over all, blessed forevermore. Dr. Bonar (*Prophet. Landmarks*) has so happily expressed our thoughts that we reproduce his remarks as a fitting conclusion: ‘Our doctrine, as Millenarians, pervades the whole Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation. It is not confined to the figurative and poetical books. It declares itself with equal fullness in narrative and epistle, in symbol and in type. Like a thread of gold it runs through

the whole web of Revelation, crossing and recrossing it everywhere, and imparting the richest brilliance in the whole texture. It is the burden of all prophecy. It is the summing up as well as the unravelling of all history. It is the final and grand solution of the mystery of God's dealings with this world of ours. It is the germ of Israel's types. It is woven into all their ordinances, and rites, and festivals. It is the theme of many a Psalm, the heart of many a symbol, the subject of many a parable, the end and point of many a promise, the seal set to the Gospel of the grace of God as the "Gospel of the Kingdom." It has been the hope of the Church through many a starless night, when other hopes had gone out one by one, like beacons shattered by the tempest, leaving her disconsolate and helpless. And it is now again, in our day, pressed upon her notice as her strength in "the hour of temptation, which is coming upon all the world," the only light which cannot be quenched, and by which alone she will be able to steer her perilous course through the gloom of the thickening storm. It is no dream of carnal enthusiasts, enamored of materialism, and anticipating a paradise of gross delights. It is the calm belief of spiritual men, resting upon God's sure promise, and looking forward to a Kingdom of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is no hasty conjecture, no novelty of a feverish period, rashly caught up, without consideration and without evidence. It can produce the testimony of ages in its behalf; and they who have held it in our day have been men who studied their Bible on their knees, and have come to their conclusions after long, deliberate, and most solemn investigation. It is no fable of romance; it is sober, Scriptural reality, though far beyond what fancy ever painted. It is no vision of the politician, yet it shows us how, ere long, shall be exemplified that which earthly governments have been vainly striving to realize—a peaceful and prosperous world.' Whatever of defect or misconception may be in the preceding Propositions, yet the grand outlines, the precious doctrine of the Kingdom is undoubtedly true, because based on the plain grammatical sense of that which 'is written,' 'the word of the Lord.' It is no little gratification, advantage, and privilege to live at this period of time, way down in the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, with so many centuries of fulfilled prophecy, past and present, and a solemn and joyful culmination of the remainder imminently before us. The gratification arises from our lengthened view confirming the predictions of the future; the advantage springs from the practical use that we can make of the same, thrilling the heart with hope and joy at the glorious prospects; the privilege is seen in that we still live in a period enabling us to secure the inestimable blessing of 'Kingship and priesthood.' Contemplating the wonderful scheme of redemption and the results of the Christship, culminating

in this Theocratic ordering, the heart—realizing ‘the earnest’ preparative—is filled with peace in believing; ‘the Gospel of the Kingdom’ imparting strength and weaning us from the world; the Theocratic King and His glory giving us more ravishing ideas of our own heirship and ‘high calling’ while still ‘pilgrims and strangers;’ appropriating faith beholding Jesus on the cross and the throne makes Him exceedingly precious, and delights itself in the things pertaining to the love, dominion, and excellent glory of One so dear and worthy. The Theocratic promises now make us content to await the time when God’s ways will be vindicated, when His providences will be light, and when our own trials and sufferings will be seen as prerequisites to qualify us for our respective stations in the Kingdom. To those who object to such a vision of the future, to such views of a delightful land of promise, restored Eden, exalted, glorified, and Adamic condition, the Christ’s Theocratic grandeur, etc., we only say in reply: ‘This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes’ (Ps. 118:23)... It is proper to acknowledge at the close of our labor gratitude to God that He has brought believers to the knowledge of such truth, and that once ‘aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise’ we ‘are made nigh by the blood of Christ;’ and being ‘Christ’s, then are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to promise.’ We thank God that He has enabled us to lay hold upon His oath-attested covenants, and by faith in a covenanted Christ to have confidence and assurance in the fulfillment of His most gracious Word, so that when brethren forsook and reproached us (a sad trial, to which the Saviour was no exception) we still had great comfort. We thank Him that, unlike some (Erasmus-like) who keep silence, He put it into our heart to present His own rich treasures to others, as a token of gratitude, as a kind of testimony to the Church and the world, as a source of encouragement in the coming trial, although advised to sacrifice the best years of our life by committing this work to the flames, on the ground of the Church’s hostility to its expressed faith. We thank Him that when often sorely tempted, tried, discouraged—when through poverty much of this work was written on leaves of books, old letters, and waste paper (so that Jonathan Edwards’s straits could be appreciated, when reduced to write his Freedom of the Will on backs of letters and blank pages of pamphlets)—when depressed at the prevailing unbelief and the few in number with whom we could ‘take sweet counsel’—when falsely accused of heresy, fanaticism, and held up to odium, and influence sought to be lessened on account of Chiliasm, He was ever the prayer-hearing and answering God, supplying our wants, giving strengthening views of the unity of Divine Purpose, and the fullness of Jesus in redemption; imparting hope that as the work was designed to pro-

mote the Father's honor, the Son's glory, and the Spirit's praise, He would provide for its publication; and allowing the sweet privilege of being among that number who entertain, confess, and proclaim "The Blessed Hope,' even 'His Appearing and Kingdom'" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:603).

Indeed, from our foregoing study of the Kingdom we conclude that:

In the Bible, God has said exactly what He means, and He means exactly what He has said (see our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*).

In the Bible, Israel means Israel. *Always!* Israel is not the church (see our discussion of the fact that the church is not Israel in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*). And Israel is not the "anointed remnant" of Jehovah's Witnesses (see our discussion of God's people as they relate to Jehovah's Witnesses in our section *Applications and Admonitions* below. See also our discussion of the description of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

God's Kingdom to come is a literal government, a monarchy, a theocracy, a union of church and state, and a union of legislative, executive and judicial branches of government (see our discussion of the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*). It is the best possible, all-encompassing hope for mankind (see our discussion of the purpose of the Kingdom in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*, and our description of the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*). It is for real and for sure (see our discussions of the truthfulness and inspiration of Scripture in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*).

Regarding earthly vs. heavenly hopes, the church's hope is heavenly then earthly; Israel's hope is earthly then heavenly (see our discussion of heavenly vs. earthly hopes in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*). The church's immediate hope is the heavenly Rapture; Israel's hope during the Tribulation will be the earthly Millennial Kingdom. (And, incidentally, there is no biblical "earthly hope" for any Christians alive now.) In the end, the church, Israel and saved Gentiles will all share in the New Jerusalem that comes down out of heaven to the new earth (see our discussion of the New Jerusalem in our chapter *The Eternal Order*). "There is one Savior, one plan of redemption, and one family of all the redeemed people who will worship God in heaven. Spiritually, God's people share a redemptive inheritance, even though there are functional differences between Israel and the church" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:537).

Mankind is not going to save the world. The world is getting worse, not better. In the near term the world is heading not for a socialistic (or any other kind of) utopia but rather for the Great Tribulation. "We are gravely told that civilization, education, humanity, philosophy, science and art are

changing the nations for the better. Are the standing armies less? Are the engines of war, and fortifications, and fleets less? Do establishments that manufacture weapons of destruction languish and die for lack of work? Is taxation less? Are the jealousies and desire for revenge less? Is the spirit between rulers and subjects more harmonious? Is the conflict between the high and low, the rich and poor, the capitalist and laborer diminished? Are the interests of nations and classes reconciled? Such questions need no answer” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:777). “In His sight the highest moral, educational, and religious ideals that the unregenerate world can comprehend are but a part of the confusion and darkness of this age when coupled with a rejection of His testimony in regard to His Son as their atoning Saviour” (Chafer, *S*, C4:19/31). “When the doctrine of evil, as to its future, is examined with unprejudiced attention, truth will be discovered which will serve to abolish the Romanist conception of a world-conquering church, or the Protestant ideal of a world transformed by the gospel” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:xxviii) “No doubt will be raised by any intelligent Christian concerning the truth that it is within the range of divine power to transform society in this age, or at any other time. The question is really one of whether world-transformation is the divine purpose for this age” (*ibid.*, 4:17). “The Reformers did not restore all features of doctrine and along with justification by faith they retained the Romish notion that the church is the kingdom, fulfilling the Davidic covenant, and appointed to conquer the world by bringing it under the authority of the church. This idea has prevailed in spite of the clear, uncomplicated testimony of the New Testament that this age must end in unprecedented wickedness” (*ibid.*, p. 257). “...the present tendency in the church to an unscriptural optimism in spite of the evident apostasy” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 194) (See also our discussion of the last days of the church in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)* and our discussion of the apostasy that is associated with the Tribulation in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Prophecy is being fulfilled *now*. Observe! “...a high degree of probability that eschatological fulfillment is in process before our very eyes” (Horner, *FI*, p. 61).

And, as time rolls on toward the inauguration of the Kingdom, we expect objections to the genuine, biblical Kingdom of God to increase, not decrease. “There is no doubt but in the coming struggle with unbelief, preparing the way for Antichrist’s revelation, all such objections will be more persistently urged against Christ” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:522). (See our discussion of the apostasy of the last days of the church in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*, and our discussions of the ideologies and apostasy

that are associated with the Tribulation, the characteristics of the Tribulation and the fact that all nations will ultimately gather against Israel at the end of the Tribulation in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Applications and Admonitions

The Kingdom of God will affect everyone who's ever lived, for better or for worse. Why not, then, while opportunity now presents itself, make it for the better? It is our contention that we would do well to take this doctrine of the Kingdom to heart, that it might add confidence and joy to our faith and greatly enhance our ability to glorify God. "Any doctrine can be held intellectually or speculatively without producing any effect on heart and life" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:327) We therefore now offer specific Kingdom-related applications and admonitions to seven different people groups: to the Jews, to the Gentile nations, to the United States, to the unsaved, to Jehovah's Witnesses, to Christians, and to Tribulation saints.

To the Jews

To our Jewish friends, our doctrine honors you (see our discussion of the various ways our doctrine is Israel-honoring in our discussion of the grammatical-historical hermeneutic in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*). The Kingdom is for you first, even in this Church age. "For I am not ashamed of **the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first** and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). "but glory and honor and peace to every man who does good, **to the Jew first** and also to the Greek" (Rom. 2:10).

Thank you for the the Scriptures (see our discussion of the Jewishness of Scripture in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*), the covenants (see our discussion of God's five covenants with Israel in our chapter *Covenants of the Kingdom*), the prophecies (see our chapter *The Kingdom in Hebrew Prophecy*), the Messiah (see our discussion of the ethnicity of the incarnation in our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*) and the Kingdom (see our discussion of the Jewishness of the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*).

God has not cast off your nation forever (see our discussion of the fact that eventual restoration of the Theocracy is promised in our chapter *Fall of the Kingdom*, and our description of Israel's regeneration, restoration and blessing in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*).

Study the Kingdom. "...influence a Jew... induce an independent and conscientious search of the Scriptures. If such a posture is once assumed, we have no fears respecting the final result" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:415).

Believe now and be saved. "For I am not ashamed of **the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first** and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). "The Jew is not now urged to

recognize his Messiah, but he is urged to believe on a crucified and risen Savior” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:318).

Reign with Christ in the Kingdom (see our discussion of the fact that one of the purposes of the Church Age is to select and prepare kings and priests for the Kingdom in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*, and our discussion of the fact that believers will reign with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*).

Your nation and race will suffer greatly during the Tribulation (see our discussions of the anti-Semitic and persecuting characteristics of the Tribulation, and the fact of Israel’s persecution, especially beginning at the mid-point of the Tribulation, in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*).

However, your nation and your race have a glorious future (see our discussion of national Israel’s future glory in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*).

To the Gentile Nations

Throughout Scripture, Gentile nations are advised to be respectful toward Israel (for God’s sake, for Israel’s sake and for their own sakes) and to be prepared to cede sovereignty to the Son of God, Jesus the Christ when He comes to claim David’s throne and world possession and leadership. “Now Jehovah said unto **Abram**, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And **I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse**. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3). “And **Jacob** went near unto Isaac his father... So he blessed him. And he said... **Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee**” (Gen. 27:22–30) “Ask of me, and **I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession**. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Now therefore **be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way**, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him” (Ps. 2:8–12). “Kings and rulers are admonished to secure right relations with the Christ before His awful judgments begin” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:89). “And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end

thereof shall be with a flood, and even **unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined**” (Dan. 9:26). “*Unto the end shall be war.’... ‘Desolations are determined’... no permanent peace* can come to this sinful world till the Prince of Peace comes down to earth again in glory. ‘Unto the end shall be war.’ We may not like the prophecy; it may humble our rebellious pride; but God hath spoken” (McClain, *DP*, p. 44). “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.** For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?” And the King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**” Then He will also say to those on His left, “**Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.**” Then they themselves also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?” Then He will answer them, saying, “Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**” And **these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life**” (Matt. 25:31-46) “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, **lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in**” (Rom. 11:25) “This also should serve as a warning to the nations, not to allow themselves by any arguments or inducements to enter into a league against Jerusalem” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:112). “The United States... she has been uniformly kind and consid-

erate to the Jews. Such... however, will avail nothing, if such nations resist the restoration of the Theocratic Kingdom and its intended sway; all depends upon their future conduct” (*ibid.*, p. 113). “How vain is the boast of statesman or king, that this or that nation and land will become the greatest that earth shall ever behold. If wise, they would see that this is reserved for the now despised people that stand in covenanted Theocratic relationship with Jesus” (*ibid.*, p. 128). “England, Germany, the United States, and others... notwithstanding the professed claim of ‘Christian nation,’ none of these receive the slightest recognition as such in the Word. The reason for such omission is self-evident” (*ibid.*, 3:15). “...that which gave vitality and force to a Theocracy (viz., God’s personally acting as the Ruler of the nation) is lacking in all other governments, and, therefore, no other can possibly hope to be substituted in its place” (*ibid.*, p. 16). “We are not at liberty to eulogize our form of government at the expense of the Theocracy” (*ibid.*, p. 592). “Until the true God breaks supernaturally once more into the stream of history to establish some effective theocratic controls, as He will at the second coming of His Son as the true mediatorial King, the reconciliation of national security and personal liberty must continue to be a matter of political compromise” (McClain, *GK*, p. 69). “All anti-Semitic prejudice (as well as narrow Semitic pride) arises out of blindness to the benevolent purpose of God” (*ibid.*, p. 212). “One final fact is the re-establishment of Israel as ‘a political state bearing its name and embodying at least a portion of their ancient geographical possession.’ This again illustrates the pro-Zionism so often found among Dispensationalists” [quoting Walvoord, *Millennial Kingdom*, p. 185] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 523). “Ignorance can cause the Gentiles to ‘draw false conclusions’ because they ‘do not see in perspective all the facts relating to the blindness [of Rom 11:25].’ This ignorance has ‘led Gentiles to believe that they were somehow better than Jews,’ and to blame only the Jews for the crucifixion. Hoyt points out that such a conclusion is ‘utterly false,’ for ‘Christ died because of the sin of all people.’ ‘Representatively Gentiles as well as Jews were implicated in the crucifixion’” [quoting Herman A. Hoyt, *First Christian Theology*, p. 129] (*ibid.*, p. 550). “Those that bless this nation [Israel] will be blessed and those that curse it will be cursed. This is God’s foreign policy to the Gentiles in their relationship to the Jewish people” (*ibid.*, p. 756). (See also Dr. Fruchtenbaum’s extended treatment of anti-Semitism in his *Israelology*, pp. 836-839.)

