

that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

There is deep symbolism employed here and a different type of warfare conducted so that the whole struggle is wrapped in mystery, which doubtless will only be fully understood when the fulfillment comes.

The description of this great battle in which the Kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ is as strange in its weapon of warfare as it is brief in detail. Its very brevity amazes us. But the result is decisive.

The beast, representative of all political despotism and tyranny and the false prophet, the embodiment of false religion are taken, are seized and thrown alive into the lake of fire and brimstone.

And their followers alike are dispatched. Again the strange weapon that destroys them is the sword which proceedeth out of His mouth—that spiritual weapon of irresistible might.

Such a strange warfare and such a feast of death has never before been witnessed. Thus is terminated the present order of things as we know it. Only the dragon's, or the devil's fate remains to be uncovered.

Truly, more we would like to know, but we must not speculate. Neither dare we read in human opinions or theories. It is still true, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.” (Deut. 29:29).

We dare not be wise above that which is written.

CHAPTER XX

THE THOUSAND YEARS

Text (20:1-15)

INTRODUCTION

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. **2** And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound

him for a thousand years, 3 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.

4 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. 5 The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 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.

7 And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 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 out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. 15 And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

Shall we take a very brief parting look at the preceding chapter, before taking up the consideration of the one before us.

The portrayal of Christ coming seated on a white horse, followed by his armies, also on white horses, has been interpreted by some, who are advocates of His visible return before the Millennium, as substantiation for their theory called "Pre-millennialism."

They maintain this description as given in Revelation 19:11-16, pictures a personal coming visible to all eyes, and is the second advent often referred to in the Scriptures. Such advocates need to consider some very serious objections before accepting such a theory with too much enthusiasm, or spiritual fervor. Only a few objections are listed here:

First, The language here is in the realm of symbolism.

Second, That this being so, how can they interpret this as a visible return at this particular time, without including a literal sword protruding out of his mouth?

Third, Then, this must be an actual horse and he must have eyes from which flash a flame of fire.

Fourth, He must actually be clothed in a vesture dipped in blood.

Fifth, His armies must be real men with literal bodies (and that before the resurrection of the body) riding upon real horses.

That there is to be a literal, personal return of Christ is a well-established truth in the Scriptures, but in this instance to make His return literal and personal when the language is purely symbolical leads to confusion. Logic demands that if this is His personal and literal return, then that return is accompanied by literal horses and all other manifestations attendant to this description here must be considered literal.

All this false, unscriptural and misleading concept has come about by those who advocate the doctrine known as "Pre-millennialism."

The term "pre-millennialism" is no where to be found in all the Scriptures. Then, does not reason, logic and love for God's "thus saith the Lord" prompt, yea compel us "to be silent where the Scriptures are silent?" All who believe in the divine inspiration of God's Word recognize the truth that "we must speak where the Bible speaks." Ought not there be as reverent a recognition of the necessity of "being silent where the Bible is silent?"

Never once did Christ mention "Pre-millennialism." Was it because He had not the time in his brief ministry to refer to it? Or is it as John said, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written?" (John 21:25)

Of all that has been written in God's inspired Word, not once is the expression "pre-millennialism" included. Yet, today, perhaps no word is used so much or heard so frequently as this one, even by those who pride themselves as being fundamentalists—another unscriptural term, by the way.

Upon another occasion Christ said to His apostles, and, in his farewell conversation when every word was freighted with sublime meaning:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now" (John 16:12)

Was the term "pre-millennialism" to be among the things yet to be revealed? He promised that further revelation (all things) should be completed after the Spirit should come, even to the giving of new prophecies—"He will show you things to come." His words to them are:

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak and he will show you things to come." (John 16:13)

Yet those same apostles who were all filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost spoke, even with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance (Acts 1:26); (2:1-4) never in all their labors ever so much as once let fall from their lips this oft heard word of the present day—"Pre-millennialism."

It could not be because their memories failed them, for the spirit was to *bring them remembrance all things* Christ had said to them. Said Christ on this matter of remembrance:

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall *teach you all things*, and *bring all things* to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26)

Then we are forced to one of two, or even both conclusions.

First, Christ did teach "pre-millennialism" and sent the Holy Spirit to remind his apostles of all things, among which would be this doctrine, if its advocates are right, and that the Holy Spirit failed to remind, not one, but all the apostles, including Paul chosen out of due season, to mention this doctrine by the name used so frequently today.

Or *second*, the Holy Spirit did remind them and they failed to speak as the Holy Spirit was to give them utterance.

Either conclusion is utterly untenable and preposterous, even sacrilegious.

There is only one logical, ethical and scriptural decision left us. The term "pre-millennialism" never once crossed Christ's lips, therefore the Holy Spirit did not have this word to bring to their remembrance. Pre-millennialism was never among "all things to be remembered."

Furthermore, it was not among the many things Christ had yet to say unto them, which they yet were not able to hear.

It was not among the things the Holy Spirit was to hear of Christ, neither was it among the things of which it was said, "He *shall show you things to come.*"

It was not among the "all truth" into which the Holy Spirit was to guide them.

There is a truism recognized by every close student of divine truth, a self-evident fact, requiring no demonstration, a sound accepted principle.

"If *anything*, be it a matter of belief or practice, is called by an unscriptural name, it is axiomatic that the thing which the name represents, *is also unscriptural.*

Applying this self-evident truth to the usage of the term "pre-millennialism," since the name is unscriptural, then it follows that the belief in it is also unscriptural.

Then this nomenclature must be dropped, or we are not being "silent where the Scriptures are silent."

But coming back to the verses we have had under observation, namely Revelation 19:11-16, not only is the language here symbolic, but the description is not in harmony with Christ's own account of His personal return. Shall we review a few of his declarations concerning the manner of His return:

"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 power and great glory.

And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matthew 24:30, 31)

Again "when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of His glory:

And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," (Matt. 25:31, 32)

To this may be added Paul's description of Christ's return: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:16, 17)

Thus we see that (Rev. 9:11-16) does not rightly describe Christ's

return, as some have interpreted these verses in order to substantiate their teaching that he returns before the millennium.

Shall we now proceed with the unfolding of this chapter before us.

The Dragon Bound for a Thousand Years

vs. 1 "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand."

There has been considerable discussion as to who this angel is, but the point is of no great consequence. We remember that it was Michael, the archangel, who fought against the dragon and his angels, as recorded in chapter twelve.

