

# Sir Robert Anderson

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Sir Robert Anderson was the Chief Inspector for Scotland Yard. He was greatly respected for his skill as an investigator. When Anderson wasn't writing on subjects related to crime, he wrote Christian books on prophecy. He helped establish the fact that 69 of Daniel's 70 weeks has now transpired, and the tribulation will be the 70th week. Sir Robert Anderson's book *The Coming Prince*, has become a foundational resource for all dispensationalists.

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## The Coming Prince

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# The Coming Prince

## INTRODUCTORY

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To living men no time can be so solemn as "the living present," whatever its characteristics; and that solemnity is immensely deepened in an age of progress unparalleled in the history of the world. But the question arises whether these days of ours are momentous beyond comparison, by reason of their being in the strictest sense *the last*? Is the world's history about to close? The sands of its destiny, are they almost run out, and is the crash of all things near at hand?

Earnest thinkers will not allow the wild utterances of alarmists, or the vagaries of prophecy-mongers, to divert them from an inquiry at once so solemn and so reasonable. It is only the infidel who doubts that there is a destined limit to the course of "this present evil world." That God will one day put forth His power to ensure the triumph of the good, is in some sense a matter of course. The mystery of revelation is not that He *will* do this, but that He *delays* to do it. Judged by the public facts around us, He is an indifferent spectator of the unequal struggle between good and evil upon earth.

"I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but *they* had no comforter." (Ecclesiastes 4:1)

And how can such things be, if indeed the God who rules above is almighty and all-good? Vice and godlessness and violence and wrong are rampant upon every side, and yet the heavens above keep silence. The infidel appeals to the fact in proof that the Christian's God is but a myth. [1]

1. According to Mill, the course of the world gives proof that both the power and the goodness of God are limited. His *Essays on Religion* clearly show that skepticism is an attitude of mind which it is practically impossible to maintain. Even with a reasoner so clear and able as Mill, it inevitably degenerates to a degrading form of *faith*." The rational attitude of a thinking mind towards the supernatural" (he declares) "is that of skepticism, *as distinguished from belief* on the one hand, and from atheism on the other;" and yet he immediately proceeds to formulate a creed. It is not that there is a God, for that is only probable, but that if there be a God He is *not* almighty, and His goodness toward man is limited. (*Essays, etc.*, pp. 242, 243.) He does not prove his creed, of course. Its truth is obvious to a "thinking mind." It is equally obvious that the sun moves round the earth. A man only needs to be as ignorant of astronomy as the infidel is of Christianity, and he will find the most indisputable proof of the fact every time he surveys the heavens!

The Christian finds in it a further proof that the God he worships is patient and longsuffering— "patient because He is eternal," longsuffering because He is almighty, for wrath is a last resource with power. But the day is coming when

"our God shall come and *shall not keep silence*." (Psalm 1:3)

This is not a matter of opinion, but of faith. He who questions it has no claim whatever to the name of Christian, for it is as essentially a truth of Christianity as is the record of the life and death of the Son of God. The old Scriptures teem with it, and of all the writers of the New Testament there is not so much as one who does not expressly speak of it. It was the burden of the first prophetic utterance which Holy Writ records; (Jude 14) and the closing book of the sacred Canon, from the

first chapter to the last, confirms and amplifies the testimony.

The only inquiry, therefore, which concerns us relates to the nature of the crisis and the time of its fulfillment. And the key to this inquiry is the Prophet Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks. Not that a right understanding of the prophecy will enable us to prophesy. That is not the purpose for which it was given.[2]

2. Prophecy is not given to enable us to prophesy, but as a witness to God when the time comes." – PUSEY, *Daniel*, p. 80.

But it will prove a sufficient safeguard against error in the study. Notably it will save us from the follies into which false systems of prophetic chronology inevitably lead those who follow them. It is not in our time only that the end of the world has been predicted. It was looked for far more confidently at the beginning of the sixth century. All Europe rang with it in the days of Pope Gregory the Great. And at the end of the tenth century the apprehension of it amounted to a general panic. "It was then frequently preached on, and by breathless crowds listened to; the subject of every one's thoughts, every one's conversation." "Under this impression, multitudes innumerable," says Mosheim, "having given their property to monasteries or churches, traveled to Palestine, where they expected Christ to descend to judgment. Others bound themselves by solemn oaths to be serfs to churches or to priests, in hopes of a milder sentence on them as being servants of Christ's servants. In many places buildings were let go to decay, as that of which there would be no need in future. And on occasions of eclipses of sun or moon, the people fled in multitudes for refuge to the caverns and the rocks." [3]

3. Elliott, *Horae Apoc.* (3rd Ed.), 1., 446: and see also ch. 3, pp. 362-376.

And so in recent years, one date after another has been confidently named for the supreme crisis; but still the world goes on. A.D. 581 was one of the first years fixed for the event,[4] 1881 is among the last. These pages are not designed to perpetuate the folly of such predictions, but to endeavor in a humble way to elucidate the meaning of a prophecy which ought to deliver us from all such errors and to rescue the study from the discredit they bring upon it.

#### 4. Elliott, 1., 373. Hippolytus predicted A. D. 500.

No words ought to be necessary to enforce the importance of the subject, and yet the neglect of the prophetic Scriptures, by those even who profess to believe all Scripture to be inspired, is proverbial. Putting the matter on the lowest ground, it might be urged that if a knowledge of the past be important, a knowledge of the future must be of far higher value still, in enlarging the mind and raising it above the littlenesses produced by a narrow and unenlightened contemplation of the present. If God has vouchsafed a revelation to men, the study of it is surely fitted to excite enthusiastic interest, and to command the exercise of every talent which can be brought to bear upon it.

And this suggests another ground on which, in our own day especially, prophetic study claims peculiar prominence; namely, the testimony it affords to the Divine character and origin of the Scriptures. Though infidelity was as open-mouthed in former times, it had its own banner and its own camp, and it shocked the mass of mankind, who, though ignorant of the spiritual power of religion, clung nevertheless with dull tenacity to its dogmas. But the special feature of the present age – well fitted to cause anxiety and alarm to all thoughtful men – is the growth of what may be termed religious skepticism, a Christianity which denies revelation – a form of godliness which denies that which is the power of godliness. (2 Timothy 3:5)

Faith is not the normal attitude of the human mind towards things

Divine, the earnest doubter, therefore, is entitled to respect and sympathy. But what judgment shall be meted out to those who delight to proclaim themselves doubters, while claiming to be ministers of a religion of which FAITH is the essential characteristic?

There are not a few in our day whose belief in the Bible is all the more deep and unfaltering just because they have shared in the general revolt against priestcraft and superstition; and such men are scarcely prepared to take sides in the struggle between free thought and the thralldom of creeds and clerics. But in the conflict between faith and skepticism within the pale, their sympathies are less divided. On the one side there may be narrowness, but at least there is honesty; and in such a case surely the moral element is to be considered before a claim to mental vigor and independence can be listened to. Moreover any claim of the kind needs looking into. The man who asserts his freedom to receive and teach what he deems truth, howsoever reached, and wheresoever found, is not to be lightly accused of vanity or self-will. His motives may be true, and right, and praiseworthy. But if he has subscribed to a creed, he ought to be careful in taking any such ground. It is not on the side of vagueness that the creeds of our British Churches are in fault, and men who boast of being freethinkers would deserve more respect if they showed their independence by refusing to subscribe, than by undermining the doctrines they are both pledged and subsidized to defend and teach.

But what concerns us here is the indisputable fact that rationalism in this its most subtle phase is leavening society. The universities are its chief seminaries. The pulpit is its platform. Some of the most popular religious leaders are amongst its apostles. No class is safe from its influence. And if even the present could be stereotyped, it were well; but we are entered on a downward path, and they must indeed be blind who cannot see where it is leading. If the authority of the Scriptures be unshaken, vital truths may be lost by one generation, and recovered by the next; but if that be touched, the foundation of all truth is

undermined, and all power of recovery is gone. The Christianized skeptic of today will soon give place to the Christianized infidel, whose disciples and successors in their turn will be infidels without any gloss of Christianity about them. Some, doubtless, will escape; but as for the many, Rome will be the only refuge for those who dread the goal to which society is hastening. Thus the forces are marshaling for the great predicted struggle of the future between the apostasy of a false religion and the apostasy of open infidelity.[5]

5. I cannot refrain from giving the following extract from an article by Professor Goldwin Smith, in *Macmillian's Magazine* for February 1878:

"The denial of the existence of God and of the future state, in a word, is the dethronement of conscience; and society will pass, to say the least, through a dangerous interval before social science can fill the vacant throne...But in the meantime mankind, or some portions of it, may be in danger of an anarchy of self-interest, compressed, for the purpose of political order, by a despotism of force.