To the United States

In 1884, George Peters penned these strikingly insightful words regarding the future of the United States: “Some present the United States as

the great element for 'the regeneration' of the nations, expressing themselves in eulogies which appropriate the promises solely belonging to Jesus, 'the Son of Man.' Wise statesmen (as Webster, etc.), have pointed out the great evils connected with our system of government, such as result from office-seeking, the licentiousness of the press, the abuse and perversion of suffrage, the dangers of emigration, the corruption of officials, the violence of party spirit, the conflicting interests of sections, and the misunderstanding of the rights of the general government and of individual States. But there is a portent of danger before us far greater than all these, which must eventually result disastrously, and that is, the growth of unbelief, socialism and its kindred brood with their demands. The government is in the hands of the people, and just so soon as the majority becomes leavened with socialistic ideas (which will come when the laboring population becomes more dense, wages become low, labor itself becomes difficult to obtain, distress brings discontent, etc.); then its doctrines respecting capital will be enforced (for the rich being in the minority, will be helpless) legally in the Legislative halls, and a series of spoliations ensue. Each blow at capital relieving distress but temporarily, will be succeeded by another and another, until the means of wealth being exhausted and the motives to its being obtained are destroyed, anarchy, engendered by a fearful experience, will evidence the worth of all such predictions. Unbelief will attack the Church, and in every way cause it to suffer. Both capital, because of its former extortion and monopolies, and the Church, because of its unfaithfulness and worldliness, will then suffer. This may be thought to be a gloomy view of the future, but how can we close our eyes to the fearful increase of infidelity, the danger already threatened, the demands already made, the views of disorganization already held by a multitude, the communistic parties already organized, the facilities already provided for joint action, etc. The aim is finally to control legislation, introduce universal co-operation, make the State a universal co-operative corporation, and enforce, under coercion, a universal and equal distribution of property... Emigration is rapidly swelling their numbers; numerous papers and journals, some with a large daily circulation, adopt and circulate their principles. The people have worshipped Mammon, and their god will bring them misery. 'The National Platform and Principles of the Socialistic Labor Party,' adopted by the National Congress at Newark, N. J., Dec., 1877, has for its motto: 'The earth is man's, and the fulness thereof,' which is but a parody on Ps. 24:1, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' The abuse poured out upon God, Christ, and Christianity is so virulent and blasphemous as to be exceedingly shocking. While some to gain adherents quote Jesus as a Socialistic Reformer

(but refuse his cross), and the Bible as teaching Socialism, Communism, etc., others denominate Christianity ‘Poison, and an eighteen hundred years’ sickness,’ and declare (as *Volkstaat*, No. 25, 1876), ‘that Christianity and Socialism are opposed to each other as fire and water.’ We transcribe only one sentence as indicative of the fiery hate, given by a public speaker: ‘We hold God for an Ass of foolishness; we view God as the greatest evil in the world, and, therefore, declare against God the war.’ (He will meet them in ‘the war,’ and their blasphemy, pride, and boasting will have a terrible fall.) It is this mixture of unbelief, socialism, communism, etc., which will bring this country into an endurance of tribulation. By eloquently expressed appeals to humanitarian ideas, and by ravishing pictures of bountiful help from the State, removal of care, the certainty of competency, freedom from all restraint, and the surety of help under all circumstances, a majority will finally accrue to them, and infidelity will rule: There is one feature that may mitigate the severity of God’s judgments on the United States, provided that it is retained to the end, viz., the general and State governments have ever been friendly to the Jews. So Lawrence (‘The Jews and their Persecutors,’ *Harper’s Mag.*, June, 1874, ref. to Jost’s *Hist. of the Jews*) remarks: ‘A fair Republic sprang up in the New World, that was the first of all the nations to offer a peaceful and happy home to the persecuted people.’ Now God’s threatenings are specially leveled against the nations who in the past or future oppress that people and burden themselves with it; they particularly shall feel His vengeance. Therefore there is propriety in the observation of Wines (*Com. on the Laws of the Anc. Hebrews*, p. 340), who, after referring to the manner in which the Jews were treated in Europe, Africa, and Asia, and how in this country they have from the first enjoyed freedom, equality, protection of rights, etc., says: ‘May we not hope, that, when Jehovah shall judge the nations, He will in mercy remember the land, which has afforded a refuge and a home to the sons of Jacob’” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:779).

To the Unsaved

If the reader has not yet experienced regeneration (being “born again”), or is not sure whether he or she is in a “saved” condition before God, we hope he or she will find this section regarding sin, salvation and life subsequent to salvation particularly helpful (and ideally, eternally life-changing).

Regarding Sin

We are all sinners. “for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23) and our natural inclination, prior to regeneration, is to reject God’s Word. “And **this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light;**

for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed” (John 3:19–20). **“The world cannot hate you; but it hates Me [Jesus] because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil”** (John 7:7). **“For not knowing about God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God”** (Rom. 10:3). **“For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God”** (1 Cor. 1:18). **“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised”** (1 Cor. 2:14). **“Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation’”** (2 Pet. 3:3–4). **“...the heart inclined to love evil, to cherish selfishness, to seek pleasure and gratification, rejects the denial of self and of evil imposed by the Word, and hence seeks, in order to escape the obligations thus presented, to invalidate the Word itself... ‘this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the that light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d,’ John 3:19, 20... The condemnatory nature of both law and Gospel, the requirements of the Bible from the individual, the humbling doctrines associated with Redemption—alas, these form the great stumbling-blocks to the Christian religion”** (Peters, *TTK*, 3:279). **“So long as he refuses to place himself in the position favorable to receive faith and experience its power, man is responsible for the lack of faith... faith is the producer of action... the responsibility arises from a deliberate rejection of the evidence from a wilful choosing not to pay attention to it, from an unwillingness to place themselves in the only position favorable to its attainment, because it makes self-sacrifice imperative... claim the right of being the supreme judge in matters of faith and of thus making the Bible submit to their own judgment”** (*ibid.*, p. 283)

We must recognize our sin. **“And He [the Holy Spirit], when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment”** (John 16:8) **“Johnathan Edwards... ‘That some sinners have a greater conviction of their guilt and misery than others, is because some have more light, or more apprehension of truth, than others. And this**

light and conviction may be from the Spirit of God.’ (*WJE*, 2.13)” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:230)

We must view sin as God does. “He must realize the sinfulness of sin if he is to attain in any degree to the knowledge God possesses” (Chafer, p. 231).

God *hates* sin! “There are six things which **Jehovah hateth**; Yea, seven which are an abomination unto him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood; A heart that deviseth wicked purposes, Feet that are swift in running to mischief, A false witness that uttereth lies, And he that soweth discord among brethren” (Prov. 6:16–19). “It is evidently of measureless importance for God to demonstrate His hatred of evil” (Chafer, *ST*, p. 232).

God cannot condone sin. “Holiness dictates that there shall be no leniency toward evil on the part of God. It is true that He considers our frame and remembers that we are dust; but God never condones sin” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:204). “Holiness condemns sin while the love of God seeks to save the sinner” (*ibid.*, p. 206).

Because of our sin, we are condemned. “He who believes in Him is not judged; **he who does not believe has been judged already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). “So then as through one transgression there resulted **condemnation to all men**, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (Rom. 5:18). “For **God has shut up all in disobedience** that He might show mercy to all” (Rom. 11:32). “In Romans 11:32 the Apostle states that ‘God hath concluded them all in unbelief,’ which unbelief, as has been seen from John 3:18, is the ground of the present condemnation of all men” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:320). “And **you were dead in your trespasses and sins**” (Eph. 2:1)

Regarding Salvation

We can’t possibly do enough good on our own to merit salvation. “because **by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight**; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:20). “Every blessing from God that has ever been experienced came only from the loving mercy of God; yet with that same blasting self-trust, people are now turning to a dependence upon their works. It is far more reasonable and honoring to God to fall helpless into His everlasting arms, and to acknowledge that we rely on His grace alone” (Chafer, *G*, 35%). “To such as seek to come to Him by the law, God is as unapproachable as flaming Sinai” (*ibid.*). “It would be folly indeed to contend that a good life is not more beneficial to the state, to society, or the home than a bad life; but this question

under discussion does not involve the state, society, or the home directly: it is a matter of getting sinners so perfected that they may enjoy the presence of God in heaven forever” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:32). “The merit system represents the best that man can do, while the faith system represents the best that God can do” (*ibid.*, 3:81). “Nothing could be so insecure as a righteousness based on human merit” (*ibid.*, p. 84).

We need regeneration, not reformation. “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God**’” (John 3:3). “The Satanic message for this age will be reformation and self-development, while the message of God is regeneration by the power of the Spirit” (Chafer, *S*, C6:12/19). “...one feature of the last days will be a form of godliness which carefully denies the power of God in salvation” (*ibid.*, C7:21/31). “The word of God makes no appeal to the unsaved for a betterment of life. There is but one issue in this dispensation between God and the unregenerate man, and that is neither character nor conduct; it is the personal appeal of the Gospel of the grace of God. Until the unsaved receive Christ, who is God’s gift in grace, no other issue can be raised” (Chafer, *G*, 26%).

Only God can save us. “And Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ And when the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, ‘Then **who can be saved?**’ And **looking upon them Jesus said to them, ‘With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible**’” (Matt. 19:23-26). “Even though *faith* is possible for the unsaved, nonetheless, no one can believe *unto salvation* without the aid of God’s special grace” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:136). “...we cannot believe without God’s grace” (*ibid.*, p. 148)

God has only one way of saving us. “Jesus said to him, **‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me**’” (John 14:6). “**And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved**” (Acts 4:12). “He made known to us the mystery of **His will, according to His kind intention** which He purposed in Him with a view to **an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.** In Him” (Eph. 1:9-10) “The law ‘was added ... till the seed should come’ (Gal. 3:19); but when the Seed did come, the authority of the Mosaic law was no longer required, or even possible, as a principle of divine rule. It was the

purpose of God to close every door of access to Himself, but one” (Chafer, *G*, 62%). “Language is incapable of expressing the hideous dishonor to God which lurks in gospel appeals that offer salvation based upon divine charity and not on the efficacious blood of Christ” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:256). “The death of Christ was necessary as the only solution of the problem of evil within the range of divine possibilities; and there is, therefore, no substitute for it, no optional choice, nor any salvation apart from it” (*ibid.*, 5:229). “It is not that God ever ceases to be a God of grace; but that it is morally impossible for God to forgive sin outside of Christ, and a hardened resistance to the witness of the Spirit will keep the sinner outside of Christ forever” (McClain, *GK*, p. 315).

Only Jesus can save us. “Jesus said to him, **‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me’**” (John 14:6). “**And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved**” (Acts 4:12). “The only Saviour from sin and its sad consequences that the intelligent believer can recognize is Jesus—Jesus accepted and appropriated as the Scriptures so plainly teach” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:203).

God justifies sinners. “for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, **that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus**” (Rom. 3:26). “But to the one who does not work, but believes in **Him who justifies the ungodly**, his faith is reckoned as righteousness” (Rom. 4:5) “God is not said to be merciful or kind when he justifies the one who believes on Christ; He is said to be *just* (Rom. 3:26)” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:204). “Men are not saved by coaxing mercy out of God; they are saved when they dare to believe God has been merciful enough to provide a Savior and that He is propitious” (*ibid.*, 3:95).

The gospel is the message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. “**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life**” (John 3:16). “Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, **by which also you are saved**, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you **believed** in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and that **He was raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1-4)

We are either lost or saved. “It may be concluded, then, that men are either lost, being under sin, which is to be meritless before God in the is-

sues related to their salvation, or they are perfected forever in Christ by the saving grace of God, which salvation is divinely secured to all who believe” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:320).

You don’t need to settle for things the way they are. “The true David, to whom all belongs in title, is, as it were, in the cave of Adullam, where a few ‘discontented’ ones, those who are not satisfied with such a condition of things—have found their way to Him, and own Him, even in the day of His rejection, as rightful Lord of all” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:56).

God may be convicting you. “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, **the Helper** shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, **when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin**, and righteousness, and judgment; **concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me**; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged” (John 16:7-11).

God may be drawing you. “**No one can come to Me [Jesus], unless the Father who sent Me draws him**” (John 6:44) “Every truly regenerate person will testify that he would not have turned to God apart from that all-important divine drawing of his heart” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:242). “...a work of the Spirit in the heart of the individual unregenerate person, which is essential preparation of that person for an intelligent acceptance of Christ as Savior” (*ibid.*, p. 412). “A preliminary work must be wrought in the heart of those who are unsaved before they can enter, by their own choice, into any saving relationship with Christ. That preliminary work is not a part of their salvation, but is rather an indispensable preparation for it” (*ibid.*, 5:153). “It is the peculiar ministry of the Spirit to testify to the Son and thus bring sinners into the only place where sin can be forgiven” (McClain, *GK*, p. 315).

Faith has always been the basis for entrance into the Kingdom. “For what does the Scripture say? ‘**AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS**’” (Rom. 4:3). “From the inception of the first form of the theocracy in the Garden of Eden, faith was the basis for entrance into the kingdom of the God of heaven on earth” (Pentecost, *TKC*, p. 83).

We are not saved by Law, or by works. “because **by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight**; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:20). “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith **apart from the deeds of the law**” (Rom. 3:28). “Israel alone was delivered from the written commandments of Moses through the

death of Christ. However, both Jew and Gentile were delivered by that death from the hopeless principle of human merit, and from the useless struggle of the flesh” (Chafer, *G*, 69%). “The sanctity of the law is never preserved by those who attempt to keep it. The holy will of God was never wrought by any person other than Christ. The effort of man has universally failed. The supposition that God will be pleased and honored by any fleshly attempt to do His will, is a delusion as old as the race. Those who try to keep the law, or try by their own effort to do the whole will of God, outrage the law at every step by their absolute failure. On the other hand, those who, in recognition of the righteous character of the law, bow before those holy demands, acknowledging their utter failure and inability to fulfill them, and who flee to Christ that they may stand in His redemption and partake of the very righteousness of God in Him and be sheltered under the cross whereon He met every demand of the law for them, are the only ones who really uphold the law, or keep it. ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law’ (Rom. 3:31)” (*ibid.*).