There it was a forensic foray; here it is the seizing, binding, and casting of him into prison. Certainly, Michael could be a victor in either contest, but, of course, the name and rank of the angel are not given here.

This angel possesses the key to the bottomless pit, or the abyss. This key is mentioned once before in Revelation in relation to the bottomless pit. It is first referred to in Revelation 9:1. There we read:

"I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth and *to him* (a star is an angel Rev. 1:20) was given the *key* to the bottomless pit."

The bottomless pit, or abyss is mentioned in (Rev. 9:1, 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, and 20:3). This comes from the greek "Abusoos," meaning "a very deep place," sometimes translated the "Abyss." This is not the same place into which the beast and the false prophet were thrown. That was "the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone." After a thousand years the devil is to join them there. Here he is cast into the "abyss," or a very deep place, from where the beast ascended to go into perdition. (Rev. 17:8)

And what is the difference between these two places? Briefly, the "lake of fire" is the final hell; the "abyss" is a very deep place, a prison in which the dragon and evil spirits are retained prior to the final judgment.

A homely comparison would be like that of a county jail where a criminal is incarcerated prior to his sentence, and the Lake of fire is like the state penitentiary where he is confined for final punishment.

"Having a great chain in his hand." Some have been troubled about the nature of that chain. Was it of iron or brass? If so how could such a chain bind a spirit being, like the dragon? The

book does not declare it is a chain made of any earthly material. This, we must remember, is a book of symbolism. The chain is the symbol of some binding agent of Divine construction. It is a chain of such a nature that spirits and angels can be bound by it. Jude speaks of such a chain, which is actually binding rebellious angels *right now*. Hear Jude:

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath received in *everlasting chains* under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (Jude 6)

What they are made of or how they are able to bind spirit beings is beyond our knowledge now.

vs. 2 “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and satan and bound him a thousand years.”

Here we find the arch enemy of Christ and the church called by four names, the same names assigned to him in Rev. 12:9.

And interesting parallel presents itself here. Christ, the rider on the white horse in the nineteenth chapter also had four names, namely, “Faithful and True,” “a name written, that no man knew but Himself,” “The Word of God” and “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

But back to the four names of the Dragon, the enemy of the woman’s seed. Shall we briefly consider these four names.

First, He called “the Dragon.” This is the name given him with especial reference to his connection with political and spiritual powers, particularly that of Imperial and papal Rome.

Since these have by this time already been cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, when this evil spirit comes up out of the bottomless pit, or the abyss, at the end of the thousand years, he comes with only two of his former four names, viz. “Satan,” and “the devil.”

Second, he is called “the old serpent.”

The “old” has reference to his existence since the beginning of man on the earth.

The “serpent” has reference to his subtlety, his deceiving ways, his deadly poison. It was the serpent that deceived Eve. It is as the serpent that brought in the false doctrine which corrupted the church. This name draws our attention to the subtlety of his temptations.

It does not appear from the symbolism employed here that he ever comes, after his being chained, in the capacity of a serpent. He

is the same evil spirit when he is loosed for a short season but he induces God and Magog to "compass the camp of the saints," in the role of "the devil" and "Satan."

Third, he is spoken of as the "devil." This word means, a slanderer and a malignant liar. To this angel of his nature Christ referred when He said, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44)

Evidently, in his deepest malignity he is a liar. As a liar he will deceive the nations at the end of the thousand years.

Fourth, he is called "Satan," which means "The adversary," "the accuser." It really is a Hebrew word transferred and means "a hater."

As an accuser he charged God with a lie in the beginning when he said to the woman, "ye shall not surely die." in reply to Eve's statement "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." (Genesis 3:3)

He was Christ's great adversary when he made the attempt to snuff out His life in the murder of the babes of Bethlehem, through the temptation in the wilderness, in the casting of doubt upon Christ's diety, even to the struggle to make the gates of Hades prevail against his rising again to prove his Sonship to God.

He has been the adversary to every human soul. As an adversary he appears again in the short season in which he is unchained following the thousand years.

But it was, in all four of these characterizations, that the angel laid hold upon him to bind him a thousand years. Reading further:

vs. 3 "And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, 'till the thousand years should be fulfilled. And after that he was to be loosed for a little season.

He is cast into the abyss, and sealed there, from whence there is no escape, instead of into the lake of fire, the place of no return.

This arch adversary is dealt with in two different stages. First, as described, he is shut up and a seal put upon him "for a thousand years." After this period he is "loosed for a little season."

Judging by the books-without-end which have been written on the subject of the "millennium," it has been quite apparent that men have overcentered their thinking upon that subject, rather than the real theme here, which is the imprisonment of Satan, first in the

abyss, and then this final destruction in the lake of fire and brimstone. In the vision of the previous chapter, the last two of the unholy trinity, the beast and the false prophet were disposed of; here the third of those three is dealt with.

Whatever is included in any mention of the thousand years, its mention seems decidedly incidental to the importance of the doom of the dragon—the principle subject of this vision. This passage, the modern millennialist notwithstanding, is concerned chiefly with a prediction of the overthrow of satan. By a series of bold strokes John is presenting to us first the restraining and then the final destruction of the age-old enemy of Christ, who must be destroyed before the City of God can descend out of heaven.

This verse declares that the dragon or satan must remain in the abyss "till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season."

There is absolutely no reason given here why he must be loosed for this brief time. A reason is assigned why the devil was bound, "that he should deceive the nations no more 'til the thousand years should be fulfilled," but no reason is given why he is loosed after the thousand years.

Of course we might raise the question, "why was the devil put into the scheme of things from the very beginning? A brief answer is that when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let him have dominion," He was launching out on an age-long process. Since God knew right and wrong and had volition, man made in God's image, must have volition. Therefore, he had to have both good and evil influences play upon him. Thus, the devil's place in the scheme of things is to provide man with the opposite influences; that he may be tested and tried and act under his own volition.

If God had placed man in the garden eastward in Eden and left him there millennium after millennium without a tempter, he would have been *innocent*, but perfect in nothing.

But through overcoming, by a divinely designed plan, he would be made in God's image and after His likeness.

By the same token perhaps the devil is loosed for a little season. This is a logical reason based upon analogy. It still remains a fact that God has here revealed no reason, so we must not be wise above that which is written.

So we advance to the next verse:

vs. 4, 5 "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

We have made a sincere and earnest attempt to move cautiously throughout "this wonder book of the Bible," letting the Holy Spirit lead all the way. But as carefully as we have moved thus far we wish to use the utmost caution at this point.