"That science and criticism, acting – thanks to the liberty of opinion won by political effort – with a freedom never known before, have delivered us from a mass of dark and degrading superstitions, we own with heartfelt thankfulness to the deliverers, and in the firm conviction that the removal of false beliefs, and of the authorities or institutions founded on them, cannot prove in the end anything but a blessing to mankind. But at the same time the foundations of general morality have inevitably been shaken, and a crisis has been brought on, the gravity of which nobody can fail to see, and nobody but a fanatic of materialism can see without the most serious misgiving.

"There has been nothing in the history of man like the present situation. The decadence of the ancient mythologies is very far from affording a parallel...The Reformation was a tremendous earthquake: it shook down the fabric of mediaeval religion, and as a consequence of the disturbance in the religious sphere, filled the world with revolutions and wars. But it left the authority of the Bible unshaken, and men might feel that the destructive process had its limit, and that adamant was still beneath their feet. But a world which is intellectual and keenly alive to the significance of these questions, reading all that is written about them with almost passionate avidity, finds itself brought to a crisis the character of which any one may realize by distinctly presenting to himself the idea of existence without a God."

Is the Bible a revelation from God? This is now become the greatest and most pressing of all questions. We may at once dismiss the quibble that the Scriptures admittedly *contain* a revelation. Is the sacred volume no better than a lottery bag from which blanks and prizes are to be drawn at random, with no power of distinguishing between them till the day when the discovery must come too late! And in the present phase of the question it is no less a quibble to urge that passages, and even books, may have been added in error to the Canon. We refuse to surrender Holy Writ to the tender mercies of those who approach it with the ignorance of pagans and the animus of apostates. But for the purpose of the present controversy we might consent to strike out everything on which enlightened criticism has cast the shadow of a doubt. This, however, would only clear the way for the real question at issue, which is not as to the authenticity of one portion or another, but as to the character and value of what is admittedly authentic. We are now far beyond discussing rival theories of inspiration; what concerns us is to consider whether the holy writings are what they claim to be, "the oracles of God." [6]

6. ta logia tou theou (Romans 3:2). The old Hebrew Scriptures were thus regarded by those who were the divinely-appointed custodians of them (*ib.*) Not only by the devout among the Jews, but, as Josephus testifies, by all, they "were justly believed to be Divine," so that men were willing to endure tortures of all kinds rather than speak against them, and even "willingly to die for them" (Josephus, *Apion*, 1., 8). This fact is of immense importance in relation to the Lord's own teaching on the subject. Dealing with a people who believed in the sanctity and value of every word of Scripture, He never missed an opportunity to confirm them in that belief. The New Testament affords abundant proof how unreservedly He enforced it upon His disciples. (As regards the limits and date of closing of the Canon of Scripture, *see* Pusey, *Daniel*, p. 294, *etc.*)

In the midst of error and confusion and uncertainty, increasing on every side, can earnest and devout souls turn to an open Bible, and find there "words of eternal life"? "The rational attitude of a thinking mind towards the supernatural is that of *skepticism*." [7]

#### 7. Mill, *Essays on Religion*.

Reason may bow before the shibboleths and tricks of priestcraft— "the voice of the Church," as it is called; but this is sheer credulity. But if GOD speaks, then skepticism gives place to *faith*. Nor is this a mere begging of the question. The proof that the voice is really Divine must be absolute and conclusive. In such circumstances, skepticism betokens mental or moral degradation, and faith is not the abnegation of reason, but the highest act of reason. To maintain that such proof is impossible, is equivalent to asserting that the God who made us cannot so speak to us that the voice shall carry with it the conviction that it is from Him; and this is not skepticism at all, but disbelief and atheism.

"It pleased God to reveal His Son in me," was St. Paul's account of his conversion. The grounds of his faith were subjective, and could not be produced. In proof to others of their reality he could only appeal to the facts of his life; though these were entirely the result, and in no sense or degree the basis, of his conviction. Nor was his case exceptional. St. Peter was one of the favored three who witnessed every miracle, including the transfiguration, and yet his faith was not the result of these, but sprang from a revelation to himself. In response to his confession,

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"

the Lord declared,

"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 16:17)

Nor, again, was this a special grace accorded only to apostles.

"To them that have obtained like precious faith with us," (2 Peter 1:1)

was St. Peter's address to the faithful generally. He describes them as "born again by the Word of God." So also St. John speaks of such as

"born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13)

"Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth"

is the kindred statement of St. James. (James 1:18).

Whatever be the meaning of such words, they must mean something more than arriving at a sound conclusion from sufficient premises, or accepting facts upon sufficient evidence. Nor will it avail to urge that

this birth was merely the mental or moral change naturally caused by the truth thus attained by natural means. The language of the Scripture is unequivocal that the power of the testimony to produce this change depended on the presence and operation of God. Pages might be filled with quotations to prove this, but two may surface. St. Peter declares they preached the Gospel

"with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;" (1 Peter 1:12)

and St. Paul's words are still more definite. "Our Gospel came not: unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost." [8]

8. alla kai en dunamei kai en pneumati agio (1 Thessalonians 1:5.) "But also in power, even in the Holy Ghost." There is no contrast intended between God on the one hand, and power on the other, nor yet between different sorts of power. To object that this referred to miracles which accompanied the preaching is to betray ignorance of Scripture. Acts 17 represents the preaching to which the Apostle was alluding. That miraculous power existed in Gentile Churches is clear from 1 Corinthians 12 but the question is, did the gospel which produced those Churches appeal to miracles to confirm it? Can any one read the first four chapters of 1 Corinthians and retain a doubt as to the answer?

And if the new birth and the faith of Christianity were thus produced in the case of persons who received the Gospel immediately from the Apostles, nothing less will avail with us who are separated by eighteen centuries from the witnesses and their testimony. God is with His people still. And He speaks to men's hearts, now, as really as He did in early times; not indeed through inspired Apostles, and still less by dreams or visions, but through the Holy Writings which He Himself inspired; [9] and as the result believers are "born of God," and obtain

the knowledge of forgiveness of sins and of eternal life. The phenomenon is not a natural one, resulting from the study of the evidences; it is *supernatural* altogether. "Thinking minds," regarding it objectively, may, if they please, maintain towards it what they deem "a rational attitude;" but at least let them own the fact that there are thousands of credible people who can testify to the reality of the experience here spoken of, and further let them recognize that it is entirely in accordance with the teaching of the New Testament.

9. God is omnipresent; but there is a real sense in which the Father and the Son are not on earth but in heaven, and in that same sense the Holy Spirit is not in heaven but on earth.

And such persons have transcendental proof of the truth of Christianity. Their faith rests, not on the phenomena of their own experience, but on the great objective truths of revelation. Yet their primary conviction that these *are* Divine truths does not depend on the "evidences" which skepticism delights to criticize, but on something which skepticism takes no account of.[10]

10. Such faith is inseparably connected with salvation, and salvation is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). Hence the solemn words of Christ, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matthew 11:25).

"No book can be written in behalf of the Bible like the Bible itself. Man's defenses are man's word; they may help to beat off attacks, they may draw out some portion of its meaning. The Bible is God's word, and through it God the Holy Ghost, who spake it, speaks to the soul which closes not itself against it." [11]

11. Pusey, *Daniel, Pref.* p. 25.

But more than this, the well-instructed believer will find within it inexhaustible stores of proof that it is from God. The Bible is far more than a textbook of theology and morals, or even than a guide to heaven. It is the record of the progressive revelation God has vouchsafed to man, and the Divine history of our race in connection with that revelation. Ignorance may fail to see in it anything more than the religious literature of the Hebrew race, and of the Church in Apostolic times; but the intelligent student who can read between the lines will find there mapped out, sometimes in clear bold outline, sometimes dimly, but yet always discernible by the patient and devout inquirer, the great scheme of God's counsels and workings in and for this world of ours from eternity to eternity.

And the study of prophecy, rightly understood, has a range no narrower than this. Its chief value is not to bring us a knowledge of "things to come," regarded as isolated events, important though this may be; but to enable us to link the future with the past as part of God's great purpose and plan revealed in Holy Writ. The facts of the life and death of Christ were an overwhelming proof of the inspiration of the Old Testament. When, after His resurrection, He sought to confirm the disciples' faith,

"beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:27)

But many a promise had been given, and many a prophecy recorded, which seemed to be lost in the darkness of Israel's national extinction and Judah's apostasy. The fulfillment of them all depended on Messiah; but now Messiah was rejected, and His people were about to be cast away, that Gentiles might be taken up for blessing. Are we to conclude then that the past is wiped out for ever, and that God's great

purposes for earth have collapsed through human sin? As men now judge of revelation, Christianity dwindles down to be nothing but a "plan of salvation" for individuals, and if St. John's Gospel and a few of the Epistles be left them they are content. How different was the attitude of mind and heart displayed by St. Paul! In the Apostle's view the crisis which seemed the catastrophe of everything the old prophets had foretold of God's purposes for earth, opened up a wider and more glorious purpose still, which should include the fulfillment of them all; and rapt in the contemplation, he exclaimed,

"Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33)

True prophetic study is an inquiry into these unsearchable counsels, these deep riches of Divine wisdom and knowledge. Beneath the light it gives, the Scriptures are no longer a heterogeneous compilation of religious books, but one harmonious whole, from which no part could be omitted without destroying the completeness of the revelation. And yet the study is disparaged in the Churches as being of no practical importance. If the Churches are leavened with skepticism at this moment, their neglect of prophetic study in this its true and broader aspect has done more than all the rationalism of Germany to promote the evil. Skeptics may boast of learned Professors and Doctors of Divinity among their ranks, but we may challenge them to name a single one of the number who has given proof that he knows anything whatever of these deeper mysteries of revelation. The attempt to put back the rising tide of skepticism is hopeless. Indeed the movement is but one of many phases of the intense mental activity which marks the age. The reign of creeds is past. The days are gone for ever when men will believe what their fathers believed, without a question. Rome, in some phase of its development, has a strange charm for minds of a certain caste, and rationalism is fascinating to not a few; but orthodoxy in the old sense is dead, and if any are to be delivered it must be by a

deeper and more thorough knowledge of the Scriptures.