We are not saved by pleading, but by believing. “In no case are divine blessings to be secured by human merit, or by pleading; they await the faith that will appropriate them” (Chafer, *G*, 68%). “The unsaved have no access to God in prayer. ‘But,’ it is often asked, ‘how then can they be saved, if they cannot ask God to save them?’ The answer is simple: No person is ever saved because he asks God to do it. He is saved through grace only when he believes. God is offering salvation to men. He does not need to be implored or moved in their behalf. He has been moved to give His Son to die. What more could He do? This marvelous gift of His grace is for all who will believe” (*ibid.*, 90%).

Believe and be saved now! You should be childlike in your believing. “Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But **Jesus said, ‘Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these’**” (Matt. 19:13-14). “And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, ‘**Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all.**’ And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands upon them” (Mark 10:13-16). You must *believe* in order to be saved. “**He who believes in Him is not judged;** he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has

not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). *Believing* is the only thing you need to do. “And when the jailer had been roused out of sleep and had seen the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!’ And he called for lights and rushed in and, trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, ‘**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**’ **And they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household’**” (Acts 16:27–32). “For we maintain that **a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law**” (Rom. 3:28). “The exercise of faith is the one condition (action) necessary for a person to receive justification before God” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:133). *God is asking you to believe!* “What is it that men are thus implored to do? Simply this: God is satisfied with the solution of the sin question as consummated by Christ in His death, and the sinner is petitioned to be satisfied himself with that which satisfies God” (Chafer, p. 92). It’s your choice. “Agnosticism is better expressed by the phrase, ‘I *will not* believe,’ than by the phrase, ‘I *cannot* believe’” (*ibid.*, 1:166). It’s the most important thing you could ever do. “The most important choice the human heart can ever make is that of the acceptance of Christ as Savior, and the will of man alone is appealed to in this decision” (*ibid.*, p. 251).

Jesus is all you need. “and **through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things**, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses” (Acts 13:39). “and **in Him you have been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority” (Col. 2:10) “**He who has the Son has the life**; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John. 5:12). “The man who has found God in Christ has laid his hand upon the key which explains the riddle of cosmic history” (McClain, *GK*, p. 33).

After death it will be too late. “**He that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy**” (Prov. 29:1). “Now it came about that **the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.’**” **But Abraham said,** “Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad

things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, **between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us**” (Luke 16:22–26). **“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him”** (John 3:36). “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not **come into judgment**, but has **passed out of death** into life” (John 5:24). “And inasmuch as **it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment**” (Heb. 9:27) “Anyone living in this age must be saved now or he will not be saved in a future dispensation” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 316). “Like humans at the point of physical death (Heb. 9:27), once angels have made their final choice, it is eternally too late” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:139). “All the mortal sins of men, grave or less grave, are pardonable before death; whereas after death they are without remission, and endure forever” [quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1a.64.2] (*ibid.*, p. 142). “The Bible is clear that there is no second chance after death (cf. Heb. 9:27). The Revelation records the Great White Throne Judgment, in which those who are not found in the Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire (20:11-15). Luke records Christ’s teaching that once a person dies, he goes either to heaven or hell (16:19-31), and that there is a great gulf fixed ‘so that those who want to pass’ from one to the other cannot (v. 26 NKJV). The whole urgency of responding to God in this life, before we die, further supports the fact that there is no hope beyond the grave (cf. Prov. 29:1; John 3:36; 5:24)” (*ibid.*, p. 397).

Again, it’s your choice. “...the Gospel... man, owing to the duties enjoined and self-denial required, can reject it” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:192). “By reason of the precious but perilous gift of freedom, man is able to say No to God” (McClain, *GK*, p. 359).

Regarding Life Subsequent to Salvation

After salvation, live a godly life. **“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him”** (Col. 2:6) “It should be repeated often that such an exalted position as immutable justification proclaims calls for a heaven-high manner of daily life, not that the sinner can *attain* to or *maintain* by any works of merit a position so exalted, but to the end that he may not *profane* that which God hath wrought in answer to simple faith in Jesus” (Chafer, *ST*, 5:203). “As to their daily needs, they are called to a life of continual trust and dependence upon God through sincere and believing prayer (Matt. 6:1-7:11)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 286).

Pray to God the Father, in Jesus' name, regularly. "The scope of prayer under grace is not narrow: it is as infinite as the eternal interests of the One in whose name we are privileged to pray" (Chafer, *MBT*, 79%). "To pray to Christ is to abandon His mediation by praying to Him, rather than through Him; thereby sacrificing the most vital feature of prayer under grace — prayer in His name. To pray to the Spirit of God is to pray to Him, rather than by Him; and implies that we are, to that degree, depending on our own sufficiency" (*ibid.*, 80%).

Don't be artificially, overly "spiritual." "Experimentally, the believer, when empowered by the Spirit, will be conscious only of the exercise of his own faculties. The Spirit does not disclose His presence directly; His ministry is to reveal and glorify Christ. His presence will be evidenced, however, by the victory that is wrought, which victory could be wrought only by the Spirit" (Chafer, *G*, 60%). "The presence of the Spirit is not disclosed through human emotions and feelings; it is rather detected by the things which He does" (*ibid.*, 91%).

Life will still not be easy. "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but **because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you**" (John 15:18–19). "And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, **Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God**" (Acts 14:21–22). "And **indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted**" (2 Tim. 3:12). "The reader is reminded that while many professors are rejected and few are chosen, it is also true that out of those saved some are but barely saved, as by fire, and cannot expect to enjoy that honor of position that others realize in the coming Kingdom. Prosperity, too, is no sign of God's special favor, for Heb. 12:5–12; James 1:12; Rev. 3:19, etc., clearly teach that trial, adversity, etc., are often but tokens of God's love toward His elect. With Paul (Col. 1:24), they fill up the measure of Christ's sufferings, for being designed as co-heirs, co-rulers with Christ, it is essential that they become in all things Christ-like, imitating Him and cultivating His spirit, which can only be done by being tested and tried, as Jesus Himself was afflicted, so that they may partake of His glory. Enduring temptation and trial is indicative of a proper apprehension of Christ, of the Spirit and truth abiding with us, of our being truly the children of God, of our being the elect. But while enduring, under trial, fighting the good fight of faith, it is not for us to sit in judgment over others who

may be struggling and tried as we are; it is sufficient to realize in our own experience God's leadings and to enjoy the sweet consciousness of His favor in the fulfillment of promises pertaining to the present life" (Peters, *TTK*, 1:417). "...the positive assertions of the Spirit that the world shall always hate, etc., the godly" (*ibid.*, 3:117). "The preaching of the Gospel and the acceptance of the same has always more or less been accompanied by the division predicted by Christ, Luke 12:51-53, and the hatred prophesied, John 15:19... comparatively few families are all believers" (*ibid.*, p. 196) "It is true that the people of God in every age have known in their hearts the joy of the Lord; but all their rejoicings have been tempered by a somber note, as they faced the uncertainties and problems inevitably present in human life this side of the Kingdom" (McClain, *GK*, p. 220). "God is more interested in our holiness than our happiness" (Geisler, *ST*, 4:634).

See also our section addressed *to Christians* below.

To Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses, you've been deceived. Deception is common. "It would seem that Satan still exercises some of his original responsibility, as the defender and promoter of righteousness on which the throne of God must ever rest. Satan's ministers pose as 'ministers of righteousness' (2 Cor 11:15); but reference is made in this text to personal or self-promoted righteousness. The redemptive plan proposes to constitute sinners righteous before God through the merit of Christ which He released and provided for the lost in His death. The constituting of sinners to be righteous through the saving work of Christ is easily believed to be a point of satanic opposition against God. There is nothing else about the gospel which Satan would resist, or concerning which he would 'blind the minds' of those who are lost (2 Cor 4:3-4). The one who specializes in self-promoted righteousness has always been the least able to comprehend and the greatest objector to the doctrine of imputed righteousness" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:59). "His ideal is ever reflected in his ministers who are said to be 'ministers of [personal] righteousness' (2 Cor 11:13-15). It is concerning this gospel of grace by which lost men may be saved, that Satan has cast a veil over the minds of all unregenerate human beings 'lest the light of the glorious gospel... should shine unto them' (2 Cor 4:4). Every observing soul-winner is sooner or later impressed with the more than natural inability of the unsaved to comprehend the offer of salvation apart from human merit by faith alone" (*ibid.*, p. 97). "The value and delusion of a counterfeit are increased by the nearness of its likeness to the real" (*ibid.*, p. 102). "A counterfeit is Satan's most natural method of resisting the purpose of God, since by it he can realize to that extent his de-

sire to be *like* the Most High” (*ibid.*, p. 105). “Their gospel is one of human reason, and appeals to human resources” (*ibid.*, p. 107). “One is directed only at the reformation of the natural man, while the other aims at regeneration through the power of God” (*ibid.*, p. 108). “Any of the great Scriptural subjects which are of universal interest to humanity, such as physical health, life after death, morality, unfulfilled prophecy, or religious forms, may be substituted in the false systems for that which is vital” (*ibid.*). “The secondary things are tangible and seen, while the one essential thing is spiritual and unseen; and Satan has blinded their eyes toward that which is of eternal value” (*ibid.*).

You are difficult to reach. “Since there is so much delusion in a counterfeit, the person most difficult to reach with the gospel of divine grace is the person who is trying to do all that a Christian ought to do, but is doing it as a means of becoming accepted before God. His willing acknowledgement of the value of the Christian life, his unquestioned reception into the fellowship of believers, and his real sincerity in all Christian activities constitute his greatest hindrance. Such a one is more deluded than the person who acknowledges no relationship to God. Both fall short and are lost through their failure to believe on Christ as the all-sufficient Savior; but, naturally, the person who has no false hope is more apt to become conscious of the fact that he is lost than is the person who believes he is a Christian. The law cannot save, and the one who transforms the teachings of grace into a legal system by attempting to do them in order that he may be right with God, and has not believed on Christ, is still unsaved. Turning to meritorious works as a basis of salvation, be those works a precise counterfeit of a true Christian life, is to be under a by-works relation to God, and therefore to be under condemnation; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:231). “...filter... through the... grid” (Horner, *FI*, p. 78)

This writer has affection for you. This is due in large measure to my prior association with you, I’m sure, and also because of your love of the Bible and your dedication to and zeal for Jehovah, and because you are, as I am, looking forward to the Millennial Kingdom.

There are several things that I believe you should be seeking now, including the complete, unvarnished *truth*, “Our desire in all this is to elicit the truth, seeing that truth is useful—leading to other truth, avoiding bigotry, giving motives for action, forming character, commending us to God and man, and is eternal, while error is misleading and injurious” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:465). “...to close our eyes to the truth only indicates lack of faith in God’s own utterances” (*ibid.*, 2:775) *God above earthly reward*, “Martin

Luther... ‘And he who seeks no more than holiness itself, seeks and finds God Himself. But he who seeks reward and flees punishment never finds God but makes reward his god. For that which moves a man to do something is his god.’ (*WLS*, 655-56)” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 320) and, of course, *the Kingdom*. “But **seek first His kingdom** and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). As I hope you’ve seen in this study, a tremendous amount of research has been done on the Kingdom over the past one hundred years by evangelical scholars, research that Jehovah’s Witnesses have for the most part missed out on due to their theological and social isolation. Don’t let the Watchtower Society rob you of the real, biblical Kingdom hope!

Regarding Bible study, I urge you to read and study the Bible for yourself. “And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to **Berea**; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now **these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so**” (Acts 17:10–11). “Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. But **examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good**” (1 Thes. 5:19–21) “**Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth**” (2 Tim. 2:15).

The Holy Spirit is our Teacher. “But **the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you**” (John 14:26). It has been my experience that the Holy Spirit simply enables us to understand and believe the Bible in its plain, obvious sense.

Be willing to believe the Bible, even if you don’t yet understand every single detail. “It is a characteristic of believers, in opposition to unbelievers, to receive all that God says He will perform, even if not able fully or satisfactorily to explain or reconcile all His words and predictions;—and this is properly based upon the reason (derived from reason apprehending God as described), that the wisdom and power of God will be found equal to any emergency that may arise in the fulfillment (in the order given) of His predictions, no matter how inexplicable they may appear unto us” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:522). “Simple faith in what God says is the best protection against all such efforts, and in this fortunately unlearned are as well protected as the most learned” (*ibid.*, 3:243). God is honored when we believe what Scripture says, not when we doubt that it means what it says. Believe what the infallible Bible *says*; not what fallible men say that it “really” means.

Interpret Scripture plainly (see our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*).

Do not spiritualize Kingdom prophecy. “Russell (*Our Lord’s Return*, p. 55), who was for a time in affiliation with Barbour, remarks in opposition to a visible Kingdom and Christ sitting on David’s throne in Palestine, that ‘fleshly Israel is not, and never again will be “the Kingdom of God.” They were once, but it will be taken from them, and given to another people, children of Abraham by faith, the Church. Under the sounding of the seventh trumpet all the Kingdoms of the world (now under the control of Satan) “become the Kingdoms of our Lord.” They pass into the possession of Christ and under the rule of His Kingdom—the devil being bound, Rev. 20:2. Israel, with their capital at Jerusalem, will doubtless be the chief of these fleshly nations [Note: Jehovah’s Witnesses no longer believe that Israel will be “the chief of these fleshly nations”—*ed.*], but it will no more be the heavenly Kingdom than they.’ Hence it is spiritual, etc. The inconsistency of making the Kingdom spiritual because ‘heavenly,’ and admitting that as ‘the Kingdom of God’ and as ‘heavenly’ it once existed in a visible form, is certainly very striking, especially when in this future Kingdom God’s will is to be done on earth as in heaven. The simple fact is this: Russell overlooks the elect condition of the nation, the necessity of our being engrafted into it [technically, we (the church) are, rather, grafted into the Abrahamic root of blessing—*ed.*], the express covenanted relationship of that Kingdom with the nation, the removal of God’s wrath which restores them to their ancient position... All prophecy makes the setting up of this Kingdom contingent with the restoration of that nation, for it is David’s throne and Kingdom (not a type or symbol, but the same Kingdom overthrown) that is the inheritance of David’s Son, the Messiah. As to taking the Kingdom from the nation and giving to others, the general tenor of the Scriptures, as we have shown at length, teaches that to the Jewish nation at the First Advent was tendered, on the condition of repentance, the honor of rulership, kingship, and priesthood in this Kingdom. This tender was refused, and now, lest the purpose of God fail, these rulers are gathered out of other repentant and believing ones that are engrafted. The nation as such, however high its position in the coming Kingdom, cannot, and does, not occupy the noble and exalted stations of honor and glory that these gathered ones—gathered because of their unbelief and rejection—will sustain. But we must refer the reader to our previous statements; given with the scriptural proof, and logically step by step. This we, however, add: these engrafted ones to whom the honor of rulership (inheriting the Kingdom) is given are united with previous ones selected from the nation previously, for they inherit the promises with the ancient worthies. These promises only include the Kingdom advo-

cated by us, and embraced in ‘the sure mercies of David.’ The purely spiritual Kingdom of Barbour, Russell, and others has no existence either in Covenant or in prophecy, and was never heard of until mysticism and spiritualizing exerted their influence upon scriptural interpretation and application” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:122).