There has been so much written upon this subject of the thousand years that we want to move with extreme care.

This period of a thousand years is not mentioned anywhere else in the entire Bible and here in rapid succession it occurs six times in the space of seven verses.

Six mentions in so short a space would, at first thought, give us the impression of the importance of the thousand years, yet, on the other hand, its importance lies primarily in the interval of the binding and loosing of the dragon or devil. Three, or half of the mentions, refer directly to the devil, two to the souls who had part in the reigning with Christ and the sixth mention relates itself to the rest of "the dead who lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

But the fact that this thousand year period is mentioned six times, is rather significant. "Six" is short of "seven" or perfection. Therefore it is not the new heaven and the new earth. It is not the eternal dwelling place of the redeemed.

This fact leads us to another startling truth. Since it is not the eternal home of the children of God, then Christ is not personally present during the thousand years for He was not to return until that place was prepared. Let Christ speak for Himself at this point. He said in his confidential conversation with His apostles at the Passover meal, and the communion which followed it:

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And *if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also.*"

Shall we carefully scrutinize this first intimation of the day of the coming of Christ. We learn from this that the Father's House of many mansions is a place already existing—"are many mansions."

Christ said, "*I got to prepare a place for you.*" Paul tells us in Eph. 4:10, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

The father's house is the third heaven, as taught in the Scriptures. Christ ascended above all heavens to prepare a place for us.

Therefore, since this thousand year period, with all its blessings is not the eternal home, then Christ has not at that time returned, because He said, "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again *to receive you unto myself, that where I am*, ye may be also. He never, himself, promised to return to dwell with the saints here personally and visibly, but He did promise to receive them unto Himself to be with Him where He is.

Truly, we must take exceeding care not to read into a passage that which is not there and particularly if it is contrary to what Christ promised He would do.

Judging by the outstanding importance which some have placed upon this passage in Revelation, would it not seem logical that somewhere Christ would say something about it?

If so notable an event as His coming to be here personally during the thousand years was to come to pass at that time does it not seem that Christ would have made some statement concerning it?

In the fourteenth chapter of John He does mention His return but only *to receive us unto Himself* that where He is we might be also. He is strangely silent here, where human beings have been so vociferous. Would it not be more becoming of the saints to keep silent where He has done so?

Not only was Christ silent about coming at the beginning of the thousand years, but so was John, the divine Revelator, silent. He mentions an angel coming down from heaven and binding Satan for a thousand years, but never a word about Christ also coming at the beginning of the thousand year period.

And not only was John utterly silent on this point, but so, also, were all the other apostles. Of the early church it was said: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42) but never once was the personal visible return of Christ during the thousand years mentioned as a part of the apostles' doctrine. The conclusion is, that such a teaching is not apostolic.

Paul charged Timothy "the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (II Timothy 2:2)

So this teaching of Christ's personal return during the thousand years is not included in the same which Paul committed to faithful men. All this evidence is rather heart searching, to say the least.

Now just what did John say? "I saw thrones and *they* sat upon them, and judgment was given unto *them*."

Now who are the "*they*?" "The *souls of them* that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God . . . *they* lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

"*They*" had thrones but where is the mention of a throne for Christ to occupy? Where does John say that Christ was here sitting on a throne? He is strangely silent.

Shall we delve a little further into the antecedent of "*They*." Looking ahead in the sixth verse of this twentieth chapter this "*they*" occurs again, and of them we read, "*They* shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

Where have we heard of the redeemed being *priests* and *reigning with Christ* before? Why, back in (Rev. 5:9). "They (that is the four beasts, or living creatures and the four and twenty elders) sang a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed (not *us* as in the Authorized version) to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; and has made them (not *us* as in the common version) unto our God *kings and priests, and they shall reign upon the earth.*"

In this reference the redeemed are called kings and priests; in Revelation 20:6 they are called priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Also John here in the twentieth chapter saw them sitting upon thrones in this reigning.

Now, going back to the fifth chapter again where was Christ while these kings and priests were reigning? Hear John: "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain." (Rev. 5:6)

Here we find that God is sitting on the throne and Christ is at His right hand. Paul said, "When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on hand" (Heb. 1.3)

While John saw the souls of the martyrs sitting on thrones and reigning over the earth he mentions no throne for Christ. Why? Because Christ, until His return is at the right hand of God.

Into what a maze of errors we fall when we read into a passage something which is not there! By what authority can we assert that

Christ will be on earth, simply because John said these martyrs live and reign with Him for a thousand years. Have we become so earthly minded that we can not conceive of Christ reigning in any place except upon His footstool, the earth?

Did not the Jews make the same mistake in the days of His flesh? They were looking for an earthly kingdom with a temporal throne and the Messiah sitting upon it. Because Christ declared His kingdom was not of this world (not one with a temporal throne, and material appointments) they rejected him.

Has not the Roman Catholic church made the same mistake, placing the pope on an earthly throne, himself crowned with a golden crown and maintaining ambassadors at the courts of temporal kingdoms?

That the Roman Catholic church considers itself a temporal, visible kingdom is further substantiated by their official explanation of the triple crown worn by the pope.

“Among his (the pope’s) insignia are the *pallium*, which signifies his rank as a Primate, and the tiara or triple crown. In the early centuries the pope wore a simple mitre, like other bishops; but about the ninth century a crown was added to it, to denote the pontiff’s *temporal* power as ruler of the states of the church. Later a second crown was added, and about the year 1365 a third—signifying, according to some, the supreme authority of the pope in spiritual things, his jurisdiction over the church considered as a human society, and his dominion as a *temporal* monarch. According to others, the triple crown typifies his threefold office as teacher, law-giver and judge.” *Externals of the Catholic church*—page 9.

How ill becoming, then, for those who renounce the authority of the pope and the claims of the Catholic church to temporal dominion, to fall into the same error of teaching that Christ will sit upon a temporal throne ruling over a visible and temporal kingdom during the thousand year period! Why should the pot call the kettle black?

There have been those who have taught that a literal, temporal kingdom of Israel is to be set up by God at the end. Constant reference is made to the Jews return to Palestine and the setting up of their national government.

While such a return is being witnessed by our eyes, yet how can one, by the greatest stretch of his prophetic imagination see God’s hand in this, when there is no acceptance of Christ by these returning Jews after the flesh? We are witnessing a return as an escape from persecution and earthly desire to restore their national life, but

these motives are no different in nature from those of the Jews who fought the wars of the Maccabees with the same objectives in mind, during the four hundred years preceding Christ's incarnation.