These pages are but a humble effort to this end; but if they avail in any measure to promote the study of Holy Writ their chief purpose will be fulfilled. The reader therefore may expect to find the accuracy of the Bible vindicated on points which may seem of trifling value. When David reached the throne of Israel and came to choose his generals, he named for the chief commands the men who had made themselves conspicuous by feats of prowess or of valor. Among the foremost three was one of whom the record states that he defended a tract of lentiles, and drove away a troop of the Philistines. (2 Samuel 23:11, 12)? To others it may have seemed little better than a patch of weeds, and not worth fighting for, but it was precious to the Israelite as a portion of the divinely-given inheritance, and moreover the enemy might have used it as a rallying ground from which to capture strongholds. So is it with the Bible. It is all of intrinsic value if indeed it be from God; and moreover, the statement which is assailed, and which may seem of no importance, may prove to be a link in the chain of truth on which we are depending for eternal life.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER II DANIEL AND HIS TIMES

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"DANIEL *the prophet.*" None can have a higher title to the name, for it was thus Messiah spoke of him. And yet the great Prince of the Captivity would himself doubtless have disclaimed it. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the rest, "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" (2 Peter 1:21) but Daniel uttered no such "God-breathed" words.[1] Like the "beloved disciple" in Messianic times, he beheld visions, and recorded what he saw. The great prediction of the seventy weeks was a message delivered to him by an angel, who spoke to him as man speaks with man. A stranger to prophet's fare[2] and prophet's garb, he lived in the midst of all the luxury and pomp of an Eastern court. Next to the king, he was the foremost man in the greatest empire of antiquity; and it was not till the close of a long life spent in statecraft that he received the visions recorded in the latter chapters of his book.

1. My belief in the Divine character of the Book of Daniel will, I trust, appear plainly in these pages. The distinction I desire to mark here is between prophecies which men were inspired to utter, and prophecies like those of Daniel and St. John, who were merely the recipients of the revelation. With these, inspiration began in the *recording* what they had received.

2. To quote Daniel 1:12 in opposition to this involves an obvious anachronism. The word "pulse," moreover, in the Hebrew points generally to vegetable food, and would

include a dish as savory as that for which Esau sold his birthright (comp, Genesis 25:34). To eat animal food from the table of Gentiles would have involved a violation of the law; therefore Daniel and his companions became "vegetarians."

To understand these prophecies aright, it is essential that the leading events of the political history of the times should be kept in view.

The summer of Israel's national glory had proved as brief as it was brilliant. The people never acquiesced in heart in the Divine decree which, in distributing the tribal dignities, entrusted the scepter to the house of Judah, while it adjudged the birthright to the favored family of Joseph;<sup>[3]</sup> and their mutual jealousies and feuds, though kept in check by the personal influence of David, and the surpassing splendor of the reign of Solomon, produced a national disruption upon the accession of Rehoboam. In revolting from Judah, the Israelites also apostatized from God; and forsaking the worship of Jehovah, they lapsed into open and flagrant idolatry. After two centuries and a half unillumined by a single bright passage in their history, they passed into captivity to Assyria;<sup>[4]</sup> and on the birth of Daniel a century had elapsed since the date of their national extinction.

3. "Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's" (1 Chronicles 5:2).

4. The disruption was in B. C. 975, the captivity to Assyria about B. C. 721.

Judah still retained a nominal independence, though, in fact, the nation had already fallen into a state of utter vassalage. The geographical position of its territory marked it out for such a fate. Lying half-way between the Nile and the Euphrates, suzerainty in Judea became

inevitably a test by which their old enemy beyond their southern frontier, and the empire which the genius of Nabopolassar was then rearing in the north, would test their rival claims to supremacy. The prophet's birth fell about the very year which was reckoned the epoch of the second Babylonian Empire.[5] He was still a boy at the date of Pharaoh Necho's unsuccessful invasion of Chaldea. In that struggle his kinsman and sovereign, the good king Josiah, took sides with Babylon, and not only lost his life, but compromised still further the fortunes of his house and the freedom of his country. (2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chronicles 35:20)

### 5. B. C. 625.

The public mourning for Josiah had scarcely ended when Pharaoh, on his homeward march, appeared before Jerusalem to assert his suzerainty by claiming a heavy tribute from the land and settling the succession to the throne. Jehoahaz, a younger son of Josiah, had obtained the crown on his father's death, but was deposed by Pharaoh in favor of Eliakim, who doubtless recommended himself to the king of Egypt by the very qualities which perhaps had induced his father to disinherit him. Pharaoh changed his name to Jehoiakim, and established him in the kingdom as a vassal of Egypt (2 Kings 23:33-35; 2 Chronicles 36:3, 4).

In the third year after these events, Nebuchadnezzar, Prince Royal of Babylon,[6] set out upon an expedition of conquest, in command of his father's armies; and entering Judea he demanded the submission of the king of Judah. After a siege of which history gives no particulars, he captured the city and seized the king as a prisoner of war. But Jehoiakim regained his liberty and his throne by pledging his allegiance to Babylon; and Nebuchadnezzar withdrew with no spoil except a part of the holy vessels of the temple, which he carried to the house of his god, and no captives save a few youths of the seed royal of Judah, Daniel being of the number, whom he selected to adorn his

court as vassal princes. (2 Kings 24:1; 2 Chronicles 36:6, 7; Daniel 1:1, 2) Three years later Jehoiakim revolted; but, although during the rest of his reign his territory was frequently overrun by "bands of the Chaldees," five years elapsed before the armies of Babylon returned to enforce the conquest of Judea.[7]

6. Berosus avers that this expedition was in Nabopolassar's lifetime (Jos., *Apion*, 1. 19), and the chronology proves it. See [App. I.](#) as to the dates of these events and the chronology of the period.

7. 2 Kings 24:1, 2. According to Josephus (*Ant.*, 10. 6, Ch. 3) Nebuchadnezzar on his second invasion found Jehoiakim still on the throne, and he it was who put him to death and made Jehoiachin king. He goes on to say that the king of Babylon soon afterwards became suspicious of Jehoiachin's fidelity, and again returned to dethrone him, and placed Zedekiah on the throne. These statements, though not absolutely inconsistent with 2 Kings 24, are rendered somewhat improbable by comparison with it. They are adopted by Canon Rawlinson in the *Five Great Monarchies* (vol. 3, p. 491), but Dr. Pusey adheres to the Scripture narrative (*Daniel*, p. 403).

Jehoiachin, a youth of eighteen years, who had just succeeded to the throne, at once surrendered with his family and retinue, (2 Kings 24:12) and once more Jerusalem lay at the mercy of Nebuchadnezzar. On his first invasion he had proved magnanimous and lenient, but he had now not merely to assert supremacy but to punish rebellion. Accordingly he ransacked the city for everything of value, and "carried away all Jerusalem," leaving none behind "save the poorest sort of the people of the land." (2 Kings 24:14)

Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah was left as king or governor of the

despoiled and depopulated city, having sworn by Jehovah to pay allegiance to his Suzerain. This was "King Jehoiachin's captivity," according to the era of the prophet Ezekiel, who was himself among the captives. (Ezekiel 1:2)

The servitude to Babylon had been predicted as early as the days of Hezekiah; (2 Kings 20:17) and after the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy respecting it, Jeremiah was charged with a Divine message of hope to the captivity, that after seventy years were accomplished they would be restored to their land. (Jeremiah 29:10) But while the exiles were thus cheered with promises of good, King Zedekiah and "the residue of Jerusalem that remained in the land" were warned that resistance to the Divine decree which subjected them to the yoke of Babylon would bring on them judgments far more terrible than any they had known. Nebuchadnezzar would return to "destroy them utterly," and make their whole land "a desolation and an astonishment." (Jeremiah 24:8-10; 25:9; 27:3-8) False prophets rose up, however, to feed the national vanity by predicting the speedy restoration of their independence, (Jeremiah 28:1-4) and in spite of the solemn and repeated warnings and entreaties of Jeremiah, the weak and wicked king was deceived by their testimony, and having obtained a promise of armed support from Egypt, (Ezekiel 17:15) he openly revolted.