Do not add to nor subtract from Scripture. “I testify to everyone who hears **the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city**, which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18–19). “Both those who would add and those who would subtract do so as evidence of their unsaved state” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 539). “These two warnings against additions and subtractions in their context are concerned specifically with the Book of Revelation, and the primary emphasis is not on the Bible as a whole. However, since the Book of the Revelation is the final revelation of God’s Word, the principle behind the warning can be extended to the Bible as a whole, for the Bible as a whole is complete only with the Book of Revelation. Once the last Apostle died, no further inspired books would be written (Eph. 2:11–3:12)” (*ibid.*). “Examples of those who add are the numerous cults that accept other writings as inspired and authoritative and place them on equal grounds with the Bible (i.e., the Mormons with *The Book of Mormon* and Christian Science with their *Key to the Scriptures*). Examples of those who subtract are those who refuse to accept the entire body of Scripture as God’s inspired Word and hold to concepts of partial inspiration or no inspiration. However, both those who add and those who subtract do so because they are not willing to accept the Scriptures as the final authority. This demonstrates their unsaved state. Hence, they will lose out on dwelling in the New Jerusalem, and the Lake of Fire will be their eternal abode” (*ibid.*).

And, do not presume to tell God what He should and should not be and do (regarding His nature, His people, His exercising of justice and wrath, the propriety of the lake of fire, etc.) “For **my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts**” (Isa. 55:8–9). “You will say to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?’ On the contrary, **who are you, O man, who answers back to God?** The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this,’ will it” (Rom. 9:19–20)? “...presuming to point out what is right

and proper for Deity to perform” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:614) “...the same principle adopted by unbelievers, viz., upon what he may regard proper and right for God to say and do in the matter; and then gives the sense which best suits his ideas of God’s character and doings” (*ibid.*, 2:490).

Regarding doctrine, you are right about some things. To the extent that you use a literal hermeneutic, your doctrine is correct. For instance, you are correct that Jehovah is the one true God (see our discussion of the fact that Jehovah, the God of the Bible, is the only true God in our chapter *Presuppositions and Premises*), regarding the exclusivity of truth (see our discussion of the exclusive characteristic of truth in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*), regarding the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible (see our discussions of the Bible’s inspiration and infallibility in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*), regarding the literalness of historical events in the Bible (see our discussion of the truthfulness of the Bible in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*), Jesus’ perfect life (see our discussion of Jesus’ life in our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*), that the Kingdom is a literal government (see our discussion of the fact that the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom is a literal government in our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*), that some humans will survive the Great Tribulation (see our discussions of the survival, gathering and judging of the Tribulation survivors in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*), that there will be a literal one-thousand-year-long earthly kingdom (see our discussion of the fact that the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom is an earthly kingdom in our chapter *Five Facets of the Kingdom*, and our discussion of the fact that the duration of the Millennial Kingdom is one thousand years in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*), that the Millennial Kingdom will be populated by humans (see our description of the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*), and that Jehovah’s Kingdom is the sole and complete answer to mankind’s problems. “In view of the testimony of so extended a body of Old Testament Scripture, none can reasonably doubt but that Jehovah is coming to establish a reign of righteousness in all the earth” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:331). (See our discussion of the purposes of the Kingdom, which include solving mankind’s most pressing problems, in our chapter *A Kingdom Needed*, and our description of the Millennial Kingdom in our chapter *The Millennial Kingdom*.)

However, you are wrong about many things, and are under many illusions. “Departure from the norm in one realm of truth usually carries with it disastrous results in other areas” (Feinberg, *M*, p. 353). Basically, to the extent that you allegorize the Scripture, rather than taking it simply for what it says, your doctrine is incorrect.

Regarding Bible translations, your *New World Translation* is a very poor “translation” of the Bible. For instance, your translators were not at all justified in inserting the name “Jehovah” into the New Testament over two hundred times. “*Jehovah* is a Hebrew term which is not brought forward into the New Testament. Its equivalent is *kyrios*, which title is also applied to the Father and the Spirit. It is a justifiable procedure to treat the name *Jehovah* of the Old Testament as continued in its specific meaning into the New Testament by the name *Lord*” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:334). (For many other serious problems with the *New World Translation*, see *Appendix B: The New World Translation* of this writer’s book *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witnesses*.)

Regarding hermeneutics, I suggest to you that the tried-and-true grammatical-historical hermeneutic (see our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*) is far more scientific and far more reliable than the “faithful and discreet slave’s” allegorical whims.

Regarding the nature of God, you are wrong concerning the deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit and the trinity.

Concerning the deity of Christ, “No instructed Jew who was present missed the fact that Christ asserted of Himself that He is the ‘I am,’ the *Jehovah*, of the Old Testament” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:264). “...the measure of God’s love is reduced to naught if God gave only a creature to man as His love-gift to them” (*ibid.*, p. 279) “Arians... This immeasurable insult to Christ... being motivated by unbelief and being as dark as the natural heart of man” (*ibid.*, p. 320). “May the Spirit, whose work it is to take of the things of Christ and show them unto His own, illuminate the mind of the one who writes and the mind of all those who in patience pursue these pages” (*ibid.*, p. 321)! “The unanimity of belief on the part of all devout scholars that the Angel of Jehovah is the preincarnate second Person of the Trinity” (*ibid.*, p. 327) “...on the divine side, He has a Father and, on the human side, He has a God (John 20:17)” (*ibid.*, p. 336) “As there is no question among professing Christians about the Deity of either the Father or the Spirit, it is reasonable to suppose that there would have been no question raised about the Deity of the Son had He not become incarnate in human form. The Deity of the Son is asserted in the Bible as fully and as clearly in every particular as is the Deity of the Father or the Spirit. On the other hand, the humanity of the Savior is as dogmatically set forth. To those who in their thinking keep these two natures of Christ separate both with respect to substance and manifestation, there is less perplexity about Christ’s Deity. Difficulty arises with those who, assuming that they must blend these natures, attempt to strike an average in which His Deity is lowered and His humanity is exalted

to a point of equivalence. To such persons, the resulting error is twofold: the Deity of the Lord is submerged in doubt and the humanity of the Lord is deprived of all its naturalness. Under those conditions, the Scriptures which so clearly present each of these two natures must either be disputed or qualified beyond effectiveness” (*ibid.*, p. 339). “...the subjection of the Son to the Father is wholly within the relationship of the humanity of the incarnate Person to His Father and is not primarily a subjection of the Deity, or Second Person, to the First Person. Between the two divine Persons there is eternal cooperation, but not subjection. It is further to be seen that subjection to the Creator on the part of man is that which is inherent in the very order of things created, and the God-man cannot be the *perfect* man which the incarnation secures should He not, as man, be wholly subject to the Father” (*ibid.*, p. 363). “The Christian era has seen a reversal of emphasis in its Christology. The early centuries were characterized by discussions calculated to establish the *humanity* of Christ, while the present requirement seems to be the recognition of, and emphasis upon, His Deity” (*ibid.*, p. 365). “He was self-limited in knowledge” (*ibid.*, p. 369) “He who subsisted immutably as the precise form or reality which God is, assumed that which is human, not in place of the divine, but in conjunction with it. He added to Himself the precise form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. He was *man*, but that term was not sufficient to define Him. Because of His theanthropic Person, His manhood, though fully present, was better styled, ‘the likeness of men’” (*ibid.*, p. 378). “Christ emptied Himself of self-interest” (*ibid.*, p. 379) “Christ gave up, as Strong aptly suggests, the ‘independent exercise of the divine attributes’ (*Systematic Theology*, p. 382)” (*ibid.*, p. 381) “Within the umbrella of Christendom will include all types of groups, such as cultic groups which use Christ’s name, but deny His deity” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 613). (See our main discussion of Christ’s deity in our chapter *The King of the Kingdom*.)

Concerning the personality of the Holy Spirit, “...the three elements of personality—intellect, sensibility, and will” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:398) “Every characteristic of Deity belongs as much to the Spirit as to the Father or the Son” (*ibid.*, p. 399). (For a complete discussion of the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit see this writer’s *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witnesses, The Personality of the Holy Spirit*.)

Concerning the trinity, “Recognizing that the word *trinity* is not found in the Sacred Text and that the doctrine which it represents is not directly taught therein, Dr. W. Lindsay Alexander states: ...As a doctrine it is a human induction from the statements of Scripture; —*System of Biblical Theology*, *I*, 94, 95” (Chafer, *ST*, 1:272) “...the greatest mystery of all revealed

truth” (*ibid.*, p. 273) “...no finite mind has ever comprehended how three Persons may form but one Essence” (*ibid.*) “No argument has been advanced against the trinitarian conception other than that it does not conform to the limitations of the mind of man” (*ibid.*, p. 274). “...those who deny the triune existence of the Godhead do not worship the God of the Bible” (*ibid.*, p. 278) “Dr. Robert South (1634-1716) has said of this doctrine: ‘As he that denies it may lose his soul; so he that too much strives to understand it may lose his wits’” (*ibid.*, p. 288) “There is a plurality in the Godhead from all eternity and these in the reciprocity of agent and object have maintained mutual love, glory, knowledge, and communion from everlasting—a relationship so sufficient that infinite demands have been satisfied. To this, creation, coming later in time, could add nothing” (*ibid.*, p. 297). “Distinctiveness in the Godhead does not violate unity, it only violates uniformity” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 759). “One of the difficulties, especially in Western theology, is that *mysteries* are often treated as if they were *problems*. At this point, Gabriel Marcel’s distinction is very helpful. He notes that problems call for a *solution*, but mysteries call for *meditation*. Problems demand *extensive* study (like knowing more words to solve a crossword puzzle), whereas mysteries require *intensive* study. In view of this distinction, the Trinity should be treated as a mystery, not a problem. Once the basic elements are understood, we should not attempt to unscrew the inscrutable. We should not analyze it, but admire it; we should not dissect it, but devote ourselves to it. It is an object of worship, not scholarship. As has been well said, if one tries to understand it completely (as a problem), he may lose his mind, and if he does not believe it sincerely, he may lose his soul! Once we understand God’s attributes and ineffable nature, we need more reverence, not more research. It would appear that there is a place for both the intellectual and the mystical. Rationally, we need to sort out false from true beliefs about God. Also, we need to demonstrate that what we believe about God is not contradictory. However, once the borders of orthodoxy have been established, based on Scripture and good reason, we should be content to enjoy the mystery of God’s ineffability” (Geisler, *ST*, 2:252). “J.I. Packer [in *Knowing God*, p. 154]... ‘the triune Jehovah’” (*ibid.*, p. 403) “...within a universality... diversity... The triunity of the only blessed God comprises the personal diversity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (Horner, *FI*, p. 242). (See also *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witnesses, The Trinity*.)

Regarding the nature of man, you are wrong about the spirit of man (see *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witnesses, The Spirit of Man*), the soul of man (see *ibid.*, *The Soul of Man*), the nature of death (see our discussion of

the intermediate state of the dead in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, The Nature of Death*), immediate afterlife (see the discussion of the intermediate state of the dead in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, The Nature of Death*), resurrection: the bodily resurrection of Christ (see our discussion of the bodily resurrection of Christ in our chapter *King of the Kingdom*), the bodily resurrection of all believers and unbelievers, “Barbour (*Three Worlds*, p. 44)... his Gnostic theory of a spiritual body and spiritual kingdom” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:615) (see our discussion of the fact that the first resurrection is a bodily resurrection in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom* and our discussion of the fact that the second resurrection is also a bodily resurrection in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*), the timing and nature of the first resurrection (see our discussion of the first resurrection in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*), the timing and nature of the second resurrection (see our discussion of the second resurrection in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*), and the nature of hell: the nature of Hades (see our discussion of the intermediate state of the dead in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*), and the nature of Gehenna or the lake of fire (see our chapter *The Lake of Fire*).

Regarding God's people, you are wrong about Israel (see our discussions of the identity of Israel in nearly every chapter of this study), the church (see our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*), and “God's organization.” “In 2 Peter 2:1-2 we are warned against ‘False Teachers’ who shall privately bring in ‘damnable heresies,’ even denying the Lord that bought them, such as... Russellites” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 174). The modern-day Jehovah's Witnesses are not found anywhere in prophetic Scripture due to the simple fact that they are not, and never have been, part of God's theocratic Plan. (See *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, God's Organization*.) You are also wrong about the “faithful and discreet slave” (see *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, The Faithful and Discreet Slave*), the “little flock” and “other sheep:” the “little flock” were of the Jewish “fold;” the “other sheep” are Gentiles. “And I have other sheep, which are not of **this fold**; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd” (John 10:16). “Jesus has other sheep... *which are not of this fold* (v. 16). The sheep of *this fold* are the Jewish sheep. The *fold* is Israel and the believing sheep of *this fold* are the Remnant of Israel. The *other sheep* are the Gentile believers. The Good Shepherd will unite together the believing Jewish and Gentile sheep to become *one flock under one shepherd*. This new *one flock* is the same as the *one new man* of Ephesians 2:11-16. It is the Church, the Body of Messi-

ah with the Messiah as its Head” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 827). “Therefore remember, that formerly you, the **Gentiles** in the flesh, who are called ‘Uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘Circumcision,’ which is performed in the flesh by human hands — remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of **Israel**, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who **made both groups into one**, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into **one new man**, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in **one body** to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity” (Eph. 2:11-16). “Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that **Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad**” (John 11:51-52). You are wrong about the 144,000. “““I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and **the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan**””” (Rev. 2:9) “““Behold, **I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews, and are not, but lie — behold, I will make them to come and bow down at your feet, and to know that I have loved you**””” (Rev. 3:9-10) “It is a matter of amazement how coolly and deliberately men can appropriate Scripture to themselves which relates to the future. Sects, at various times, have professed to be those sealed ones of Rev. 14... Error constantly repeats itself; and to-day we have some of the Seventh Day Adventists (as e.g. seen in the writings of a Mrs. White) claiming that the Adventists of their party constitute this number. Others adopt the same view in respect to their own particular sect or organization... the Seventh Day Adventists... the lack of propriety in appropriating such a magnificent portraiture to their present condition... It is simply amazing what self-confidence and credulity can do in the way of Scripture application to sect in order to bring forth claims of professed purity and pre-eminence” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:323). “...the untold millions of the martyrs” (Anderson, *SOG*, p. 7) “What then was the purpose of listing the tribes separately if it did not refer to literal Israel” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 57)? (See our discussion of the sealing of the 144,000 in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.) You are also wrong in your premature identification of the “great crowd” (see the discus-

sion of the salvation of the great multitude in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*), the number of Christians that can validly claim the heavenly hope (see our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)* and our discussion of the sealing of the 144,000 in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*), and the heavenly hope for all Christians alive now (see our chapters *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)* and *The Rapture of the Church*).