Christ's crucifixion swept aside forever the entire Jewish ceremonial of the temple, the priesthood and the sacrifices. Thus the Scriptures make it utterly impossible for God to ever recognize Israel after the flesh, or to establish the Jewish ritual again. Even if the nation should revive its Old Testament ceremonies, God's hand will not be in it nor His blessing upon it.

The whole Jewish system was a fore-shadowing of better things to come, and like the old covenant, of which it was a part, is done away forever.

Reformed Judaism is not looking for a *personal Messiah*, but teaches that the Messianic hope is the restoration of national life. They still reject Christ as the long-looked-for-Messiah.

The teaching of the restoration of the Jewish nation with its old covenant ceremonies, is an out right denial of the very work Christ accomplished upon the cross.

This whole system of modern day teaching of a certain school of the prophets is based upon the same fallacious and utterly carnal system of interpretation that caused the Jews of Christ's day to reject Him as the Messiah.

The only Israel recognized by God since Christ's first coming is a spiritual one—a kingdom that cometh without observation, a kingdom that is within the heart of the obedient, repentant, baptized believer.

And yet earnest, but nevertheless misguided souls, blithely talk of a temporal kingdom being set up during the thousand year period, with Christ personally and visibly reigning over it!

Thousands of so-called fundamentalists will stand before classes and condemn the Jew of Christ's day for rejecting their Messiah because they looked for a temporal ruler reigning over a temporal kingdom. Yet these same folk will piously and fervently pray for and preach that a temporal kingdom will be set up during the thousand years with Christ personally, visibly reigning over it.

Some Insurmountable Objections to a Physical Resurrection

There are some insurmountable objections to physically resurrected saints living on the earth during the thousand years. Such would have bodies like the resurrected body of Christ.

He could instantly make Himself visible or invisible. He could immediately appear in a closed room without use of a door, and just as instantly vanish from sight.

How can advocates of a literal, physical resurrection during the thousand years keep a straight face. Imagine two kinds of beings existing on the earth simultaneously for that length of time!

Christ for a few days did so appear on the earth between His resurrection and His ascension, but for a definite purpose, viz., to provide indubitable proof of His resurrection and to teach His apostles that He was always with them whether visible or invisible.

But a thousand year condition with multitudes of martyrs living with other multitudes still restrained to human limitations raises so many insoluble problems as to render such a teaching impossible, if not ridiculous.

A second objection, and perhaps the greater, to this fallacious teaching is that this text does not so state such a resurrection. John said:

“I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, etc. and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

John does not say one word about the bodies of the martyrs being resurrected. He is very particular to call our attention to what he actually saw. He saw the *souls* of the martyrs living and reigning with Christ.

How different the language here from the account of the resurrection of those who came forth out of their graves at the time Christ died upon the cross. There we read:

“And many *bodies* of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.” (Matt. 27:52-53)

Here John saw no bodies raised; only the *souls* of the martyrs, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

These had been beheaded and put to death and had never ceased to exist. There is an indication that in some way they now have a

different existence than they had before, but it certainly cannot mean that they had come to live, for they had never ceased to live.

Just what is the meaning here? Certainly it refers to spiritual resurrection, not a physical one. The glorious reign of Christ is so manifest at that time because the spirit of the martyrs is resurrected and pervades all who name Christ's name and that they are filled with the spirit of the ancient martyrs.

And let us not entertain for a single second that this is a forced interpretation.

When the Bohemian martyr, John Huss was about to die, he prophesied, "And I, awakening from among the dead, and rising so to speak, from my grave, shall leap with great joy."

One hundred years later when Luther was engaged in a life-and-death-struggle with the papacy and the Roman Catholic church, Pope Adrian sent a letter to the German Diet meeting in Nuremberg, containing the following words:

"The heretic's Huss and Jerome are now alive again in the person of Martin Luther."

No one understood such a statement to mean that Huss and Jerome had literally been raised and were dwelling again in their bodies long since returned to the dust.

But shall we turn to a Scriptural parallel. It was prophesied that Elias should come again before the Messiah's first advent. In Malachi 4:5 we read:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord."

Did this refer to a literal and bodily resurrection of that old Testament prophet. No. Hear none other than Christ interpret this for us.

"For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

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 Kingdom of heaven is greater than he, for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:10-11, 15)

There is that statement, "Let him that hath ears to hear, let him hear—a characteristic declaration of Christ when he wishes to call

our attention pointedly to some truth he wishes us to especially understand.

Elias, or Elijah was not bodily resurrected, but he did come in spirit and power, not in person, but as the fearless, rugged reformer in the wilderness of Jordan.

In speaking of the return of the captive Jews from captivity to their own land, Ezekial said:

"I will open your graves, oh my people, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." (Ezekiel 37:12-14)

God didn't bodily resurrect these Jews in Babylonian captivity, but the return of the Jews as a nation to their homeland is spoken of as a resurrection.

Oh we are conscious that some claim if the first resurrection is not literal and bodily, then the second cannot be literal either.

But such miss the point. The second resurrection is the calling up of the Spirits of all the dead for judgment. The bodily resurrection is for those who having been judged righteous are to have their bodies raised. Hear Paul:

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies."

(Rom. 8:22-23)

This redemption of our bodies comes after "the manifestation of the Sons of God" (Rom. 8:19) for which the whole creation waits. And the manifestation of the sons of God is not to be until after the Judgment.

Christ appears at the time of the Judgment and John said that is the time when the sons of God shall be made manifest.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is." (I John 3:2)

We do not have our bodies raised incorruptible until the last trump:

"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." For this corruptible must put on incor-

ruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (I Cor. 15:51-53)

This is to occur at the last trump, but there is no trump sounded at the beginning of the thousand year period. Therefore, the first resurrection is not a physical and bodily one.

Oh how much confusion has been brought in by reading into a passage that which it never declared. John simply said, "I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

But one writer pens such confusion, others read it and quote it to others and confusion is added to confusion. One pulpiteer proclaims such confusion and his hearers go out and quote that confusion. Thus like a tidal wave, such unscriptural and unsound teaching sweeps far and wide.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Having considered the insurmountable objections to the bodily resurrection of the martyrs during the thousand years, we turn now to another such objection which pertains itself to Christ visibly and personally reigning over a temporal Kingdom during that time.

We again are reminded that we must not read into this passage more than it says. Earlier in this chapter we have found that John did not *say*, nor ever hint at Christ sitting on a throne and reigning during the thousand years.