Thereupon the Chaldean armies once more surrounded Jerusalem. Events seemed at first to justify Zedekiah's conduct, for the Egyptian forces hastened to his assistance, and the Babylonians were compelled to raise the siege and withdraw from Judea. (Jeremiah 37:1, 5, 11) But this temporary success of the Jews served only to exasperate the King of Babylon, and to make their fate more terrible when at last it overtook them. Nebuchadnezzar determined to inflict a signal chastisement on the rebellious city and people; and placing himself at the head of all the forces of his empire, (2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 34:1) he once more invaded Judea and laid siege to the Holy City.

The Jews resisted with the blind fanaticism which a false hope inspires; and it is a signal proof of the natural strength of ancient Jerusalem, that for eighteen months (2 Kings 25:1-3) they kept their enemy at bay, and yielded at last to famine and not to force. The place was then given up to fire and sword. Nebuchadnezzar "slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah." (2 Chronicles 36:17-21)

As He had borne with their fathers for forty years in the wilderness, so for forty years this last judgment lingered, "because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place." (2 Chronicles 36:15) For forty years the prophet's voice had not been silent in Jerusalem; "but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy." [8]

8. 2 Chronicles 5:16. This period is no doubt the forty years of Judah's sin, specified in Ezekiel 4:6. Jeremiah prophesied from the thirteenth year of Josiah (B. C. 627) until the fall of Jerusalem in the eleventh year of Zedekiah (B. C. 587). See Jeremiah 1:3, and 25:3. The 390 years of Israel's sin, according to Ezekiel 4:5, appear to have been reckoned from the date of the covenant of blessing to the

ten tribes, made by the prophet Ahijah with Jeroboam, presumably in the second year before the disruption, *i. e.*, B. C. 977 (1 Kings 11:29- 39).

Such is the sacred chronicler's description of the first destruction of Jerusalem, rivaled in later times by the horrors of that event under the effects of which it still lies prostrate, and destined to be surpassed in days still to come, when the predictions of Judah's supreme catastrophe shall be fulfilled.[9]

9. The horrors of the siege and capture of Jerusalem by Titus surpass everything which history records of similar events. Josephus, who was himself a witness of them, narrates them in all their awful details. His estimate of the number of Jews who perished in Jerusalem is 1, 100, 000. "The blood runs cold, and the heart sickens, at these unexampled horrors; and we take refuge in a kind of desperate hope that they have been exaggerated by the historian." "Jerusalem might almost seem to be a place under a peculiar curse; it has probably witnessed a far greater portion of human misery than any other spot upon the earth." --MILMAN, *Hist. Jews*.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER III.

### THE KING'S DREAM AND THE PROPHET'S VISIONS

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THE distinction between the Hebrew and the Chaldee portions of the writings of Daniel[1] affords a natural division, the importance of which will appear on a careful consideration of the whole. But for the purpose of the present inquiry, the book will more conveniently divide itself between the first six chapters and the last, the former portion being primarily historical and didactic, and the latter containing the record of the four great visions granted to the prophet in his closing years. It is with the visions that here we are specially concerned. The narrative of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters is beyond the scope of these pages, as having no immediate bearing upon the prophecy. The second chapter, however, is of great importance, as giving the foundation of the later visions.[2]

1. "The Chaldee portion of Daniel commences at the fourth verse of the second chapter, and continues to the end of the seventh chapter." –TREGELLES, *Daniel*, p. 8.

2. The following analysis of the Book of Daniel may help the study of it:

Chap. 1. The capture of Jerusalem. The captivity of Daniel and his three companions, and their fortunes in Babylon (B. C. 606).

Chap. 2. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of THE GREAT IMAGE (B. C. 603-2).

Chap. 3. Nebuchadnezzar's golden image set up for all his subjects to worship. Daniel's three companions cast into the fiery furnace.

Chap. 4. Nebuchadnezzar's dream about his own

insanity, and Daniel's interpretation of it. Its fulfillment.

Chap. 5 Belshazzar's feast. Babylon taken by Darius the Mede (B. C. 538).

Chap. 6. Daniel is promoted by Darius; refuses to worship him, and is cast into a den of lions. His deliverance and subsequent prosperity (? B. C.. 537).

Chap. 7. Daniel's vision of THE FOUR BEASTS (? B. C. 541).

Chap. 8. Daniel's vision of THE RAM AND THE GOAT (? B. C. 539).

Chap. 9. Daniel's prayer: the prophecy of THE SEVENTY WEEKS (B. C. 538).

Chaps. 10. - 12. Daniel's LAST VISION (B. C. 534).

In a dream, King Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image, of which the head was gold, the breasts and arms silver, the body brass, the legs iron, and the feet partly iron and partly potter's ware. Then a stone, hewn without hands, struck the feet of the image and it fell and crumbled to dust, and the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.[3]

3. The difficulty connected with the date of this vision (the second year of Nebuchadnezzar) is considered in [App. 1.](#)  
*post.*

The interpretation is in these words:

"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, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this 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 breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; 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 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 is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the 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 2:37-45)

The predicted sovereignty of Judah passed far beyond the limits of mere supremacy among the tribes of Israel. It was an imperial scepter which was entrusted to the Son of David.

"I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." (Psalm 89:27)

"All things shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him." (Psalm 72:11)

Such were the promises which Solomon inherited; and the brief glory of his reign gave proof how fully they might have been realized, (2 Chronicles 9:22-28) had he not turned aside to folly, and bartered for present sensual pleasures the most splendid prospects which ever opened before mortal man. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, and Daniel's vision in interpretation of that dream, were a Divine revelation that the forfeited scepter of the house of David had passed to Gentile hands, to remain with them until the day when "the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." (Daniel 2:44)

It is unnecessary here to discuss in detail the earlier portions of this prophecy. There is, in fact, no controversy as to its general character and scope; and bearing in mind the distinction between what is doubted and what is doubtful, there need be no controversy as to the identity of the empires therein described with Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome. That the first was Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom is definitely stated, (Daniel 2:37, 38) and a later vision as expressly names the Medo-Persian empire and the empire of Alexander as being distinct "kingdoms" within the range of the prophecy. (Daniel 8:20, 21) The fourth empire, therefore, must of necessity be Rome. But it is sufficient here to emphasize the fact, revealed in the plainest terms to Daniel in his exile, and to Jeremiah in the midst of the troubles at Jerusalem, that thus the sovereignty of the earth, which had been forfeited by Judah, was solemnly committed to the Gentiles.[4] The only questions which arise relate, first to the character of the final catastrophe symbolized by the fall and destruction of the image, and secondly to the time of its fulfillment; and any difficulties which have been raised depend in no way upon the language of the prophecy, but solely upon the preconceived views of interpreters. No Christian

doubts that the "stone cut out without hands" was typical either of Christ Himself or of His kingdom. It is equally clear that the catastrophe was to occur when the fourth empire should have become divided, and be "partly strong and partly brittle." Therefore its fulfillment could not belong to the time of the first advent. No less clear is it that its fulfillment was to be a sudden crisis, to be followed by the establishment of "a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." Therefore it relates to events still to come. We are dealing here, not with prophetic theories, but with the meaning of plain words; and what the prophecy foretells is not the rise and spread of a "*spiritual* kingdom" in the midst of earthly kingdoms, but the establishment of a kingdom which "shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." [5]

4. Cf. Daniel 2:38, and Jeremiah 27:6, 7. – The statement of Genesis 49:10 may seem at first sight to clash with this: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." But, as events prove, this cannot mean that royal power was to be exercised by the house of Judah until the advent of Christ. Hengstenberg has rightly interpreted it (*Christology*, Arnold's trans., Ch. 78): "Judah shall not cease to exist as a tribe, nor lose its superiority, until it shall be exalted to higher honor and glory through the great Redeemer, who shall spring from it, and whom not only the Jews, but all the nations of the earth shall obey." As he points out, "*until* not unfrequently means *up to* and *afterwards*." (See *ex. gr.* Genesis 28:15.) The meaning of the prophecy, therefore, was not that Judah was to exercise royal power *until* Christ, and then lose it, which is the lame and unsatisfactory gloss usually adopted; but that the pre-eminence of Judah is to be irrevocably established in Christ – not spiritually, but in fact, in the kingdom of which Daniel prophesies.

5. To believe that such a prophecy can ever be realized may seem to betoken fanaticism and folly, but at least let us accept the language of Scripture, and not lapse into the blind absurdity of expecting the fulfillment of theories based on what men conjecture the prophets ought to have foretold.