Regarding man's salvation, you are wrong about the gospel. You are wrong about the present gospel. "In the light of eternal issues it would be better that a tongue should be stilled in death rather than to voice mis-statements concerning the way of salvation through Christ. Dealing with the destiny of men is a responsibility as limitless as eternity to which they hasten" (Chafer, *G*, 99%). (See our discussion of the present gospel in our section *To the Unsaved* above.) You are also wrong about the gospel of the kingdom (see our discussion of "this good news of the Kingdom" being preached in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*), salvation (see *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, Salvation*), justification (see *ibid., Justification*), and the sufficiency of Christ's atonement. "Only God can perform a sacrifice that will meet the demands of infinite holiness" (Chafer, *ST*, 1:358). "It is, therefore, not the blood of a human victim, but the blood of Christ who is God (cf. Acts 20:28, where the blood is said to be the blood of God)" (*ibid.*). "God did not merely use the human Jesus as a sacrifice; God was *in* Christ as a reconciling agent" (*ibid.*, p. 370). "The higher the person of Christ, the greater the glory of God in the gift of His Son" (*ibid.*, 5:11). "Being God's own devised solution of His greatest problem—the sin question—it is, like all His works, efficacious to the point of infinity. Nothing of man's values need be added to it; nor can it be increased in value by any human effort when once it is applied to an individual" (*ibid.*, p. 230). This writer would add that as long as you believe you have something to contribute to your salvation, you have not yet believed on Christ in the biblical sense. (See also *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, Sufficiency of Christ's Redemption*.) You are wrong regarding the necessity of being born again to see or enter the Kingdom (see *ibid., Being Born Again*), a Christian's relationship with Christ, (see *ibid., Relationship with Christ*), Christian freedom, (see *ibid., Christian Freedom*), and witnessing (see our discussion of "this good news of the Kingdom" being preached in the section *Events of the Last Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*; see also *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses, The Gospel and Witnessing*).

Regarding the last days, you are wrong about the desirability of being on earth during the Tribulation. **“Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it”** (Amos 5:18-20)? (See our chapters *The Rapture of the Church* and *The Great Tribulation*.) You are also wrong about the Rapture of the church (see our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*), the Great Tribulation (see our chapter *The Great Tribulation*), and the return of Christ. “We cannot possibly receive Russell’s view (*Our Lord’s Return*, p. 62, etc.), which indorses Barbour’s (*Three Worlds*) position: (1) that Jesus has already come, is now present and is (mentally) inspecting the guests of the marriage; (2) that we are already in the time of the harvest... The theory evidences a confusion of ideas” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:334) “Barbour’s theory (*Three Worlds*) of Christ’s necessary invisibility because He has a spiritual body” (*ibid.*, p. 350). “We reject as utterly untenable the theory of Barbour and others (as seen e.g. in *Herald of the Morning*, Aug. 1st, 1877), who, basing their view on some unproven chronological positions, declare that “the day of the Lord” commenced in the autumn of 1874” (*ibid.*, p. 413). (See our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*.) You are wrong about 1914 and the Gentile times. “These times of the Gentiles have been variously estimated to accord with some favorite chronological views, so that the times of Lev. 26 and Dan. 4, have had various endings (depending on the commencement) given to them, even extending to A.D. 1918 (Habershon, *Guide*, p. 34), and to A.D. 1923 (by Guinness in his recent work, *Approaching End*)” (*ibid.*, p. 774). (See our discussion of the times of the Gentiles in our chapters *The Decline and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*, *The Great Tribulation* and *The Second Coming of the King*; see also *Reasoning with Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 1914.) You are wrong about the timing and manner of personal judgment. “...apply (as e.g. Barbour, *Three Worlds*, pp. 62-88) passages describing a future reward of works at Christ’s Coming, as not descriptive of the resurrected and translated saints, but of those living in ‘the restitution age,’ when the whole tenor and spirit of the New Test. is to make them applicable to all believers, from the First Advent down to the Second. A theory that can misapply such passages is necessarily defective” (*ibid.*, p. 393). (See our discussion of the judgment and rewarding of the church in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*, our discussion of the gathering and judgment of Jewish and Gentile Tribulation survivors in our chapter *Inauguration of the King-*

dom, and our discussion of the judgment of the lost at the great white throne judgment in our chapter *The Lake of Fire*.) You are wrong about many details of the Millennial Kingdom, including Israel's role therein (see our chapters *Five Facets of the Kingdom* and *The Millennial Kingdom*), and the new heaven and new earth (see our discussion of the new heaven and new earth in our chapter *The Eternal Order*).

Regarding Christians, contrary to what your organization's leaders have taught you, Christians don't hate Jehovah "...among Christians there are presently many who fear and love Jehovah, the God of Israel" [quoting W. a Brakel, *The Christians' Reasonable Service*, IV, pp. 530-531 (Horner, *FI*, p. 155)].

Regarding the Watchtower Society, you need to know that there are serious problems with its foundation, identity, leaders, motives, activities, message and standing before God.

Regarding its foundation, it was founded on error. C. T. Russell was in unbelief regarding much foundational doctrine (see George Peters' unfavorable critiques of Russell's doctrine throughout this book), and God cannot and did not bless his unbelief.

Regarding its identity, it is a cult, a counterfeit religious system. "Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For **I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures**" (1 Cor. 15:1-4) "But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8-9). "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19). "Cults are now multiplying and their appearance is restricted to very recent times" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:111). "[cultic systems]... No one can anticipate the number that will yet appear or the confusion of doctrine they will engender; but for each and all there is but one acid test, namely, What place

does it give to the redeeming grace of God made possible only through the death and shed blood of Christ” (*ibid.*)? “As someone has truly said, ‘the posture of impartiality’ is generally a very deceptive thing” (McClain, *GK*, p. xi). “It is a sound political and ecclesiastical principle that the people of a church or a nation in the long run get the kind of leaders that they deserve... their selfish interest in the mere physical benefits of the impending Kingdom” (*ibid.*, p. 316) “The idea of men having authority to dispense the Grace of God in saving the soul should be left to the Dark Ages of theology where it belongs” (*ibid.*, p. 330). “...cults—... Jehovah’s Witnesses” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 78) “...cultic groups that claim to believe in Jesus but deny something essential, such as His deity” (*ibid.*, p. 667) “Catholicism has institutionalized salvation and thus corrupted the pure grace of God by placing it under the control of a human hierarchy” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:277). “How adherents live is, at best, a manifestation of their moral code, which may or may not have anything to do with whether their religion’s central teachings about God and salvation are true... the moral preeminence of Christianity does not rest on the imperfection of Christ’s followers but on the perfection of Jesus Christ Himself” (*ibid.*, p. 419). “Sincerity is not a test of reality” (*ibid.*, p. 421). It is a false prophet: consider its prophetic record concerning 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, 1941, 1975, etc. “All divine prophecy is based on speaking in the name of Jehovah... the assumption of the prophetic office without being divinely called, was... treason to the State, and hence the severity of the penalty, death” (Peters, *TTK*, p. 599). The Watchtower Society is a false kingdom (see our discussion of the fact that the Kingdom is not the Watchtower Society in our chapter *Postponement of the Kingdom*).

Regarding its leaders, they are inept. Reconciling all the prophetic Scriptures without resorting to gross allegorizing is apparently beyond their capabilities. They are theological quacks. Compare Russell, Rutherford, Franz and Knorr with, for instance, Peters, Chafer, Pentecost, Walvoord, Ryrie, Fruchtenbaum and Geisler. They have no valid authority. The apostles were inspired and were therefore authoritative; the governing body of Jehovah’s Witnesses is not inspired. We have the apostles’ writings which *are* authoritative. From this writer’s viewpoint, the governing body’s grip on control appears to be entirely carnal. And finally, they have usurped and superseded the things of God: they have usurped the authority of God’s Word (they have usurped Scripture’s authority to interpret itself, with the result that Jehovah’s Witnesses’ faith is placed not in Jehovah’s words but rather in their leaders’ words), and by insisting that we cannot have an approved relationship with God without associating with them, they have

usurped Jesus' mediation. "For **there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus**" (1 Tim. 2:5)

Regarding its motives, it is driven by its leaders to steal, kill and destroy. "**The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy**; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (John 10:10). The Watchtower Society is attempting to steal the earthly Kingdom from Israel and betrothal to Christ and rulership in the Kingdom from the church, but it cannot and will not succeed. In the long run it will not be allowed to maintain even the illusion of a successful theft. The Watchtower Society kills those who disagree with it, via its extreme shunning policies, by which Jehovah's Witnesses are taught to treat former Jehovah's Witnesses as though they were dead, and destroys families (for instance, this writer had been shunned by his Jehovah's Witness brother for twenty-six years, up until his death just a few months ago). It also literally kills its members via its prohibition of blood transfusions and through the extreme mental and emotional stresses that its works-based religion places on them (sadly, my brother died from complications [hepatic cirrhosis of the liver] from chronic alcoholism, undoubtedly precipitated and exacerbated by the stresses and unrelieved guilt of life in the Watchtower Society's "spiritual paradise"). It also destroys genuine Christian faith, that is, trust in the biblical Christ to the exclusion of trust in anything and everything else. Other unsavory motives of the Watchtower organization include unashamed self-promotion, self-aggrandizement and self-service. "So little regard have such writers for the interests and feelings of their fellow men, that they only produce the class of evidence which they deem favorable to themselves" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:357)

Regarding its activities, it misrepresents Christian doctrine, for instance the doctrine of the trinity, misrepresenting it as teaching "three gods," "Jesus is the Father," etc. "A theory, however plausible, that requires bolstering up by misrepresenting others, must have but feeble supports" (Peters, *TTK*, 2:122). It squelches God, not allowing Him to speak for Himself through His Word without its interposition. It blasphemes God, ascribing the doctrines of the deity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit to Satan, and also ascribing the doctrine of eternal punishment to Satan. "Pinnock [in Clark Pinnock, 'The Destruction of the Finally Impenitent' in *Criswell Theological Review*, pp. 246-247] wrote... 'endless torment... Surely a God who would do such a thing is more nearly like Satan than like God.' This caution by Millard Erickson [in *Evangelical Mind and Heart*, p. 152] is to the point: One who makes such claims 'had better be very certain he is correct. For if he is wrong, then he is guilty of blasphemy'" (Geisler,

ST, 4:392). And, it is abusive to its people. “That ‘power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely’ is true no matter what kind of church exercises episcopal government” (*ibid.*, p. 94). “When religion is prostituted, it moves from the position of servanthood to the position of lordship, where it begins to rule” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 687).

Regarding its message, it publishes a false gospel (see our identification of the true gospel in our section *To the Lost* above). The “gospel” of “God’s established (since 1914) kingdom” is a false gospel. The Jehovah’s Witness leadership hates the the genuine, biblical gospel of Jesus Christ because, among other things, it destroys its authority.

Regarding its standing before God, the Watchtower Society is in unbelief. It is in a constant struggle against the plain (and true) understanding of Scripture. It encourages unbelief in the true, fully-God and fully-man Messiah of the Bible. It is also unchristian. The vast majority of its “Christian” membership is happy to have no hope of ever seeing Jesus! It is accursed. **“But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed”** (Gal. 1:8–9). It serves as neither Jehovah’s nor Jesus’ witnesses. The Jews are Jehovah’s witnesses (Isa. 43:10); Christians are Jesus’ witnesses (Acts 1:8); the Watchtower Society serves as nothing but its own self-promoting and self-incriminating witness.

Regarding salvation, we’re now living in the Church Age. The invitation to be with Christ as a member of Jesus’ body and bride is still open to any and all who will come (see our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*). This is the best possible destiny ever. Please don’t miss it! You shouldn’t want to try to make it through the horrible Great Tribulation (see our chapter *The Great Tribulation*). You can instead have the biblical hope of escaping it entirely (see our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*)!

“Dedication to Jehovah” is not salvation. “A pseudo self-dedication to God is a rare bit of religion with which the unsaved may conjure. The tragedy is that out of such a delusion those who embrace it are likely never to be delivered by a true faith in Christ as Savior” (Chafer, *ST*, 3:385).

Believing a false gospel cannot save you. “If we’re walking on a frozen lake, it isn’t the strength of our faith in the ice that matters but the strength of the ice on which we stand that makes the difference” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:510).

Paul warns against preaching “another gospel.” **“But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.**

As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" (Gal 1:8-10)

Paul's gospel is not the "good news of Jehovah's established (since 1914) kingdom." "Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also **you received**, in which also you stand, **by which also you are saved**, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you **believed** in vain. For I delivered to you **as of first importance** what I also received, that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and that **He was raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1Cor 15:1-4)

Only Christ's work, apart from yours, can save you. "For we maintain that **a man is justified by faith apart from works** of the Law" (Rom. 3:28). "The sinner, then in the last analysis, is saved on a meritorious basis, but it is the merit of the One who is made unto him the very righteousness of God" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:322). "The reckoning of all in unbelief is a necessity if all human beings are to be placed before God as those whose meritorious structure has been torn away and who are now eligible to receive as a gift from God all that enters into the new creation" (*ibid.*).

Reformation is not enough. *Regeneration* is needed. "The preacher must ever be on his guard to discourage the tendency of the natural man to move along lines of reformation rather than regeneration" (Chafer, *ST*, 3:388).

You *must* be born again! "Jesus answered and said to him [Nicodemus], 'Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **Do not marvel that I said to you, "You must be born again"**'" (John 3:3-8). "Peter said to Him, 'Never shall You wash my feet!' **Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me'**" (John 13:8). "Noel (*Brief Inquiry*, p. 124): '...If God the Holy Ghost regenerate not our hearts, He will never regenerate our bodies'" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:328). "It should be remembered that argument does not create divine enlightenment. Only by the new birth can one 'see the kingdom of God'" (Chafer, *ST*, 1:162). "There can be no entrance into the Kingdom, except as men are 'born again' (John 3:3)" (McClain, *GK*, p. 286).