We also proved that Christ remained at God's right hand while the martyrs as priests reigned on thrones.

Now we take up the third objection. If Christ were reigning on earth personally during the thousand year period we must admit His temporary defeat when the devil is loosed for a short season.

When Christ was upon the earth the first time He was in His body of humiliation. Therefore the devil had power. Christ, Himself, said, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30) Thus Christ freely acknowledged the devil's power, calling him the prince of this world.

But Christ is never pictured as coming to this earth again except in His ineffable glory and His unlimited power. Such demonstration of His omnipotence would render the devil incapable of restored power, even for a short season.

Christ gave the devil free reign during the days of His flesh because He came to perfect our redemption through His suffering and humiliation upon the cross. But the devil will be forever powerless when the glorified Christ comes at the judgment time.

"Then cometh the end (note: the thousand years period was not the end), when He shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

"For He must reign, 'till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I Cor. 15:24-26)

In this we learn that when He does return the second time, He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, He shall have put down all rule and authority and power and He shall have put all enemies under His feet, and finally He shall destroy the last enemy, or death.

None of these things mentioned was done before the thousand year period but rather earthly kingdoms and power and authority and rule and enemies and even death are still existant until after the thousand years.

All this precludes Christ being present and reigning personally during that period because the conditions do not agree with those obtaining at His second coming.

To take any other position requires us to admit that a returned, glorified Christ is powerless before the devil, even for a short season. The devil might and did have power over the Christ in the humiliation of the days of His flesh, but never has he power against a glorified Christ as portrayed at His second coming.

To advocate a return of Christ personally at the beginning of the thousand years and again at the judgment makes him come a *second* and a *third time*. Such a position is Scripturally untenable. Hear Paul on this:

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the *second time* without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28)

He was offered once at His *first* coming and He is to appear a *second time* without sin unto salvation. There will be no third coming.

The Scriptures only recognize *one visible* return of Christ and that does not take place until after the thousand years. Chapter 19:11-16 describes a coming in power, the power of the word, but not a visible coming.

This leads us forward to the consideration of what will be happening at His *second coming*, or appearing.

First: The second coming of Christ and the glorification of Christians will occur at the same time.

"When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." (Colossians 3:4)

Second: The second coming of Christ and the gathering of the elect from the four winds shall be simultaneous:

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." (Mark 13:26-27)

Only the souls of the martyrs were seen by John at the beginning and in duration of the thousand years.

Third: The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of both good and bad, will be at the same time.

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

Fourth: The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep, or are dead in Christ, and the translation of the living will be at the same time.

"For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we that are alive that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first; 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." (I Thes. 4:15-17)

Paul here asserts that the living shall not go before the dead to meet the descending Lord. He further declares that Christ "Himself" will come personally at His second coming. This rules out all possibility of Christ's coming being at the beginning of the thousand year period because then John said, "I saw *an angel* come down from heaven." (Rev. 20:1) "Himself" in I Thes. 4:16, proves that Christ will not come by representative, but in person.

Paul enumerates three sounds accompanying Christ's second coming. There will be the *shout* of Christ, the *voice* of the archangel, and the *trump* of God.

How can otherwise sincere and earnest folk confuse this scene of

the second coming of Christ with the beginning of the thousand year period? In the description of the beginning of this latter period only an angel, not archangel comes down from heaven and not a word is uttered by him.

There is no trump sounded at the beginning of the thousand years, but the trump of God sounds at the return of Christ after the thousand years, or at the end.

Again how can sincere folk teach two resurrections, one for the righteous (the first resurrection) and one for the wicked (the second resurrection?) Shall we quote John W. McGarvey on this. It is so clear and fine and logical and scriptural and sound that it ought to be incorporated into every book upon this vital subject:

“Of course such a doctrine is abhorrent to the idea of a single hour of judgment, with the saved on the right hand and the lost upon the left. Those who hold this theory appeal to this passage (Rev. 20:4-5) in proof of it, reading it thus: ‘The dead in Christ shall rise first, and the dead out of Christ shall rise second.’

But in order to make it read thus they have *supplied* a correlative clause which is totally foreign to the context, and which crowds out the correlative which Paul himself has given; for “shall rise *first*” is correlative with “then shall be caught up.”

The apostle has been drawing a comparison, not between the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead, but between the dead and the living at the hour of the advent. He began His comparison at verse fifteen and he here completes it by showing that the supposition that the living would precede the dead is so contrary to the facts that, on the contrary, the dead will be raised *before* any ascension is allowed the living, and *then* after the resurrection of the dead, the living and the dead shall be caught up together to meet the Lord.

That glorious change, wherein the mortal puts on the immortal, as indicated at I Cor. 15:51-55, will no doubt be simultaneous with the resurrection of the dead.”

McGarvey’s Commentary on I Thessalonians—pages 22 and 23.

Fifth: The descent of Christ with clouds at His second coming and the dead and living saints being caught up occur at the same time.

We are not to understand that we are caught up with clouds, but that we are to meet Him who comes in the clouds.

Daniel in (Dan. 7:13) said, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, *came with the clouds of heaven.*"

Matthew said in Matt. 24:30, "They shall see the Son of man *coming in the clouds of heaven* and with power and great glory."

John said in Rev. 1:7, "Behold He cometh *with clouds.*"
The Psalmist said, "Who maketh the clouds His chariots."
(Psa. 104:3)

This coming of Christ with clouds is after the thousand years, because no clouds are mentioned at the ushering in of that period, neither is Christ's coming mentioned there; only the descent of an angel.

At this coming we are to be caught up in the air to ever be with the Lord (I Thes. 4:17) This corresponds with Christ's description of His return:

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

At no time is Christ ever said to stand upon the earth at His second coming. Of His first coming Job declared: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." (Job 19:25)

But this is not said of Christ at His second coming. Rather:

Sixth: The second coming of Christ and the destruction of the world will be at the same time. How then could He stand upon the earth at His second coming? No wonder we must be *caught up to meet Him in the air*. And again we see why at His coming He descends *to receive* us unto Himself.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Peter 3:10)

He further declares, "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved," and again, "Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." (II Pet. 3:11-12)

Seventh: The second coming of Christ and the changing of our vile body will occur at the same time.

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” (Phil. 3:20-21)

Eighth: At the second coming of Christ then shall be the restitution of all things, and this restitution and His coming are at the same time.

“And He shall send Jesus Christ, which was before preached unto you. Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution (Greek-restoration) of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20-21)

Ninth: The second coming of Christ and the judgment will be at the same time.