The interpretation of the royal dream raised the captive exile at a single bound to the Grand-Vizier-ship of Babylon, (Daniel 2:48) a position of trust and honor which probably he held until he was either dismissed or withdrew from office under one or other of the two last kings who succeeded to Nebuchadnezzar's throne. The scene on the fatal night of Belshazzar's feast suggests that he had been then so long in retirement, that the young king-regent knew nothing of his fame.[6] But yet his fame was still so great with older men, that notwithstanding his failing years, he was once more called to the highest office by Darius, when the Median king became master of the broad-walled city.[7]

6. This appears from the language of the queen-mother, Daniel 5:10- 12. But chap. 8:27 shows that Daniel, even then, held some appointment at the court.

7. Daniel 6:1, 2. Daniel cannot have been less than eighty years of age at this time. See chron. table, [App. 1.](#) *post.*

But whether in prosperity or in retirement, he was true to the God of his fathers. The years in which his childhood in Jerusalem was spent, though politically dark and troubled, were a period of the brightest spiritual revival by which his nation had ever been blessed, and he had carried with him to the court of Nebuchadnezzar a faith and piety that withstood all the adverse influences which abounded in such a scene.[8]

8. It is improbable that Daniel was less than twenty-one years of age when placed at the head of the empire in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar. The age to which he lived makes it equally improbable that he was more. His birth would thus fall, as before suggested, about B. C. 625, the epoch of Nabopolassar's era, and some three years later was Josiah's passover, the like of which had never been held in Israel from the days of Samuel (2 Chronicles 35:18, 19).

The Daniel of the second chapter was a young man just entering on a career of extraordinary dignity and power, such as few have ever known, The Daniel of the seventh chapter was an aged saint, who, having passed through the ordeal scathless, still possessed a heart as true to God and to His people as when, some threescore years before, he had entered the gates of the broad-walled city a captive and friendless stranger. The date of the earlier vision was about the time of Jehoiakim's revolt, when their ungovernable pride of race and creed still led the Jews to dream of independence. At the time of the later vision more than forty years had passed since Jerusalem had been laid in ruins, and the last king of the house of David had entered the brazen gates of Babylon in chains.

Here again the main outlines of the prophecy seem clear. As the four empires which were destined successively to wield sovereign power during "the times of the Gentiles" are represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream by the four divisions of the great image, they are here typified by four wild beasts.[9] The ten toes of the image in the second chapter have their correlatives in the ten horns of the fourth beast in the seventh chapter. The character and course of the fourth empire are the prominent subject of the later vision, but both prophecies are equally explicit that that empire in its ultimate phase will be brought to a signal and sudden end by a manifestation of Divine power on earth.

9. The following is the vision as recorded in Daniel 7:2-14:

"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of the heaven strove 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 stand upon the 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 raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and, lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; 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, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: 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 little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I

beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

The details of the vision, though interesting and important, may here be passed unnoticed, for the interpretation given of them is so simple and so definite that the words can leave no room for doubt in any unprejudiced mind. "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings" (*i.e.*, kingdoms; compare verse 23), "which shall arise out of the earth; but the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever." (Verses 17, 18)

The prophet then proceeds to recapitulate the vision, and his language affords an explicit answer to the only question which can reasonably be raised upon the words just quoted, namely, whether the "kingdom of the saints" shall follow immediately upon the close of the fourth Gentile empire.[10] "Then," he adds, "I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than

his fellows. 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."

10. Certain writers advocate an interpretation of these visions which allots the "four kingdoms" to Babylonia, Media, Persia, and Greece. This view, with which Professor Westcott's name is identified, claims notice merely in order to distinguish it from another with which it has been confounded, even in a work of such pretensions as *The Speaker's Commentary* (Vol. 6., p. 333, *Excursus on the Four Kingdoms*). The learned author of the *Ordo Saeculorum* (Ch. 616, *etc.*), quoting Maitland, who in turn follows Lacunza (Ben Ezra), argues that the accession of Darius the Mede to the throne of Babylon did not involve a change of empire. These writers further urge that the description of the third kingdom resembles Rome rather than Greece. According to this view, therefore, the kingdoms are 1st Babylon, including Persia, 2nd Greece, 3rd Rome, 4th a future kingdom to arise in the last days. But as already noticed (p. 32, *ante*), the book of Daniel expressly distinguishes Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece as "kingdoms" within the scope of the prophecy.

Such was the prophet's inquiry. Here is the interpretation accorded to him in reply.

"The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great

words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." (Daniel 7:19-27)[11]

11. Daniel 7:19-27. On this vision see Pusey, *Daniel*, pp. 78, 79.

Whether history records any event which may be within the range of this prophecy is a matter of opinion. That it has not been *fulfilled* is a plain matter of fact.[12] The Roman earth shall one day be parceled out in ten separate kingdoms, and out of one of these shall arise that terrible enemy of God and His people, whose destruction is to be one of the events of the second advent of Christ.

12. The state of Europe at or after the dismemberment of the Roman Empire has been appealed to as a fulfillment of it, ignoring the fact that the territory which Augustus ruled included a considerable district both of Asia and Africa. Nor is this all. There is no presumption against finding in past times a partial accomplishment of such a prophecy, but the fact that twenty-eight different lists, including sixty-five "kingdoms," have been put forward in the controversy, is a proof how worthless is the evidence of any such fulfillment. In truth the historical school of interpreters have here, as on many other points, brought discredit upon their entire system, containing, as it does, so much that claims attention (see [App. 2. Note C](#)).

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER IV

### THE VISION BY THE RIVER OF ULAI

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"THE times of the Gentiles"; thus it was that Christ Himself described the era of Gentile supremacy. Men have come to regard the earth as their own domain, and to resent the thought of Divine interference in their affairs. But though monarchs seem to owe their thrones to dynastic claims, the sword or the ballot-box, – and in their individual capacity their title may rest solely upon these, – the power they wield is divinely delegated, for "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." (Daniel 4:25)

In the exercise of this high prerogative He took back the scepter He had entrusted to the house of David, and transferred it to Gentile hands; and the history of that scepter during the entire period, from the epoch to the close of the times of the Gentiles, is the subject of the prophet's earlier visions.

The vision of the eighth chapter of Daniel has a narrower range. It deals only with the two kingdoms which were represented by the middle portion, or arms and body, of the image of the second chapter. The Medo-Persian Empire, and the relative superiority of the younger nation, are represented by a ram with two horns, one of which was higher than the other, though the last to grow. And the rise of the Grecian Empire under Alexander, followed by its division among his four successors, is typified by a goat with a single horn between its eyes, which horn was broken and gave place to four horns that came up instead of it. Out of one of these horns came forth a little horn,

representing a king who should become infamous as a blasphemer of God and a persecutor of His people.

That the career of Antiochus Epiphanes was in a special way within the scope and meaning of this prophecy is unquestioned. That its ultimate fulfillment belongs to a future time, though not so generally admitted, is nevertheless sufficiently clear. The proof of it is twofold. First, it cannot but be recognized that its most striking details remain wholly unfulfilled.[1] And secondly, the events described are expressly stated to be "in the last end of the indignation," (Daniel 8:19) which is "the great tribulation" of the last days, (Matthew 24:21) "the time of trouble" which is immediately to precede the complete deliverance of Judah.[2]

1. I allude to the 2, 300 days of verse 14, and to the statement of verse 25, "He shall also stand up against the Prince of Princes, but he shall be broken without hand."
2. "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," – *i. e.*, the Jews (Daniel 12:1).

It is unnecessary, however, further to embarrass the special subject of these pages by any such discussion. So far as the present inquiry is immediately concerned, this vision of the ram and the he-goat is important mainly as explanatory of the visions which precede it.[3]

3. The following is the vision of the eighth chapter:

"And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan, in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai. Then I lifted up mine eyes, and

saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns. And the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west, on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns; and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great; and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones, toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it

practiced, and prospered. Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake. How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man; for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now, as he was speaking with me I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy

people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many; he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true; wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days."

One point of contrast with the prophecy of the fourth Gentile kingdom demands a very emphatic notice. The vision of Alexander's reign, followed by the fourfold division of his empire, suggests a rapid sequence of events, and the history of the three-and-thirty years that intervened between the battles of Issus and of Ipsus[4] comprises the full realization of the prophecy. But the rise of the ten horns upon the fourth beast in the vision of the seventh chapter, appears to lie within as brief a period as was the rise of the four horns upon the goat in the eighth chapter; whereas it is plain upon the pages of history that this tenfold division of the Roman empire has never yet taken place. A definite date may be assigned to the advent of the first three kingdoms of prophecy; and if the date of the battle of Actium be taken as the epoch of the hybrid monster which filled the closing scenes of the prophet's vision – and no *later* date will be assigned to it – it follows that in interpreting the prophecy, we may eliminate the history of the world from the time of Augustus to the present hour, without losing the sequence of the vision.[5] Or in other words, the prophet's glance into the future entirely overlooked these nineteen centuries of our era. As when mountain peaks stand out together on the horizon, seeming almost to touch, albeit a wide expanse of river and field and hill may lie between, so there loomed upon the prophet's vision these events of times now long gone by, and times still future.