You need to believe and be saved now:

You only need to believe, but you need to believe in a *saving* way. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** should not perish, but **have eternal life**” (John 3:16). “**He who believes in the Son has eternal life**; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36). “**Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life**” (John 5:24). “but these have been written that you may **believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that **believing you may have life in His name**” (John 20:31). “The faith which saves does not consist in the adoption of a series of articuli fundamentales primarii, but in an absolute and truthful surrender of one’s self to the personal Saviour; a surrender of which the simplest child is capable” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:418). “The only attitude that a meritless person under sin could reasonably maintain toward so great and supernatural a salvation is to trust Another who is mighty to save to accomplish it *all*. This is saving faith; and no more is, nor reasonably could be, required of any unsaved person” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:323). “Nominal faith in the Atonement will not effect change in the sinner; nominal faith is not saving faith (cf. James 2). *Saving* faith involves trust, dependence, and repentance—all of which bring change in—and of—one’s life” (Geisler, 3:251). “In John’s entire gospel, only one condition is laid down for obtaining eternal life: *belief* (3:16, 36; 5:24; 20:31, et al.)” (*ibid.*, p. 266). “If ‘confess[ing] with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”’ (Rom. 10:9) means acknowledging that Jesus is Deity, it follows logically that belief in His deity is normatively necessary for New Testament salvation” (*ibid.*, p. 543). “that **if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved**” (Rom. 10:9) “In summation, for salvation today, it is necessary that a person explicitly believe... God’s unity; Christ’s deity, atoning death, and bodily resurrection; the necessity of God’s grace; and the necessity of our faith... human depravity; Christ’s virgin birth, sinlessness, and humanity; and the Trinity—need only be believed implicitly and not denied explicitly in order for a person to receive salvation” (Geisler, *ST*, p. 545). “...no one who denies the deity of Christ qualifies for salvation by normative New Testament standards” (*ibid.*, p. 550). “In conclusion, it is possible that God could save someone without explicit faith in Christ’s deity, provided if that one had a correct understanding, he or she *would* believe. Nevertheless, given the nature of God, heaven, and the need to believe in order to enter, it does not seem

possible that God could save anyone today who, with proper understanding and subsequent opportunity, *does not* have (or *would not* have come to) explicit faith in Christ's deity" (*ibid.*).

Be delivered now from the power of darkness. "It is by salvation alone that any deliverance can be had from the power of darkness. Without this salvation Satan can still claim all his own" (Chafer, *ST*, 2:105).

During the Tribulation it may be too late for you. "and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, **because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth**, but took pleasure in wickedness" (2 Thes. 2:10-12). (See the description of the Tribulation's characteristic of deception in our chapter *The Great Tribulation*.)

Come to Jesus. "**Come to Me**, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). "**You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life**" (John 5:39-40).

Be Christ-centered; beware of bibliolatry. "Bibliology is a proper pursuit, but bibliolatry is not. Orthodoxy is right when it insists on being Bible-based but wrong when it becomes Bible-centered rather than Christ-centered" (Geisler, *ST*, 1:381). "Surely the aim of Scripture is not that we merely know more propositional truth but that we have an encounter with the person who is the Truth (John 14:6)" (*ibid.*, p. 382). "**Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me'**" (John 14:6).

Do not trust in yourself or in your own "integrity" for salvation. "Christ, through His death, became the end of the reign of law; as He, through His death, is the end of confidence in self-works for all who put their trust in Him" (Chafer, *G*, 56%).

You're not righteous. "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, **And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment**; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away" (Isa. 64:6). "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, "**God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.**" But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast,

saying, **“God, be merciful to me, the sinner!”** I tell you, **this man went down to his house justified rather than the other;** for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:10-14). **“For not knowing about God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God”** (Rom. 10:3). “The best human work could but mar and spoil the divine ideal” (Chafer, *G*, 16%). “Whatever righteousness we have is self-righteousness, which Jesus condemned (Luke 18:10-14)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:244). “It is only *our* righteousness (*self*-righteousness) that is abhorrent in God’s eyes (cf. Isa. 64:6; Rom. 10:3)” (*ibid.*, p. 268).

You cannot earn salvation. Eternal life is a gift. “even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may **give eternal life**” (John 17:2). “Now that **no one is justified by the Law before God** is evident; for, “The righteous man shall live by faith” (Gal. 3:11). **“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10). “And He said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. **I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost**” (Rev. 21:6). “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And **let the one who is thirsty come;** let the one who wishes **take the water of life without cost**” (Rev. 22:17). “We work *from* our salvation but never *for* it (Gal. 3:11; Eph. 2:8-10)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:266). “Thomas Aquinas... Eph. 2:10... ‘the reason why God saves man by faith without any preceding merits, that no man may glory.’ (*CE*, 95-96)” (*ibid.*, p. 293) “Martin Luther... ‘To want to merit Grace by works which precede faith is to want to appease God by sins; which is nothing but adding sins to sins, laughing at God, and provoking His wrath’ (*WLS*, 604)” (*ibid.*). “Earl Radmacher... ‘Everyone prefers the feeling of being able to do something to be saved. And once the door is open to his kind of thinking, the whole emphasis shifts from salvation as a gift from God. That kind of thinking accounts for the fact that none of the major religions of the world, with the exception of Christianity, offers salvation as a gift apart from any human effort at all.’ (*S*, 115)” (*ibid.*, p. 295) “Millard Erickson... ‘Even faith is not some good work which God must reward with salvation. It is God’s gift. It is not the cause of our salvation, but the means by which we receive it. And, contrary to the thinking of some, it has always been the means of salvation.’

(*CT*, 959)” (*ibid.*) “John Chrysostom... ‘Not that God has forbidden works, but forbidden us to be justified by works.’ (*HE*, 4.2.9 (*IOEP*) 2:140 as cited in Oden, *ACCSNT*, 8:134)” (*ibid.*). “Earl Radmacher... ‘Works give evidence of faith and of ongoing salvation from sin’s power.’ (*S*, 172-73)” (*ibid.*, p. 297) “...the act of receiving a gift by faith is no more meritorious than a beggar receiving a handout” (*ibid.*, p. 488) “Salvation is by grace through faith in the Messiah alone, plus nothing” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 779).

Let God justify you. “But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus**; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, **that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus**” (Rom. 3:21-26). “There is no forgiveness of those who choose to attempt to pay for their own debt” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:250).

Christ’s redemption is sufficient for you. “**There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**” (Rom. 8:1). “If our iniquities are laid on Him (Jesus), then they are not on Us. Isa. 53:5, 6” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 108). “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and **Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all**” (Isa. 53:5–6). “By Gospel preaching, sinners are to be told that they may now stand forever pardoned before God: not because God is gracious enough to excuse their sins; but because there is plentiful redemption through the blood that has been shed (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7)” (Chafer, *G*, 8%). “Christ as the sufficient Saviour” (*ibid.*, 64%) “The moral problem, which is felt to some degree by every human being, is seized upon by almost every unscriptural system. The idea that man will stand on a basis of personal worthiness has been the chief heresy, opposing the central doctrine of grace, from the time of Christ’s death to the present hour” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:110). “The righteousness which is the basis of His justifying decree is no less than the *absolute* righteousness of God made available through Christ and is imputed to all who believe” (*ibid.*, p. 276). “Salvation by grace is according to a plan which is wholly within God and therefore cannot incorpo-

rate anything, even human merit, into its execution. It is a standardized whole, complete in all its parts, which proceeds from God and, being itself infinitely perfect, leaves no place for any human contribution” (*ibid.*, p. 321). “If one persists in demanding that his own merit shall be credited he cannot be saved by grace, since God is not patching up imperfect structures” (*ibid.*). “The purpose of grace is ‘to save those who believe in the finished work of Christ’” [quoting Feinberg, *Premill or Amill?*, pp. 138-145] (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 494). “Any attempt, even by Christians, to use the law as a basis for a standing before God led inevitably to the sin of ‘boasting,’ that is, faith in self rather than faith in God” [quoting D.R. de Lacey, *The Sabbath/Sunday Question and the Law in the Pauline Corpus*, p. 175] (*ibid.*, p. 661). “The death of the infinite has infinite value, which is more than sufficient to atone for finite sins” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:250). “From God’s perspective, the work of the Cross was an accomplished fact from all eternity (Rev. 13:8; Eph. 1:4). This means that in God’s eyes—in the eyes of Him who sees with infallible foreknowledge—all our sins (past, present, and future) were already covered before we were born” (*ibid.*, p. 315). “And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose **name** has not been **written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb** who has been slain” (Rev. 13:8). “just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.” (Eph. 1:4)

Let Jesus keep you. “**My sheep** hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and **they shall never perish**; and **no one shall snatch them out of My hand**. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one**” (John 10:27–30). “**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?** Just as it is written, ‘FOR THY SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.’ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For **I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord**” (Rom. 8:34–39). “For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for **I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day**” (2 Tim. 1:12). “Now to Him

who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy” (Jude 1:24) “According to the Scriptures, God alone can save, and God alone can keep. All that will have been done when God’s saving work is completed, will be seen to be ‘his workmanship” (Chafer, *G*, 11%).

Let God work in you to carry out His will. “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For **we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them”** (Eph. 2:8-10). “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation** with fear and trembling; **for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure”** (Phil. 2:12-13). “God works salvation *in us* by His justification, and we work *out* our salvation through sanctification by His grace (Phil. 2:12-13)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:267). “Neither initial righteousness (justification) nor progressive righteousness (sanctification) is received by or conditioned on meritorious works. Both are received by grace through faith alone” (*ibid.*, p. 270). “We do not work *for* God’s grace but *from it*” (*ibid.*, p. 273).

You can be eternally secure. “Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life”** (John 5:24). “**My sheep** hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and **they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.** My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one”** (John 10:27–30). “Believers are adopted into God’s family before the creation of time. God knew in advance everything that we would do, even after we had been saved, including all of our sins. Nevertheless, *there is nothing that can undo an eternal decree of God* (cf. Rom. 11:29). Hence, those who are adopted as His children are eternally secure—there is no such scriptural reality as *unadoption*. He chose us because He wanted us, even though He knew all things from eternity” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:310). “for **the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable”** (Rom. 11:29). “God ends what He begins” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:311). “Since our salvation does not depend on our faithfulness but on God’s (2 Tim. 2:13), our perseverance is assured” (*ibid.*, p. 312). “**If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself”** (2 Tim. 2:13).

You can have assurance of salvation. **“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life”** (John 5:24). “For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because **the worshipers**, having once been cleansed, would **no longer have had consciousness of sins**” (Heb. 10:)? “(Heb 10:1-2). There is no intimation here that the Christian will not be conscious of unconfessed sin in his life; it is rather that the whole record of past sins, having been forgiven as a part of salvation, the purged conscience will not be exercised over them. This specific Scripture presents a vital test which may prove whether one is saved and may be applied to any professed believer” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:198). “And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. **And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us**” (1 John. 3:24). **“By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit”** (1 John. 4:13). **“The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself;** the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son. **And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life”** (1 John. 5:10-12). “These things I have **written** to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **in order that you may know that you have eternal life**” (1 John. 5:13). “The certainty of being engrafted, and thus becoming of ‘the elect,’ is not found in a process of reasoning, or in a mere connection with the Church, or in observance of religious rites, but is alone found in a Christian consciousness of acceptance, resulting from justification by faith in a personal Saviour, an appropriation of the Messiah which is evidenced by the accompanying fruits of the Spirit. To this self-consciousness, supported by a fruitage, the Scriptures constantly appeal; to this reality, affording a satisfactory assurance of salvation, believers in successive generations have continually referred; and it alone can afford a soul-satisfying proof, inspiring love, hope, joy, and peace. Personal, individual experience on this point is essential to happiness” (Peters, *TTK*, 1:401). “...assurances respecting the safety and salvation of the believer, the deep self-consciousness of personal religious experience confirmatory of this” (*ibid.*, 2:386) “...the believer is conscious of sins forgiven (a judicial work) through the atoning

sacrifice, of a marvellous peace bestowed, of an extraordinary change of heart experienced, of a supreme love inspired, so that he has the assurance that having the Son he hath also life” (*ibid.*). “The Bible challenges each one to test the truth by an experimental knowledge of it: ‘if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself,’ John 7:17” (*ibid.*, 3:280). “The Christian consciousness is independent of science, being based upon a personal experience of the truth” (*ibid.*, p. 281) “The results in heart and life are such that the believer possesses in himself a conclusive personal evidence of the truth and divinity of the Scriptures. The attacks of unbelieving science do not effect him, for he realizes the truth in God’s dear Son, and he is content, believing that in the ultimate outcome all things—even those supposed to be antagonistic—will be found to be in harmony with Revelation, either, on the one hand, by science enlarging its views and changing its deductions; or by faith, on the other hand, rightly apprehending the divine teaching and changing its conclusions; or by the Advent and its additional revelations affording us the light needed for a complete reconciliation. The experience derived from God in His Son gives the philosopher and ignorant, the learned and unlearned, the same assurance” (*ibid.*, p. 475). “Christian experience... the consciousness of believers only attests to a moral work wrought in the heart, while the body may be sinking into decay under the curse” (*ibid.*, p. 560). “The security of the believer... is quite independent of human worth or faithfulness” [quoting John F. Walvoord, Millennial Series, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 109:40-41] (Pentecost, *TTC*, p. 79). “Scripture guarantees eternal life as a present possession of those who believe. Jesus said: ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent me *has* [present tense] eternal life, and *does not come into judgment*, but *has* [already] passed out of death into life.’ (John 5:24 NASB)” (Geisler, *ST*, 3:265) “Every confessing believer is well advised to know what genuine saving faith is and whether he has exercised it” (*ibid.*, p. 305). “We do not have to wait until we meet Christ to know that we belong to Him” (*ibid.*, p. 314).

Learn what grace means. Grace destroys the Watchtower system. It makes the uniqueness of Jehovah’s Witnesses of no value. Grace makes anyone (who is willing to believe on Jesus) savable.

Salvation is a gift, but it will be costly for you. You will be hated and shunned, and treated as though you were dead by your Jehovah’s Witness friends and family. But you will be alive to God. “Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but **alive to God in Christ Jesus**” (Rom. 6:11).

After receiving Christ as Savior:

Separate from the Watchtower organization. “As certainly as the ‘last days’ are now present, so certainly this injunction is now to be heeded, and the Lord’s people are called upon to separate from churches and institutions which deny the gospel of God’s saving grace through the substitutionary blood-redemption of the cross” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:106). “There is probably no practice of sin which is harder to terminate than that which has drawn people into a partnership. The reason for this is clear. One cannot forsake the enterprise, as he might were he alone, without seeming to incriminate the other, or others, and to seem to be superior to the other, or others” (*ibid.*, p. 268). “‘If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed’ (John 8:36)—this principle is true in every department of human life, whether spiritual or political” (McClain, *GK*, p. 207).