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.

And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.” (Matt. 25:31-32)

While in Rev. 20:11 the scene of the judgment, nothing is said of the coming of Christ, it is said in Matt. 25:31, as quoted above, that when the Lord comes he shall be seated on the throne of judgment, while in (Rev. 20:11) John sees the throne and the Lord sitting thereon. John there does not describe His coming, as Matthew does, but shows Him *already come* and engaged in judgment.

Summary

Summing up our investigation we have found:

1. That the name “pre-millennialism” is unscriptural and the thing it represents is likewise unscriptural.
2. That neither Christ nor His apostles ever mentioned such a word or the system of belief the term signifies.
3. That the Holy Spirit never brought such a teaching to the remembrance of the apostles.
4. That in ‘the things to come’ which He was to show the apostles, the Holy Spirit did not mention pre-millennialism.
5. That Rev. 19:11-16 does not properly describe Christ’s return as some have interpreted it to be, since this return was to be marked by coming with clouds, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and these verses describe no such scene.

6. That it was an angel who descended at the beginning of the thousand years and not Christ Himself.
7. That the principle theme here is the binding of Satan and not the thousand years reign of the martyrs with the Christ.
8. That it was in all four characterizations—the Dragon, the old serpent, the devil and Satan that the angel laid hold upon him and bound him for a thousand years.
9. That it is under the characterization of Satan, or accuser and liar that he is loosed for a little season.
10. That he was cast into the abyss, or deep place, not the lake of fire, for a thousand years.
11. That the mention of the thousand years period is not the primary theme but is incidental to the real subject under discussion, the binding of Satan.
12. That those sitting on thrones are the martyrs.
13. That Christ is not pictured sitting on a throne with the saint but is at the right hand of God.
14. That these thrones are not said to be upon the earth.
15. That this thousand year period is mentioned six times, just short of perfection, and Christ only returns when the place of perfection is completed, and then only to receive the righteous unto Himself.
16. That Christ mentioned His return, not to reign a thousand years on the earth, but to catch us up to be with Him.
17. That He never once said He, Himself would set foot upon the earth.
18. That there is no bodily resurrection mentioned here, but only a vision of the *souls* of the martyrs.
19. That the body is not to be raised until the consumation of all things.
20. That the incorruptable body is to be put on at the end of all things and not before the thousand year period.
21. That there is to be no setting up of a temporal Kingdom on the earth.
22. That a physical resurrection of the martyrs during the thousand years, would place two kinds of beings on the earth, one held to the limitation of the flesh, the other with a body which could become visible or invisible at will.
23. That the reigning of the martyrs with Christ is a spiritual rule. But some may ask the question, "How can the saints reign with Christ when He is not personally present? The

answer is so simple that we marvel men would even ask the question.

Jesus is reigning in the hearts of Christians *right now*. He does not require a temporal Kingdom, nor an earthly throne to be able to reign in this present age.

The King of England reigns over the great commonwealth of nations under the British flag without being personally present in each nation of that commonwealth. It is not absolutely necessary for an earthly king to be personally present with his subjects in order to reign over them. How much less it is necessary for Christ to have a temporal throne and be personally present in order to reign over the souls of the martyrs!

24. That the redemption of our bodies comes after "the manifestation of the sons of God, which is when God returns at the judgment.
25. That to have Christ come in His glory at the beginning of the thousand years and have the devil regain his power after that period would be acknowledging Christ's defeat.
26. That Christ is not to come until He has put down all rule, and power, and authority and destroyed the last enemy—death. This only occurs at the judgment time.
27. That to teach Christ returns before the thousand years and again at the judgment would make Him return twice, once in the beginning of the thousand years, and again at the judgment, whereas He is to return only once.
28. That the coming of Christ and the glorification of His saints are simultaneous.
29. That the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the good and bad are simultaneous.
30. That the second coming of Christ and the raising of the dead and translation of the righteous living are simultaneous.
31. That Christ's second coming and the catching up of the redeemed are simultaneous.
32. That Christ comes with clouds, and we are to be caught up into the air.
33. That Christ's second coming and the destruction of the world are simultaneous.
34. That the second coming of Christ and the changing of our vile bodies is simultaneous.
35. That the second coming of Christ and the restitution of all things are simultaneous.

36. That the second coming of Christ and the judgment are simultaneous.
37. That John never said a word about the tabernacle of God being with men during the thousand years. He would have mentioned this if Christ had been here personally; but it is not until after the thousand years and after the judgment that we read, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men."
38. That if Christ's second coming was to be at the beginning of the thousand year period, at which time Satan was to be bound, then it becomes manifest that this binding was inadequate and incomplete.

vs. 1 "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

Why Satan is loosed, even for this short season is an enigma to the mortal mind, but for some reason, hidden in the secret councils of the Almighty, he is deliberately and by divine design loosed out of his prison.

vs. 8 "And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the numbers of whom is as the sand of the sea."

We have a gain come to the point where we must move with extreme caution. There are numerous explanations and interpretations many of the final battle of the earth. This battle has been referred to as the battle of Armageddon by some. Others believe the Armageddon to be the battle immediately preceding the thousand years. Still others maintain that the gathering of "the kings of the whole world" at Har-magedon of the sixth bowl (Rev. 16:14-16), and "the kings of the earth and their armies," destroyed with the beast in the vision of Rev. 19:19) may be the same as this gathering of the nations, Gog and Magog for the last struggle. (Rev. 20:7-10)

After careful research and prayerful looking to the Christ for guidance, the best answer seems to be that there is a twin phase to the culminating struggle of the last days.

The First Phase of the Battle

In Jeremiah 23:3, 5, 8 we read:

"And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries wither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds and they shall be fruitful and increase.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto

David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, "*The Lord Our Righteousness*."

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land."

This is a gathering from the world-wide dispersion which they have experienced through the centuries. Whereas, they have had no rest for the soul of their feet, they at this gathering *dwell in their own land*. And the righteous Branch shall not reign over their own land alone, but "shall execute judgment and justice in all the earth."

In Jeremiah the thirteenth chapter the first seven verses we have a description of great trial and tribulation through which Israel is to pass before his deliverance from captivity. We have not space to quote it all here but a few words will suffice, directing the reader to read them all in his Bible:

"For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, and I will cause them to return to the land I gave to their fathers and they shall possess it. . . .

"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. . . .

"For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee."