4. It was the battle of Issus in B. C. 333, not the victory of Granicus in the preceding year, which made Alexander

master of Palestine. The decisive battle which brought the Persian empire to an end, was at Arbela in B. C. 331.

Alexander died B. C. 323, and the definite distribution of his territories among his four chief generals, followed the battle of Ipsus B. C. 301. In this partition Seleucus's share included Syria ("the king of the north"), and Ptolemy held the Holy Land with Egypt ("the king of the south"); but Palestine afterwards was conquered and held by the Seleucidae. Cassander had Macedon and Greece; and Lysimachus had Thrace, part of Bithynia, and the territories intervening between these and the Meander.

5. The same remark applies to the vision of the second chapter, the rise of the Roman empire, its future division, and its final doom, being presented at a single view.

And with the New Testament in our hands, it would betray strange and willful ignorance if we doubted the deliberate design which has left this long interval of our Christian era a blank in Daniel's prophecies. The more explicit revelation of the ninth chapter, measures out the years before the first advent of Messiah. But if these nineteen centuries had been added to the chronology of the period to intervene before the promised kingdom could be ushered in, how could the Lord have taken up the testimony to the near fulfillment of these very prophecies, and have proclaimed that the kingdom was at hand?[6] He who knows all hearts, knew well the issue; but the thought is impious that the proclamation was not genuine and true in the strictest sense; and it would have been deceptive and untrue had prophecy foretold a long interval of Israel's rejection before the promise could be realized.

6. *i. e.*, the kingdom as Daniel had prophesied of it. On this see Pusey, *Daniel*, p. 84.

Therefore it is that the two advents of Christ are brought seemingly

together in Old Testament Scriptures. The surface currents of human responsibility and human guilt are unaffected by the changeless and deep-lying tide of the fore-knowledge and sovereignty of God. Their responsibility was real, and their guilt was without excuse, who rejected their long-promised King and Savior. They were not the victims of an inexorable fate which dragged them to their doom, but free agents who used their freedom to crucify the Lord of Glory. "His blood be on us and on our children," was their terrible, impious cry before the judgment-seat of Pilate, and for eighteen centuries their judgment has been meted out to them, to reach its appalling climax on the advent of the "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." [7]

7. Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21. To discuss what would have been the course of events had the Jews accepted Christ is mere levity. But it is legitimate to inquire how the believing Jew, intelligent in the prophecies, could have expected the kingdom, seeing that the tenfold division of the Roman empire and the rise of the "little horn" had to take place first. The difficulty will disappear if we notice how suddenly the Grecian empire was dismembered on Alexander's death. In like manner, the death of Tiberius might have led to the immediate disruption of the territories of Rome, and the rise of the predicted persecutor. In a word, all that remained unfulfilled of Daniel's prophecy might have been fulfilled in the years which had still to run of the seventy weeks.

These visions were full of mystery to Daniel, and filled the old prophet's mind with troubled thoughts. (Daniel 7:28; 8:27) A long vista of events seemed thus to intervene before the realization of the promised blessings to his nation, and yet these very revelations made those blessings still more sure. Ere long he witnessed the crash of the Babylonian power, and saw a stranger enthroned within the broad-

walled city. But the change brought no hope to Judah. Daniel was restored, indeed, to the place of power and dignity which he had held so long under Nebuchadnezzar, (Daniel 2:48; 6:2) but he was none the less an exile; his people were in captivity, their city lay in ruins, and their land was a wilderness. And the mystery was only deepened when he turned to Jeremiah's prophecy, which fixed at seventy years the destined era of "the desolations of Jerusalem" (Daniel 9:2) So "by prayer and supplications, with fastings, and sackcloth and ashes," he cast himself on God; as a prince among his people, confessing their national apostasy, and pleading for their restoration and forgiveness. And who can read that prayer unmoved?

"O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy Sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name: for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God; for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name" (Daniel 9:26-29.)

While Daniel was thus "speaking in prayer" Gabriel once more appeared to him, (Daniel 9:21, *See* chap. 8:16.) that same angel messenger who heralded in after times the Savior's birth in Bethlehem, – and in answer to his supplication, delivered to the prophet the great prediction of the seventy weeks.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER V

### THE ANGEL' S MESSAGE

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**"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.[1] Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment[2] to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in trou blous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and his 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[3] with many for one week: and for the half 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, even until the consummation, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolator." Daniel 9:24-27. R.V. (See marginal readings.)**

1. "The expression does not in a single case apply to any *person*." – TREGELLES, *Daniel*, p. 98. "These words are applied to the Nazarene, although this expression is never applied to a person throughout the Bible, but invariably

denotes part of the temple, the holy of holies" –  
DR. HERMAN ADLER, *Sermons* (Trubner,  
1869).

2. "From the issuing of the decree." –  
TREGELLES, *Daniel*, p. 96.

3. Not *the* covenant (as in A. V.: see margin).  
This word is rendered *covenant* when Divine  
things are in question, and *league* when, as here,  
an ordinary treaty is intended (*C. f. ex. gr.*,  
Joshua 9:6, 7, 11, 15, 16).

SUCH was the message entrusted to the angel in response to the  
prophet's prayer for mercies upon Judah and Jerusalem.

To whom shall appeal be made for an interpretation of the utterance?  
Not to the Jew, surely, for though himself the subject of the prophecy,  
and of all men the most deeply interested in its meaning, he is bound,  
in rejecting Christianity, to falsify not only history, but his own  
Scriptures. Nor yet to the theologian who has prophetic theories to  
vindicate, and who on discovering, perhaps, some era of seven times  
seventy in Israel's history, concludes that he has solved the problem,  
ignoring the fact that the strange history of that wonderful people is  
marked through all its course by chronological cycles of seventy and  
multiples of seventy. But any man of unprejudiced mind who will read  
the words with no commentary save that afforded by Scripture itself  
and the history of the time, will readily admit that on certain leading  
points their meaning is unequivocal and clear.

1. It was thus revealed that the full meed of blessing promised to  
the Jews should be deferred till the close of a period of time,  
described as "seventy sevens," after which Daniel's city and  
people[4] are to be established in blessing of the fullest kind.

2. Another period composed of seven weeks and sixty-two weeks is specified with equal certainty.

3. This second era dates from the issuing of an edict to rebuild Jerusalem, – not the temple, but *the city*; for, to remove all doubt, "the street and wall"[5] are emphatically mentioned; and a definite event, described as the cutting off of Messiah, marks the close of it.

4. The beginning of the week required (in addition to the sixty-nine) to complete the seventy, is to be signaled by the making of a covenant or treaty by a personage described as "the Prince that shall come," or "the coming Prince," which covenant he will violate in the middle of the week by the suppression of the Jews' religion.[6]

5. And therefore the complete era of seventy weeks, and the lesser period of sixty-nine weeks, date from the same epoch.[7]

4. If the words of verses 24 and 25 do not themselves carry conviction that Judah and Jerusalem are the subjects of the prophecy, the reader has but to compare them with the preceding verses, especially 2, 7, 12, 16, 18, and 19.

5. Literally the "trench" or "scarp rampart." – TRECELLES, *Daniel*, p. 90.

6. The personage referred to in verse 27 is not the Messiah, but the second prince named in verse 26. The theory which has gained currency, that the Lord made a seven years' compact with the Jews at the beginning of His ministry, would

deserve a prominent place in a cyclopaedia of the vagaries of religious thought. We know of the old covenant, which has been abrogated, and of the new covenant, which is everlasting; but the extraordinary idea of a seven years' covenant between God and men has not a shadow of foundation in the letter of Scripture, and is utterly opposed to its spirit.

7. "The whole period of seventy weeks is divided into three successive periods, – seven, sixty-two, one, and the last week is subdivided into two halves. It is self-evident that since these parts, seven, sixty-two, one, are equal to the whole, *viz.*, seventy, it was intended that they should be." – PUSEY, *Daniel*, p. 170.

The first question, therefore, which arises is whether history records any event which unmistakably marks the beginning of the era.

Certain writers, both Christian and Jewish, have assumed that the seventy weeks began in the first year of Darius, the date of the prophecy itself; and thus falling into hopeless error at the very threshold of the inquiry, all their conclusions are necessarily erroneous. The words of the angel are unequivocal: "From the issuing of the decree to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks." That Jerusalem was in fact rebuilt as a fortified city, is absolutely certain and undoubted; and the only question in the matter is whether history records the edict for its restoration.