Identify the true church. “but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in **the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth**” (1 Tim. 3:15). (See our discussion of the identity of the church in our chapter *The Mystery Kingdom (The Church)*.)

Do not persecute the church of God. “For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because **I persecuted the church of God**” (1 Cor. 15:9). “But **as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also**” (Gal. 4:29).

Find a *Bible-teaching and Bible-believing* local church. Many churches do not preach Jesus. “In St. Louis... in all the Protestant places of worship... and in some of those numbered as evangelical, it is to be feared that the preaching does not contain the slightest flavor of the truth as it is in Jesus” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:201). You won’t find a perfect church. “All organized religious bodies have more or less of error, as is evidenced by the diversity existing—no two exactly agreeing in all things” (*ibid.*, p. 260). “He who sets out to find a perfect Church, in which there are no unworthy elements and no disfigurations, proposes to himself a hopeless search” [quoting J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, pp. 178-179] (McClain, *GK*, p. 448).

Fellowship with believers. You will find it a great privilege to associate with others who have been chosen by God to be members of Christ’s body and bride.

Get baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit**” (Matt. 28:19)

Don’t be afraid to partake of the emblems at the Lord’s supper. Communion services will have profound meaning for you, as you recognize that

all of your righteousness comes from the broken body and shed blood of Jesus.

Rejoice in the grace of God! Few Christians understand and appreciate grace to the extent that you will.

Live by grace. **“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him”** (Col. 2:6)

Serve God. “There will be little need of exhortation for God-honoring service to the one who is filled with the Spirit; for the Spirit will be working in that one both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13)” (Chafer, *MBT*, 17%).

Don’t get entangled again in any yoke of bondage! **“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery”** (Gal. 5:1).

Look forward to escaping the Great Tribulation. **“Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light”** (Amos 5:18). “Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, **I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world**, to test those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). (See our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

(See also our applications and admonitions *To Christians* below.)

To Christians

My fellow believers, I encourage you to rejoice that you are complete in Christ. “For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and **in Him you have been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority” (Col. 2:9–10) “To be in Christ is to be in the sphere of His own infinite Person, power, and glory. He surrounds, He protects, He separates from all else, and He indwells the one in Him. He also supplies in Himself all that a soul will ever need in time or eternity” (Chafer, *G*, 86%). “Growing out of this glorious relationship in Christ, is a most natural responsibility to walk worthy of the calling; but the issues of a daily life and the character of the conduct which should enter into it, though important in their place, are lost and forgotten in the blaze of the eternal glory of that unchangeable grace which has brought the believer into the new creation in Christ Jesus” (*ibid.*). “Who can fathom the depths of the revelation that the believer is related to Christ on the very plane of that oneness which exists between the Father and the Son” (*ibid.*)? “Being in Christ, the member of His body partakes of all that the Head has ever been, all that He is now, and all that He will ever be. So, also, being in Christ, the member of His body

partakes of all that Christ has ever done, of all that He is doing, and all that He will ever do. No human mind is able to grasp this revelation. Its inexhaustible riches will occupy the heart throughout the ages to come” (*ibid.*, 98%).

Read and study the Bible. **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth”** (2 Tim. 2:15). “No amount of attention or painstaking study will be too great for the adequate preparation of a Gospel messenger” (Chafer, *G*, 99%). “While the major themes of prophecy may be indicated in a textbook, there is nothing, in the matter of the student’s progress, that can take the place of tireless reading and study of the text of the Bible itself” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:384).

Believe all of the Bible. (It has been this writer’s observation that there are actually very few people, even very few professing Christians that really believe all of the Bible.) **“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16)

Live a godly life. “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to **live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**” (Titus 2:11–13) “And now, little children, **abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming**” (1 John. 2:28). “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. **We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure**” (1 John. 3:2–3). “We become a ‘dual personality,’ composed of the ‘Old’ and ‘New Natures,’ and which shall predominate depends on which we feed and which we starve” (Larkin, *DT*, p. 108). “Many tasks which Christians undertake would not be assumed if God’s program and its future aspects were better known. He has given no commission to convert the world and enterprises based on that sort of idealism are without His authority. Likewise, the knowledge of prophecy yields poise to the believer in times of crisis, as well as comfort in the time of sorrow. Having declared the truth that Christ will return, the Apostle goes on to say: ‘Wherefore comfort one another with these words’ (1 Thes 4:18)” (Chafer, *ST*, 4:261).

Live by grace. “But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16). “The serious manner in which people

apply an Old Testament promise, impossible under grace, to themselves is a revelation of the measure of inattention with which the Scriptures are too often read and quoted” (Chafer, *G*, 46%). “The law of Moses presents a covenant of works to be wrought in the energy of the flesh; the teachings of grace present a covenant of faith to be wrought in the energy of the Spirit” (*ibid.*). “In this age, the unsaved are forgiven as a part of the entire accomplishment in salvation on the one condition that they believe (Eph. 4:32), and the saved are forgiven on the one condition that they confess (1 John 1:9). These two words do not represent meritorious works; they represent the simple adjustment of the heart to that which is already provided in the grace of God” (*ibid.*, 51%). “The commandments of Christ are only His grace teachings; this term being not once employed by Christ before He began in the upper room to unfold the believer’s life and walk in grace” (*ibid.*, 95%). “The law could work no change in the heart, nor can the attempt to keep rules; but the Spirit can change the desires” (*ibid.*, 96%). “The grace teachings are not laws; they are suggestions” (*ibid.*). “To be true to His [God’s] own purposes in grace, He must not only create the motive and choice of the heart but He must provide the sufficient power for its execution” (*ibid.*, 97%). “When God is molding the desires of the heart, there is liberty. When He is empowering the life, there is victory” (*ibid.*). “The child of God has been delivered from every aspect of the law. The code of rules contained in the law has been superseded by the injunctions and beseechings of grace. The legal necessity of becoming accepted of God by human merit, has been superseded by the divine accomplishment through grace wherein the Christian is already accepted and safe in Christ forever. And possessing the presence of God through the indwelling Spirit, the child of God is saved from that struggle and defeat of the flesh which characterized the law and because of which defeat, the law became a curse and an instrument of death” (*ibid.*, 98%). “GRACE, more than any other single word, is the expression of the sum-total of all that enters into Christianity” (*ibid.*). “Grace makes all conformity to the will of God to be voluntary” (*ibid.*, 99%).

Be courageous. “And **do not fear** those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28). “And when they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, ‘We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.’ But Peter and the apostles answered and said, ‘We must **obey God rather than men**’” (Acts 5:27–29). “Some by a time-serving, man-fearing, prudential spirit refrain from accepting or proclaim-

ing these things, lest they be designated enthusiasts or fanatics, and thus become unpopular. Such will meet the decision of a Saviour, who urged them not to fear man, not to be influenced by a seeking after their personal popularity, but to receive and present the truth as given” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:329).

Rejoice! **“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice”** (Phil. 4:4)! “Mourning does not belong to the Bride of Christ” (Chafer, *G*, 49%).

Be concerned for God’s program, not just for yourself and for your own personal life. “Pray, then, in this way: “Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. **Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,** On earth as it is in heaven”” (Matt. 6:9–10).

Be no part of the world. “If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because **you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world,** therefore the world hates you” (John 15:19). **“Do not love the world, nor the things in the world.** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And **the world is passing away,** and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John. 2:15–17). “These wonderful accomplishments in grace are what differentiate Christianity from Judaism. One is of the old creation with its earthly purpose and promise; the other is of the new creation with its heavenly glories. The believer could not be under law; he is ‘inlawed to Christ.’ He has been saved out of the world and is no longer a partaker of its past, its present, or its future. Its past is a record of sin and death; its present is a record of confusion under the permitted rule of ‘the god of this world’; and the future will be a record of judgment” (Chafer, *G*, 98%).

Look forward to the Rapture. “Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**” (1 Pet. 1:13). The Rapture is imminent (see our discussion of the imminence of the Rapture in the section *The Timing of the Rapture* of our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*). Have a proper attitude toward the Rapture. “Can the man who holds firmly to such a Kingdom, himself feel so little interest in the coming Bridegroom as to fall asleep, to neglect preparation for His coming, to urge others not to expect His Coming, to tell the world that it is still distant, etc.?... The time will surely come when the neglect of this doctrine will be bitterly regretted” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:228). (See our discussion of the proper

attitude of the Christian toward the Rapture in our chapter *The Rapture of the Church*.)

Have a respectful attitude toward Israel. “Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And be thou a blessing. And **I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse.** And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3). “The Gentile relationship to the Jews in the blessing and cursing aspects are as true for Messianic Jews as for other Jews. Hebrew Christians who are blessed or cursed because of their Jewishness will find the blessers blessed and the cursers cursed” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 756). Support Jewish Christians materially. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, **to the Jew first and also to the Greek**” (Rom. 1:16). “Since most believers and local assemblies participate in the Great Commission mainly through monetary giving, this would require giving *to the Jew first*” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 853). “The gospel, whenever it goes out and by whatever means it goes out, is to go to the Jew first” (*ibid.*, p. 854). “but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For **if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things**” (Rom. 15:25-27). “The way they pay their indebtedness to the Jews, according to this verse [Rom 15:27], is to minister to them, that is, to Jewish believers, in material things” (Fruchtenbaum, *I*, p. 637).

Pray for Israel and for Jerusalem. “**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:** They shall prosper that love thee” (Ps. 122:6). “Those who are wise have never ceased to ‘Pray for the peace of Jerusalem’ (Ps. 122:6). For all the hopes of a future Kingdom of God on earth are in a certain sense bound up with the future of this city” (McClain, *GK*, p. 193). “[Horatius] Bonar’s impassioned plea [in ‘The Responsibilities of Christians as Regards the Jews,’ *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* (October, 1855), pp. 351-352]... ‘Israel has been a long time neglected, persecuted, and grievously wronged. Let us go, like Jeremiah, and sit down with them amidst their ruins, and in a sympathetic spirit tell them of the Restorer of Israel—the Almighty Repairer of the great breach—the true Antitype of their own Zerubbabel, who can yet build them up “an holy temple, an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:21-22). While we mourn over their great

griefs, their mighty wrongs, and their yet mightier sins, let us gently tell them of “the Man of sorrows,” who is the all-sufficient “consolation of Israel” (Luke 2:25). We carry God’s own message, prepared by the hand of mercy for the heart of the miserable, and which can, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, win its way through a mountain of stone and a heart of stubbornly resolute hardness. Go, Christian, to thy wandering and fugitive brother, tell him of Blood “which speaks better than the blood of Abel” (Heb. 12:24)—Blood which can cleanse even those who have “gone in the way of Cain” (Jude 11). Go, in the spirit of Paul, “with our hearts desire and prayer to God, that Israel may be saved” (Rom. 10:1). Go, “praying in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 20); and you will give no heed to those who say that “it is of no use preaching the gospel to the Jew.” *It is of use*; facts abundantly prove it; God has owned his own word, and is still blessing his servants. “Many of the sons of Israel have been turned to the Lord their God” (Luke 1:16); several of them are now the ministers of Christ to the Gentiles or to their own countrymen; and “how welcome are the feet of those who announce the gospel of good things!”... We should pray earnestly for Israel’s final restoration, even for her national glory and spiritual salvation. In so doing we pray for the blessedness of the earth, and the life of the world, which God is pleased to conjointly establish. But believing that God has at the present time “a remnant chosen by grace” (Rom. 11:5), we should give, pray, and labor, if we can “somehow make [the Jew] jealous and save some of them” (Rom. 11:14)” (Horner, *FI*, p. 328). “Ultimately our hope is in the God of Israel” (*ibid.*, p. 329) “...all of their eventual faith and national glory will be God’s answer to the prayers of those who “find pleasure in the [Zion’s] stones, and favor its dust” (Ps. 102:14)... a people... with whose future blessedness the full salvation of a ruined world is connected” [quoting Horatius Bonar, “The Responsibilities of Christians as Regards the Jews,” *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* (October, 1855), p. 352] (*ibid.*).

Allow God to give you compassion for the lost. “and hope does not disappoint, because **the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us**” (Rom. 5:5). “For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD INSTRUCT HIM? But **we have the mind of Christ**” (1 Cor. 2:16). “Therefore, **we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God**” (2 Cor. 5:20). “and **may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men**, just as we also do for you” (1 Thes. 3:12) “This is good and acceptable in the sight of **God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the**

knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:3–4). “True passion for the salvation of men is not a manifestation of love springing out of human nature. It must be imparted from God. Therefore evangelism is neither expected nor required in either the law of Moses, or the law of the kingdom” (Chafer, *G*, 59%). “The spiritual Christian will experience this divine compassion for a lost cosmos in so far as, by the Spirit, the love of God is shed abroad in his heart” (Chafer, *ST*, 2:78). “God literally loves the unsaved through the believer (Rom 5:5)” (*ibid.*, p. 102). “Love for lost souls is not a human competency; it is no part of a fallen human being—even for those who are saved it is impossible unaided. It is experienced only as it is inwrought by the Spirit of God” (*ibid.*, 5:211).

Witness to others. “**And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost**” (Rev 22:17). “In the contest going on, no one who is a believer is exempt from witnessing for Christ; and the man who has an earnest of the saving power of Jesus in his own heart and life is fully prepared by a blessed experimental knowledge to vindicate the Christship of the holy Jesus. In this warfare for the honor of our Saviour let every lawful weapon of defence be employed by the believing young and old, learned and unlearned, high and low; for to every one is furnished a sufficiency, an abundant supply, which gratitude, owing to God’s response to our needs, should prompt us not to hide or rest unused” (Peters, *TTK*, 3:513). Witness to Jews, to Gentiles, and to Jehovah’s Witnesses. “Therefore I testify to you this day, that **I am innocent of the blood of all men**” (Acts 20:26). “For though I am free from all men, **I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more**” (1 Cor. 9:19). “To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; **I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some**” (1 Cor. 9:22). However, know that it will be difficult to change other peoples’ minds. “**And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, ‘The old is good enough’**” (Luke 5:39). “Men seldom change their preconceived views whether good or bad. Their early training and theological discipline serve as a mold from which the individual will seldom be extricated” (Chafer, *ST*, p. 314).

Glorify God! “**For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body**” (1 Cor. 6:20). “Whether, then, you eat or drink or **whatever you do, do all to the glory of God**” (1 Cor. 10:31). “**Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus**

Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (1 Pet. 4:11). “By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but **if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God**” (1 Pet. 4:15–16).