Christ Himself said, while yet in the days of His flesh: that until the Gentile age comes to an end these promises will not be fulfilled.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24)

Thus we see the Jew shall not possess his own land which God gave him until Gentile domination shall come to an end.

But at the termination of the Gentile age the Jew will return to his own land to rebuild it and make it a treasure trove among the nations of earth.

This return is transpiring before our very eyes. During the first

World War 1914-1918, under the Balfour Declaration, England went on record in favor of the setting up, in Palestine, a national home for the Jewish people. On December 9, 1917 General Allenby marched into Jerusalem at the head of his triumphant army. In March 1918 the Jewish flag was unfurled from the tower of David and the General proclaimed a Jewish state.

On May 24, 1920 the League of Nations officially granted to England mandatory power over Palestine.

Then came the second World War and its terrible persecution of the Jews in Germany and the increased migration of the Jew to his homeland.

Finally, on May 14, 1948, the Jewish Nation officially came into being under the designation of "Israeli." David Gurion became the first President of the Jewish State.

This fulfilled the prophecy that at the end of the Gentile age the Jew must be in possession of his homeland, because that land is to be the scene of a great world conflict.

"The way of the Kings of the east is being prepared." "The kings of the earth and of the whole world" are being gathered for the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

The chemical wealth of Palestine and the oil field of Iran are drawing the forces of the nations together for this first phase of the conflict.

This battle, of course is not the final one, although it will be terrible in its consequences. After the thousand years have passed will come the last phase of the Battle of Armageddon.

Here in the twentieth chapter of Revelation we learn that the devil is to be loosed for a brief time *after* the thousand years are completed. Under his deception Gog and Magog take up the final struggle.

Thus we see if the Battle of Armageddon is to be the *last* battle, it is plainly obvious that it cannot occur until *after* the thousand years.

The first phase of this battle, which transpires *before* the thousand years, will occur in the invasion of Gog, the prince of Magog. This angel of the struggle is portrayed in the 37, 38 and 39th chapters of Ezekial.

The first of those three chapters declares that the Jews will return to Palestine. The second of the three predicts the invasion of the restored homeland by Gog and Magog. The third of the three chapters describes the defeat of the invaders.

As to who these invaders are, we pause to give a brief sketch of

identification. Before proceeding with this identification we wish to review the setting. Before this tragedy comes to Israel she must be in her homeland. Ezekiel did prophecy the return of Israel after the Babylonian captivity, but the invasion of the restored land following that captivity was inflicted by the Romans. It was under Roman brutality that Israel was dispersed among the nations. It is from this Roman dispersion that Israel was to be gathered again, not a remnant this time and not from Babylon alone. This last "gathering" is to be from *all nations*. After this last mentioned return there shall be a concentration of wealth in Palestine and Gog will invade the land for the frank purpose of taking the spoils. He says, according to Ezekiel, "I will go up to take a spoil and to take a prey." Also Ezekiel declares, that when this invasion occurs the people will be living in a defenseless existence. They, evidently, will consider themselves secure because of the covenants the nations of earth have made with them to guarantee them an unmolested occupancy of the land of Palestine.

Now we shall proceed to a consideration of the nations which will constitute the invading forces.

The starting clue is the declaration that the alliance will be headed by Gog, who comes from Magog. Ezekiel declares that Gog is the chief prince of "Meshech and Tubal." Gog is to be the ruler and Magog is his domain.

The name 'Gog' is a proper name and occurs for the first time in the Bible in I Chron. 5:4. The name is given to a descendent of Reuben. The time is about sixteen centuries before Christ. The second occurrence is in Ezekiel 38:2. In this last reference the name is applied to Gog the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. This is a region anciently called Scythia, or Tartary.

This Gog is also the chief prince of Magog. Magog is first mentioned in Genesis 10:1-3 as the second son of Japheth. It reads:

"Now these are the generations of the Sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

The sons of Japheth; Gomer and *Magog*, and Madai, and Javan, and *Tubal* and *Meshech* and *Tiras*.

And the sons of Gomer, *Ashkenaz*, and Riphath, and Togarmah."

So here is the first occurrence of the name Magog. Later the name was applied to his descendents, and still later to their land. The land also came to be called Scythia.

Herodotus, a Greek historian who lived about 484-424 B.C., who is called the "Father of History," declared that in his day the Scythians were savages, and that Scythia was a region of vast extent, lying north of the Black and Caspian Seas, and also north of the Caucasus mountains.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, who wrote the Jewish Antiquities, a history of his countrymen from the earliest period down to the close of Nero's reign—says that Magog represented the Scythians, a race spread over the country now occupied by southern Russia. This region has always been and now is the land of Russia.

But this Gog is represented as being the chief prince of Meshech. Referring to the famous Table of Nations in the 10th chapter of Genesis, we find that Meshech was also a son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2). His descendents came to be called "Mosche" from which comes the term "Muscovites." The name originally referred to those Russians who come from Moscow and its nearby territory. The name "Muscovites" is still applied to greater Russia. The region was first called "Muscovi" and finally "Moscow." But the identification has always been Russia.

Now we turn to the third link in our lengthening chain of identification. The fifth son of Japheth was *Tubal* and Ezekiel mentions Gog as the chief prince of Tubal. His ancient descendents are always linked with those of Meshech.

Josephus calls the children of "Tubal 'the Moschoi'." The historians of Mesopotamia called these people "Tobali" and Muski." So Tubal and Meshech are associated together historically. They lived north of the Black and Caspian seas, or Crimea, which again is southern Russia. There was a city in primitive Russia called Tubal.

So Gog of the land of Magog, the chief prince of the land of Meshech and Tubal, refers to Russia and none other. And Gog and Magog are to head the alliance which invades Palestine in the first phase of the battle against the land of Israel.

There remain other nations which Ezekiel associates with Gog and Magog in this first phase of the final battle against Palestine.

There is Gomer to be considered. Referring to ethnology again and the Table of Nations as recorded in the tenth chapter of Genesis, we find that Gomer was the first son of Japheth, which makes him of the same blood as Magog, Tubal and Meshech.

In the Assyrian records we find that Assyria fought in wars against the inhabitants of Gomer. These Assyrian records inform us that Gomer was a barbaric tribe of Aryans which came out of Russia

through the Caucasian mountains. They overran Cappadocia and settled in the territory we know today as "the Balkans."

The Armenian name for Cappadocia is "Gamir," which comes from the ancient word "Gomer."

Russia and these people are kindred, being as we say today, of Slavonic blood.