When we turn to the book of Ezra, three several decrees of Persian kings claim notice. The opening verses speak of that strange edict by which Cyrus authorized the building of the temple. But here "the

house of the Lord God of Israel" is specified with such an exclusive definiteness that it can in no way satisfy the words of Daniel. Indeed the date of that decree affords conclusive proof that it was not the beginning of the seventy weeks. Seventy years was the appointed duration of the servitude to Babylon. (Jeremiah 27:6-17; 28:10; 29:10) But another judgment of seventy years' "*desolations*" was decreed in Zedekiah's reign,[8] because of continued disobedience and rebellion. As an interval of seventeen years elapsed between the date of the servitude and the epoch of the "*desolations*," so by seventeen years the second period overlapped the first. The servitude ended with the decree of Cyrus. The desolations continued till the second year of Darius Hystaspes.[9] And it was the era of the *desolations*, and not of the servitude which Daniel had in view.[10]

8. It was foretold in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, *i. e.*, the year after the servitude began (Jeremiah 25:1, 11).

9. Scripture thus distinguishes three different eras, all in part concurrent, which have come to be spoken of as "the captivity." First, the servitude; second, Jehoiachin's captivity; and third, the desolations. "The servitude" began in the third year of Jehoiakim, *i. e.*, B. C. 606, or before 1st Nisan (April) B. C. 605, and was brought to a close by the decree of Cyrus seventy years later. "The captivity" began in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, according to the Scriptural era of his reign, *i. e.*, in B. C. 598; and the *desolations* began in his seventeenth year, B. C. 589, and ended in the second year of Darius Hystaspes – again a period of seventy years. See [App. 1.](#) upon the chronological questions here involved.

10. Daniel 9:2 is explicit on this point: "I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, *that he*

*would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."*

The decree of Cyrus was the Divine fulfillment of the promise made to the captivity in the twenty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah, and in accordance with that promise the fullest liberty was granted to the exiles to return to Palestine. But till the era of the desolations had run its course, not one stone was to be set upon another on Mount Moriah. And this explains the seemingly inexplicable fact that the firman to build the temple, granted to eager agents by Cyrus in the zenith of his power, remained in abeyance till his death; for a few refractory Samaritans were allowed to thwart the execution of this the most solemn edict ever issued by an Eastern despot, an edict in respect of which a Divine sanction seemed to confirm the unalterable will of a Medo-Persian king.[11]

11. "The law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not" (Daniel 6:12). Canon Rawlinson assumes that the temple was fifteen or sixteen years in building, before the work was stopped by the decree of the Artaxerxes mentioned in Ezra 4. (*Five Great Mon.*, vol. 4, p. 398.) But this is entirely opposed to Scripture. The foundation of the temple was laid in the second year of Cyrus (Ezra 3:8-11), but no progress was made till the second year of Darius, when the *foundation* was again laid, for not a stone of the house had yet been placed (Haggai 2, 10, 15, 18). The building, once begun, was completed within five years (Ezra 6:15). It must be borne in mind that the *altar* was set up, and sacrifice was renewed immediately after the return of the exiles (Ezra 3:3, 6).

When the years of the desolations were expired, a Divine command was promulgated for the building of the sanctuary, and in obedience to that command, without waiting for permission from the capital, the

Jews returned to the work in which they had so long been hindered. (Ezra 5:1, 2, 5) The wave of political excitement which had carried [Darius](#) to the throne of Persia, was swelled by religious fervor against the Magian idolatry.[12] The moment therefore was auspicious for the Israelites, whose worship of Jehovah commanded the sympathy of the Zoroastrian faith; and when the tidings reached the palace of their seemingly seditious action at Jerusalem, Darius made search among the Babylonian archives of Cyrus, and finding the decree of his predecessor, he issued on his own behalf a firman to give effect to it. (Ezra 6)

12. *Five Great Mon.*, vol. 4., p. 405. But Canon Rawlinson is wholly wrong in inferring that the known religious zeal of Darius was the motive which led to the action of the Jews. *See* Ezra 5.

And this is the second event which affords a possible beginning for the seventy weeks.[13] But though plausible arguments may be urged to prove that, either regarded as an independent edict, or as giving practical effect to the decree of Cyrus, the act of Darius was the epoch of the prophetic period, the answer is clear and full, that it fails to satisfy the angel's words. However it be accounted for, the fact remains, that though the "desolations" were accomplished, yet neither the scope of the royal edict, nor the action of the Jews in pursuance of that edict, went beyond the building of the Holy Temple, whereas the prophecy foretold a decree for the building of the *city*; not the street alone, but the fortifications of Jerusalem.

13. This is the epoch fixed upon by Mr. Bosanquet in *Messiah the Prince*.

Five years sufficed for the erection of the building which served as a shrine for Judah during the five centuries which followed.[14] But, in striking contrast with the temple they had reared in days when the

magnificence of Solomon made gold as cheap as brass in Jerusalem, no costly furniture adorned the second house, until the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, when the Jews obtained a firman "to beautify the house of the Lord." (Ezra 7:19, 27.) This letter further authorized Ezra to return to Jerusalem with such of the Jews as desired to accompany him, and there to restore fully the worship of the temple and the ordinances of their religion. But this third decree makes no reference whatever to building, and it might be passed unnoticed were it not that many writers have fixed on it as the epoch of the prophecy. The temple had been already built long years before, and the city was still in ruins thirteen years afterwards. The book of Ezra therefore will be searched in vain for any mention of a "commandment to restore and build Jerusalem." But we only need to turn to the book which follows it in the canon of Scripture to find the record which we seek.

14. The temple was begun in the second, and completed in the sixth year of Darius (Ezra 4:24; 6:15.).

The book of Nehemiah opens by relating that while at Susa,[15] where he was cup-bearer to the great king, "an honor of no small account in Persia,"[16] certain of his brethren arrived from Judea, and he "asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem." The emigrants declared that all were "in great affliction and reproach," "the wall of Jerusalem also was broken down, and the gates thereof were burned with fire." (Nehemiah 1:2) The first chapter closes with the record of Nehemiah's supplication to "the God of heaven." The second chapter narrates how "in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes," he was discharging the duties of his office, and as he stood before the king his countenance betrayed his grief, and Artaxerxes called on him to tell his trouble. "Let the king live for ever," Nehemiah answered, "why should not my countenance be sad, when *the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchers, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire!*" "For what dost thou make request?" the king demanded in reply.

Thereupon Nehemiah answered thus: "If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favor in thy sight, *that thou wouldst send me unto Judah, unto THE CITY of my fathers' sepulchers, THAT I MAY BUILD IT.*" (Nehemiah 2:5) Artaxerxes granted the petition, and forthwith issued the necessary orders to give effect to it. Four months later, eager hands were busy upon the ruined walls of Jerusalem, and before the Feast of Tabernacles the city was once more enclosed by gates and a rampart. (Nehemiah 6:15)

15. For a description of the ruins of the great palace at Susa, see Mr. Wm. Kennett Loftus's *Travels and Researches in Chaldea and Susiana*, chap. 28.

16. *Herodotus*, 3, 34.

But, it has been urged, "The decree of the twentieth year of Artaxerxes is but an enlargement and renewal of his first decree, as the decree of Darius confirmed that of Cyrus." [17] If this assertion had not the sanction of a great name, it would not deserve even a passing notice. If it were maintained that the decree of the seventh year of Artaxerxes was but "an enlargement and renewal" of his predecessors' edicts, the statement would be strictly accurate. That decree was mainly an authority to the Jews "to beautify the House of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem," (Ezra 7:27) in extension of the decrees by which Cyrus and Darius permitted them to *build* it. The result was to produce a gorgeous shrine in the midst of a ruined city. The movement of the seventh of Artaxerxes was chiefly a religious revival, (Ezra 7:10) sanctioned and subsidized by royal favor; but the event of his twentieth year was nothing less than the restoration of the autonomy of Judah. The execution of the work which Cyrus authorized was stopped on the false charge which the enemies of the Jews carried to the palace, that their object was to build not merely the Temple, but the *city*. "A rebellious city" it had ever proved to each successive suzerain, "for which cause" – they declared with truth, – its destruction was

decreed. "We certify the king" (they added) "that *if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up*, thou shalt have no portion on this side the river." [18] To allow the building of the temple was merely to accord to a conquered race the right to worship according to the law of their God, for the religion of the Jew knows no worship apart from the hill of Zion. It was a vastly different event when that people were permitted to set up again the far-famed fortifications of their city, and entrenched behind those walls, to restore under Nehemiah the old polity of the Judges. [19] This was a revival of the national existence of Judah, and therefore it is fitly chosen as the epoch of the prophetic period of the seventy weeks.