Enjoy Christ forever. “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, **in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus**” (Eph. 2:4–7). “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus **we shall always be with the Lord**” (1 Thes. 4:16–17). “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you **stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy**” (Jude 1:24) “**For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ**” (1 Cor. 12:12). “So perfect is this unity between the Head and the members of the body, that it is probable that Christ will never be seen in glory apart from His body, and the body will never be seen apart from Him (cf 1 Cor. 12:12)” (Chafer, *G*, 86%). “To the Christian, Christ has become, in the divine reckoning, the sphere of his being, and this reckoning contemplates all that the Christian is and all that he does” (Chafer, *G*, 87%).

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! “**looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus**” (Titus 2:13) “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus**” (Rev 22:20). “To ‘the churches’ on earth, He gives a thrice-repeated reminder of something which must never be forgotten; for it will give courage in the hour of battle, strength in the hour of weakness, and hope in the hour of despair. Let us hear Him as He speaks: ‘Behold, I come quickly’ ([Rev. 22] vs. 7); ‘Behold, I come quickly’ (vs. 12); ‘Surely, I come quickly’ (vs. 20). Thus, in His last historic word from Heaven, our Lord writes once more over the portals of the Church that ‘Blessed Hope’ under which she must live and labor during every moment of her existence upon the earth. And if we are wise in the simplicity of the Word of God, we shall respond in the words of the ‘beloved disciple,’ who heard and

recorded the message: ‘Even so, come, Lord Jesus’ (vs. 20)” (McClain, *GK*, p. 514).

To the Tribulation Saints

If our reader finds himself or herself within the Tribulation period itself, you are undoubtedly enduring some very, if not extremely, difficult living conditions. “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be **a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time**; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued” (Dan. 12:1). “for **then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall**” (Matt. 24:21).

Hang in there!

This study of the Kingdom was assembled with you in mind, and I hope you’ve found it helpful. “We constantly feel too, that we are not so much writing for the present time as for the time of tribulation to come” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:733). “The warning that the Apostle Paul gives to the Gentiles, and his portrayal of the Antichristian power that will arise before, and only to be destroyed at, the Personal Advent; the fearful portraiture of the corruption of mankind just previous to the Advent like in the days of Noah and Lot (Matt. 24:39, ‘knew not until the flood came,’ etc.) making a divine personal interference imperative; the openly hostile attitude of the nations, the exaltation of reason and humanity, the oppressed condition of the pious, the lamentable state of the Jewish nation, the formation of a vast confederation and its merciless acts toward witnesses of the truth; and all this at the closing of this dispensation evinces such a state of unbelief, such a fruitage of the seeds now sown broadcast in a too favorable soil, such a continuation and powerful development of infidelity, such a turning away from God’s Redemptive Purpose in Christ Jesus and trust in humanity, that it is impossible to entertain any other opinion, consistent with faith in the Word, than that, whatever may be said in defence of the truth, men will resist it and gain adherents until the time arrives for a violent outburst engendering a revolution most disastrous to the Church [*Tribulation saints—ed.*], most ruinous to the moral interests and eternal welfare of the multitude swayed by it, and most fatal to those who shall in that day venture to testify in behalf of the truth. Indeed, so fully persuaded is the writer of the certainty of this—judging simply from past and present fulfillment—that the hope of writing for that very period—of warning the weak in faith not to yield, of encouraging the believing to suffer and endure to the end, of cautioning the

doubting how to decide, and of admonishing all, friends and foes, what they must expect—has greatly sustained him in his labor” (*ibid.*, 3:298). (See our discussion of the fact that the grammatical-historical method of biblical interpretation makes Old Testament prophecy’s and the Revelation’s details useful, for the Tribulation saints, etc., in our chapter *Biblical Hermeneutics*.)

Read and study the Bible. “Then believers, instead of neglecting these prophecies and ridiculing those who engage in their study, will earnestly investigate and compare all that the Spirit has mercifully given, and will acknowledge the wisdom of those who honored God’s Word in accepting of the testimony” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:745).

Believe the Bible.

Bible prophecy is being fulfilled literally. Observe! The Rapture really was the Rapture! “What causes such a change in the style of the preaching, which will result in the conversion, as parallel passages show, of very many, preparing them to pass through the great tribulation, and to suffer death rather than to worship the Beast and his image? Nothing less than this astonishing removal of certain chosen ones, accounted worthy, owing to their distinctive faith in God’s promises, to escape. Let this event occur just as it is described; let here one and there one of, the believing and watching be taken, and surely those who believe in God’s Word and are left behind will be most wonderfully affected by the event. By one sudden and startling event, coming home to the heart and directly appealing to the warmest affections, the prevailing spiritualizing systems and theories of progressive advancement and perfection will be overthrown, and the Millenarian doctrine, once derided and sneered at as ‘carnal,’ etc., will be most eagerly embraced and proclaimed. (The writer has often, often felt that it is specially for this period that he is laboring, when his work will be appreciated, etc.)” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:327) Christians are in heaven now with Jesus. They will return to earth with Jesus at the end of the Tribulation. The vanishing of the Christians was not an adverse judgment from God. Those that disappeared were not of “Babylon the Great,” as Jehovah’s Witnesses are likely claiming (“Babylon the Great” only becomes identifiable *during* the Tribulation; not *before* it, and she will be judged adversely by God *at the midpoint of the Tribulation*; not *before* it). (Assuming that there is no time gap between the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation, or that the time gap has passed,) Daniel’s 70th week (Dan. 9:27) is now running its course; the prophetic events of Matthew chapter twenty-four and Revelation chapters six through eighteen are now having fulfillment before your eyes (see our chapter *The Great Tribulation*).

Whatever you do, do *not* accept the mark of the beast (see our discussion of the mark of the beast in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*)! If you do, you will be lost forever. “It is not hearing the gospel before the Rapture and rejecting it that is the point of no return. It is taking the Mark of the Beast that is the point of no return” (Fruchtenbaum, *FM*, p. 693).

Trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and become part of the great multitude of Revelation chapter seven (see our discussion of the saving of the great multitude in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*).

You will likely be martyred for your faith. “The very fact that this tribulation has been predicted, that reverent students of the Word insisted upon its fulfillment, etc., will have no little influence in confirming the martyr faith of many. God help them to suffer and to triumph” (Peters, *TTK*, 2:733). “Before the incoming Antichrist, that mighty enemy who shall so freely and unsparingly shed the blood of the faithful, the differences of confession, worship, government, etc., will sink into insignificance before the great and vital point now alone insisted upon, viz., Have you such faith in, and such love for, Jesus Christ that for His sake you are willing to die? All, all, who have such faith and love, who are determined by grace sustaining them not to worship the beast or his image, are then indeed and in truth brethren, and in their common trial will mutually encourage each other. God help them to triumph” (*ibid.*, p. 745). (See our discussion of persecution as one of the characteristics of the Tribulation in our chapter *The Great Tribulation* and our discussion of the fifth-seal martyrs in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*)

Keep an eye on Israel. Antichrist will confirm a covenant with Israel for seven years (see our discussion of Antichrist’s confirming a seven-year covenant with Israel in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*). He will break the covenant after three and one half years, at the midpoint of the Tribulation (see our discussion of Antichrist’s breaking the covenant with Israel in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*). The 144,000 Jews are likely preaching the true gospel of the Kingdom (see our discussion of the sealing of the 144,000 in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*). The “two witnesses” are likely prophesying in Jerusalem; they will do so for three and one half years, will be killed, then will be raptured after three and one half

days (see our discussion of the two witnesses in the section *Events of the First Half of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*).

Take good care of the Jews in their trials and persecutions. The Jews will be severely persecuted, particularly during the last half of the Tribulation (see our discussion of Israel's persecution in the section *Events of the Middle of the Tribulation* of our chapter *The Great Tribulation*). The judgment of the Gentiles will be based largely on how they had treated the Jews during the Tribulation (see our discussion of the gathering and judging of the Gentile Tribulation survivors in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*).

Watch for Jesus' spectacular return at the end of the Tribulation (see our discussion of the proper attitude of the Tribulation saint toward the Second Coming in our chapter *The Second Coming of the King*).

If you're martyred, you will be resurrected soon and will reign with Christ for one thousand years. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years**" (Rev. 20:4-6).

If you survive the Tribulation, and if you survive the subsequent Sheep and Goats judgment, you will inherit the Kingdom prepared for you (Matt. 25:34; see our discussion of the gathering and judging of the Gentile Tribulation survivors in our chapter *Inauguration of the Kingdom*).

One way or another, by the grace of God, we'll see you in the Kingdom!

To Everyone

The Kingdom is coming, and is near! "For **the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay**" (Hab. 2:3). "FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY" (Heb. 10:37). "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy,

and heed the things which are written in it; for **the time is near**" (Rev. 1:3).

In preparation for it, let's joyfully submit to God's revealed truth. "No one can heartily accept of the predicted Theocracy in all its aspects who is not willing to make God's Will supreme, or receive the Divine Purpose as covenanted and predicted, unless his mind and heart is submissive to revealed truth" (Peters, *TTK*, 3:597).

Let's pray particularly for Israel. **"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: They shall prosper that love thee"** (Ps. 122:6). "For this "peace of Jerusalem" all creation groans, and all God's people are exhorted to fervently pray. It is the grand climax of the biblical drama of Israel, through whom God will bring the full blessing of Abraham to all the world" [quoting S. A. Ellison, *Who Owns the Land?* p. 184] (Horner, *FI*, p. 221).

Let's pray with the saints throughout all the ages that God's Kingdom would come. **"Pray, then, in this way: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven"'"** (Matt. 6:9-10). "He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus**" (Rev 22:20).

And surely it will come, in God's due time, as planned, as covenanted, and as prophesied. **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this"** (Isa. 9:6-7). "I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, **there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"** (Dan. 7:13-14). "And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him **Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end"**" (Luke 1:31-33).

And to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Israel, and to the Lamb forever be the glory of the Kingdom! “They shall speak of **the glory of thy kingdom**, And talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, And **the glory of the majesty of his kingdom**” (Ps. 145:11–12). “Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that **at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father**” (Phil. 2:9–11). “so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the **God** who calls you into **His own kingdom and glory**” (1 Thes. 2:12). “**The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen**” (2 Tim. 4:18). “And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.’ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’ And the four living creatures kept saying, ‘Amen.’ And the elders fell down and worshiped” (Rev. 5:11–14).

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Glossary of Terms

Allegorical Interpretation

The method of interpreting a literary text that gives the text a secondary, more “spiritual” meaning. (IMG*)

Antitype

A *type* is a model that serves as a preview or pattern of a reality that is yet to come. An *antitype* is the fulfillment, or the reality that the type was a preview of.

Biblical Theology

A correlation of the data of biblical revelation of a particular book, section, or theme of the Bible. (IMG)

Chiliasm

Premillennialism, especially the premillennialism of the primitive church.

Chiliast

One who holds to chiliasm as his or her eschatological view.

Covenant Amillennialism

A form of Covenant Theology that believes the spiritual kingdom of the church replaces Israel’s Messianic Kingdom and that there will be no Millennial Kingdom. (IMG)

Covenant (Historic) Premillennialism

A form of Covenant Theology that believes Jesus will return in His glory to establish the church as His Kingdom over Earth. (IMG)

Covenant Postmillennialism

A form of Covenant Theology that believes the church constitutes Jesus’ physical kingdom on Earth and that He will return to rule at its conclusion. (IMG)

Covenant Theology

A system of theology built on allegorical interpretation that views human history as God’s redemptive relationship with mankind. It is based on what adherents see as two (or three) major theological covenants that emphasize the continuity between Israel and the church, as the church replaces Israel in God’s program (from Louis Berkhof’s *Systematic Theology*). (IMG)

Dispensation

A distinguishable economy (working relationship) in the outworking of God’s purpose (from Charles Ryrie’s *Dispensationalism*); a stewardship. (IMG)

Dispensationalism

A system of theology built on consistent, literal interpretation of Scripture. It views the world as a household administered by God for His own glory through a series of progressive but distinct dispensations, emphasizing the discontinuity of Israel and the church (From Ryrie's *Dispensationalism*). (IMG)

Ecclesiology

The doctrine of the church, including its identity, nature and structure.

Eschatology

The doctrine of future things. Unfulfilled prophecy falls into this category. (IMG)

Futurism

The position that chapters 4 through 22 of Revelation are yet to have future fulfillment.

Hermeneutic(s)

The art and science of interpreting a literary text; also understood as one's philosophy (method) of interpretation. (IMG)

Historicism

The position that the book of Revelation has already largely, if not completely, had fulfillment in church history.

Literal Interpretation

The method of interpreting a literary text that regards words and phrases in their normal, usual, customary meaning (unless the text itself forces a figurative understanding). (IMG)

Midtribulationism

The position that the Rapture of the church will occur *at the midpoint of* the Tribulation.

Millennial Kingdom

The earthly, 1,000-year Messianic Kingdom Christ will set up and rule following seven years of unparalleled tribulation on Earth. To premillennialists, this period constitutes the Kingdom Age. (IMG)

Premillennialism

The position that Christ will return *before* the Kingdom Age and set up His Davidic, Messianic Kingdom. (IMG)

Preterism

The position that most, if not all end-times prophecy was fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Full preterism teaches that even Jesus' Second Advent occurred in 70 A.D., and therefore it will not occur in the future.

Pretribulationism

The position that the Rapture of the church will occur *before* the Tribulation.

Posttribulationism

The position that the Rapture of the church will occur *after* the Tribulation.

Replacement Theology

Various systems of theology, usually built on the foundation of Covenant Theology, that view the church as replacing Israel in God's overall plan for world history. (IMG)

Systematic Theology

A correlation of the data of biblical revelation as a whole in order to exhibit systematically the total picture of God's self-revelation (from Charles Ryrie's *Basic Theology*). (IMG)

Type

A model that serves as a preview or pattern of a reality that is yet to come. An *antitype* is the fulfillment, or the reality that the type was a preview of.

Universalism

The position that all people will be saved; that ultimately none will be eternally lost.

*IMG = From *Glossary of Terms* by Richard D. Emmons, *Israel My Glory* magazine, Apr./May 2010

History of Revisions

The Glory of the Kingdom Versions

Version 1.2

- Second revision
- Minor edits
- Completed July 26, 2023

Version 1.1

- First major revision
- Contains several thousand minor edits
 - Fixed typos, improved grammar and clarity
- Added this *History of Revisions* page
- Reformatted with Apple Pages 5.6
- Completed February 2, 2016

Version 1.0

- Original document
- Created with:
 - Circus Ponies Notebook for original outline
 - Runtime Revolution/LiveCode for text processing
 - Apple Pages 4.3 for editing, formatting and PDF creation
- Completed April 21, 2012

Distribution & Contact Info.

Distribution

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