Then Ezekiel (in Ezekiel 38:6) mentions "Togarmah of the North quarters". Genesis 10:3 declares that Togarmah was a son of Gomer and the grandson of Japheth.

Togarmah is now known as Armenia. It is so designated in the Assyrian records. Tacitus, a Roman historian, one of the greatest of all ages, who lived from about 55 A.D. to 120 (?) A.D., also declared that Togarmah was Armenia. Finally all Armenian literature allude to their land and its people as "The House of Togarmah." There is also Armenian tradition that they descend from the grandson of Japheth.

In Ezekiel 38:5 we have mentioned in rapid succession Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. These are also to be allies of Russia in this great battle before the thousand year period.

Persia, the first of the three has a long history reaching back into the dim shadows of antiquity. With Media she formed the second great world empire. Recently she assumed the ancient name of "Iran."

In recent years Persia, or Iran, has been the political battleground of Russian and British struggle for control of her fabulous oil fields. These fields contain one-fourth of the proven oil reserves of the world.

The other two nations mentioned by Ezekiel are Libya and Ethiopia. These are the modern names for the ancient countries called in the Hebrew language Phut and Kush.

The Egyptians called Libya by the word "Pessent," indicating that region of Africa directly west of Egypt lying on the coast of the Mediterranean.

The Persian record of Maqsh-i-Rusten applies the name "Kush" to Ethiopia.

In the Table of Nations in the tenth chapter of Genesis, Phut and Kush were the sons of Ham. The people of Kush occupied the country south of Egypt. Later they spread to include the territories of Nubia, Kordofan and Abyssinia. The Egyptians called the land "Kas," the Babylonians called it "Kusu" and the Hebrews called it "Kush."

All these countries, Gomer, or the Balkan states; Togarmah, or Armenia; Persia, or Iran; Lybia and the Egyptian countries are to be the allies of Magog, or Russia. This war is to be fought just preceding the thousand years and will bring to an end the "times of the Gentiles."

And where is this first battle to be fought? The one reference pertaining to it is in Rev. 16:16:

"And he gathered them together unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." Armageddon is the Greek: Har-Mageddon the Hebrew. The word means "The Hill of Megiddo. The Hill of Megiddo overlooks the plains of Esdraelon far north of Jerusalem.

So the storm of Ezekiel's vision is even now gathering, but at what hour it will break only God knows.

God, who knoweth the end of the matter from the beginning to the end has revealed to us this struggle. And the storm clouds of this great conflict, which Ezekiel saw gathering, will break, even as John saw the kings of the east being gathered to meet the kings of the earth and of all the world.

But after the thousand years there will come the final stage of the "Battle of Armageddon," because we read: "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of prison and "Shall go forth to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

But, whereas in the war before the thousand years a battle was to be engaged in by the nations involved, in this last struggle Gog and Magog, and the nations of the earth are to suffer divine punishment.

vs. 9 "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them."

One brief sentence tells the whole story: "There came down fire out of heaven, and devoured them." No one escapes.

Then follows the record of Satan's final destruction. He has before been imprisoned in the abyss, now he is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. Hear John:

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Thus, Political and Papal Rome are joined by the devil. When Christ

was on earth, He talked with His disciples about "the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25:41)

The Great White Throne

We now come to the last scene of the old, wicked and weary creation.

vs. 11 "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no more place for them."

This fulfills Peter's prophecy: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Pet. 3:10)

We now have come to the august day of divine judgment. Once before John, at the beginning of the second vision in Revelation, the fourth chapter, had beheld a throne and around that first throne were lesser thrones. Seven lamps, representing the seven spirits of God were before that first throne, manifesting the completeness of God's grace in the dispensation of mercy.

Here there is but one throne. There are no gracious seven lamps burning because the judgments meted out here are to be without grace and mercy.

In connection with the first throne there was joyous singing of redemption. There is no song, no voice of gladness for a word of triumph.

John is impressed by three things concerning this throne:

1. First, there was the greatness of this throne. This throne was great, not only because it is the final one of this sinful dispensation, but great because of the majesty of the occupant.
2. The second thing to impress John was the whiteness of that throne. White evidently portrays the glory of the judge.
3. Immeasurable power and invincible justice sit upon this throne, the Son, the Judge of all the earth. Christ had predicted His final judgment of the world: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." (John 4:22)

John continues:

vs. 12 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which

is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

vs. 13 We learn from the next verse that these dead are of every land of earth and sea and even Hades, the realm of departed spirits. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them and they judged every man according to his works."

The complete thought is that all the dead shall be judged.

The books that are opened contain the deeds of all men. The book of Life records the names of the saints. The overcomers are enrolled in the Book of Life:

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess His name before my Father and before His angels." (Rev. 3:5)

The lost are not enrolled in this Book of Life. In Rev. 13:8 we read:

"All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the Dragon or devil), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation "of the world." (Rev. 13:8)

And again we read, "And the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life." (Rev. 17:8)

Christ while in the days of His flesh declared concerning those who obeyed His commandments, "that they should not come to judgment, but were passed out of death unto life. (John 5:24)

But to those whose names are not enrolled in the book of life, this is "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men."

The judgment of the dead according to those books is a judgment of condemnation.

The Codex Siniaticus, one of the best three manuscripts of the Bible reads:

"The sea gave the dead ones in it, and Death and Hades gave the dead ones in them, and they were condemned, every one, according to their deeds." It seems that not one was judged worthy of a place with the blessed dead.

vs. 14, 15 "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

Thus we see that sentence is followed by immediate execution. When the beast and the false prophet were taken "they were cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Rev. 19:20)

A thousand years later Satan was cast into the lake of fire and

brimstone" (Rev. 20:10) And into this lake of fire were cast the condemned ones. Some have asked, "Is this a lake of literal fire?" If it is not, and is but a symbol, we must keep in mind that the substance is always greater than the symbol. Revelation declares this is the eternal fate and destiny of those not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

"This is the second death." Some have thought this means extinction, annihilation, but life continued after the first death. Likewise it would indicate continuation of life after the second death. The beast and the false prophet were in that death more than a thousand years and it is implied that they are still alive at the end of that time.

The fact that they shall be tormented day and night forever seems pretty solid proof that this is not a state of extinction or annihilation.

The first death was a killing of the body, but not an extinction of it. The second death must needs be still more terrific and disastrous. "There the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:44-48)

The torment is to be eternal, or literally "to the ages of the ages."

CHAPTER XXI

BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW

Text (21:1-27)

INTRODUCTION

1 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. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: 4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.