17. Pusey, *Daniel*. p. 171. Dr. Pusey adds, "The little colony which Ezra took with him of 1, 683 males (with women and children some 8, 400 souls) was itself a considerable addition to those who had before returned, *and involved a rebuilding of Jerusalem*. This rebuilding of the city and reorganization of the polity, begun by Ezra, and carried on and perfected by Nehemiah, corresponds with the words of Daniel, 'From the going forth of a commandment to restore and build Jerusalem'" (p. 172.) This argument is the feeblest imaginable, and indeed this reference to the decree of the seventh year of Artaxerxes is a great blot on Dr. Pusey's book. If an immigration of 8, 400 souls involved a rebuilding of the city, and therefore marked the beginning of the seventy weeks, what shall be said of the immigration of 49, 697 souls seventy-eight years before? (Ezra 2:64, 65.) Did this not involve a rebuilding? But, Dr. Pusey goes on to say, "*The term also corresponds,*" *i. e.*, the 483 years, to the time of Christ. Here is obviously the real ground for his fixing the date B. C. 457, or more properly B. C. 458, as given by Prideaux, whom unfortunately Dr. Pusey has followed at this point. With more *naivete* the author of the *Connection* pleads that

the years will not tally if any other date be assigned, and therefore the decree of the seventh of Artaxerxes must be right! (Prid., *Con.*, 1., 5, B. C. 458.) Such a system of interpretation has done much to discredit the study of prophecy altogether.

18. *i. e.*, *Euphrates*. Ezra 4:16.

19. "This last is the only decree which we find recorded in Scripture which relates to the restoring and building of the city. It must be borne in mind that the very existence of a place as *a city* depended upon such a decree; for before that any who returned from the land of captivity went only in the condition of sojourners; it was the decree that gave them a recognized and distinct political existence." – TREGELLES, *Daniel*, p. 98.

"On a sudden, however, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, Nehemiah, a man of Jewish descent, cup-bearer to the king, received a commission to rebuild the city with all possible expedition. The cause of this change in the Persian politics is to be sought, not so much in the personal influence of the Jewish cup-bearer, as in the foreign history of the times. The power of Persia had received a fatal blow in the victory obtained at Cnidos by Conon, the Athenian admiral. The great king was obliged to submit to a humiliating peace, among the articles of which were the abandonment of the maritime towns, and a stipulation that the Persian army should not approach within three days' journey of the sea. Jerusalem, being about this distance from the coast, and standing so near the line of communication with Egypt, became a post of the utmost importance." – MILMAN, *Hist. Jews* (3rd Ed.), 1., 435.

The doubt which has been raised upon the point may serve as an illustration of the extraordinary bias which seems to govern the interpretation of Scripture, in consequence of which the plain meaning of words is made to give place to the remote and the less probable. And to the same cause must be attributed the doubt which some have suggested as to the identity of the king here spoken of with Artaxerxes Longimanus.[20]

20. Artaxerxes I. reigned forty years, from 465 to 425. He is mentioned by Herodotus once (6. 98), by Thucydides frequently. Both writers were his contemporaries. There is every reason to believe that he was the king who sent Ezra and Nehemiah to Jerusalem, and sanctioned the restoration of the fortifications." – RAWLINSON, *Herodotus*, vol. 4., p. 217.

The question remains, whether the date of this edict can be accurately ascertained. And here a most striking fact claims notice. In the sacred narrative the date of the event which marked the beginning of the seventy weeks is fixed only by reference to the regnal era of a Persian king. Therefore we must needs turn to secular history to ascertain the epoch, and *history dates from this very period*. Herodotus, "the father of history," was the contemporary of Artaxerxes, and visited the Persian court.[21] Thucydides, "the prince of historians," also was his contemporary. In the great battles of Marathon and Salamis, the history of Persia had become interwoven with events in Greece, by which its chronology can be ascertained and tested; and the chief chronological eras of antiquity were current at the time.[22] No element is wanting, therefore, to enable us with accuracy and certainty to fix the date of Nehemiah's edict.

21. The year in which he is said to have recited his writings at the Olympic games, was the very year of Nehemiah's mission.

22. The era of the Olympiads began B. C. 776; the era of Rome (A. U. C.) B. C. 753; and the era of Nabonassar, B. C. 747.

True it is that in ordinary history the mention of "the twentieth year of Artaxerxes" would leave in doubt whether the era of his reign were reckoned from his actual accession, or from his father's death;[23] but the narrative of Nehemiah removes all ambiguity upon this score. The murder of Xerxes and the beginning of the usurper Artabanus's seven months' reign was in July B.C. 465; the accession of Artaxerxes was in February B.C. 464;[24] One or other of these dates, therefore, must be the epoch of Artaxerxes' reign. But as Nehemiah mentions the Chisleu (November) of one year, and the following Nisan (March) as being both in the same year of his master's reign, it is obvious that, as might be expected from an official of the court, he reckons from the time of the king's accession *de jure*, that is from July B.C. 465. The twentieth year of Artaxerxes therefore began in July B.C. 446, and the commandment to [rebuild Jerusalem](#) was given in the Nisan following. The epoch of the prophetic cycle is thus definitely fixed as in the Jewish month Nisan of the year B.C. 445.[25]

23. The seven months of Artabanus were by some added to the last year of Xerxes, and by others were included in the reign of Artaxerxes." – CLINTON, *Fasti Hellenici*, vol. 2., p. 42.

24. It has been shown already that the accession of Xerxes is determined to the beginning of 485 B. C. His twentieth year was completed in the beginning of 465 B. C., and his death would happen in the beginning of the Archonship of Lysitheus. The seven months of Artabanus, completing the twenty-one years, would bring down the accession of Artaxerxes (after the removal of Artabanus) to the

beginning of 464, in the year of Nabonassar 284, where it is placed by the canon. *Note b*: "We may place the death of Xerxes in the first month of that Archon (*i. e.*, of Lysitheus), July B. C. 465, and the succession of Artaxerxes in the eighth month, February B. C. 464." – CLINTON, *Fasti Hellenici*, vol. 2., p. 380.

25. See [Appendix 2.](#), Note A, on the chronology of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROPHETIC YEAR

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IN English ears it must sound pedantic to speak of "weeks" in any other than the familiar acceptance of the term. But with the Jew it was far otherwise. The effect of his laws was fitted "to render the word *week* capable of meaning a seven of years almost as naturally as a seven of days. Indeed the generality of the word would have this effect at any rate. Hence its use to denote the latter in prophecy is not mere arbitrary symbolism, but the employment of a not unfamiliar and easily understood language." [1]

1. Smith's *Bib. Dict.*, III., 1726, "Week." Greek and Latin philosophers too have known of 'weeks of years.' " – PUSEY, *Daniel*, p. 167.

Daniel's prayer referred to seventy years fulfilled: the prophecy which came in answer to that prayer foretold a period of seven times seventy still to come. But here a question arises which never has received sufficient notice in the consideration of this subject. None will doubt that the era is a period of years; but of what kind of year is it composed? That the Jewish year was lunisolar appears to be reasonably certain. If tradition may be trusted, Abraham preserved in his family the year of 360 days, which he had known in his Chaldean home. [2] The month dates of the flood (150 days being specified as the interval between the seventeenth day of the second month, and the same day of the seventh month) appear to show that this form of year was the earliest known to our race. Sir Isaac Newton states, that "all nations, before the just length of the solar year was known, reckoned

months by the course of the moon, and years by the return of winter and summer, spring and autumn; and in making calendars for their festivals, they reckoned thirty days to a lunar month, and twelve lunar months to a year, taking the nearest round numbers, whence came the division of the ecliptic into 360 degrees." And in adopting this statement, Sir G. C. Lewis avers that "all credible testimony and all antecedent probability lead to the result that a solar year containing twelve lunar months, determined within certain limits of error, has been generally recognized by the nations adjoining the Mediterranean, from a remote antiquity." [3]

2. *Encyc. Brit.* (6th ed.), title "*Chronology*." See also *Smith's Bib. Dict.*, title "*Chronology*," p. 314.

3. *Astronomy of the Ancients*, chap. 1 & 7. Are not the hundred and eighty days of the great feast of Xerxes intended to be equivalent to six months? (Esther 1:4.)

But considerations of this kind go no further than to prove how legitimate and important is the question here proposed. The inquiry remains whether any grounds exist for reversing the presumption which obtains in favor of the common civil year. Now the prophetic era is clearly seven times the seventy years of the "desolations" which were before the mind of Daniel when the prophecy was given. Is it possible then to ascertain the character of the years of this lesser era?

One of the characteristic ordinances of the Jewish law was, that every seventh year the land was to lie fallow, and it was in relation to the neglect of this ordinance that the era of the desolations was decreed. It was to last "until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for so long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years." (2 Chronicles 36:21; cf. Leviticus 26:34, 35) The essential element in the judgment was, not a ruined city, but a land laid desolate by the terrible scourge of a hostile invasion, (Compare Jeremiah 27:13; Haggai 2:17)

the effects of which were perpetuated by famine and pestilence, the continuing proofs of the Divine displeasure. It is obvious therefore, that the true [epoch of the judgment](#) is not, as has been generally assumed, the capture of Jerusalem, but the invasion of Judea. From the time the Babylonian armies entered the land, all agricultural pursuits were suspended, and therefore the desolations may be reckoned from the day the capital was invested, namely, the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year of Zedekiah. This was the epoch as revealed to Ezekiel the prophet in his exile on the banks of the Euphrates, (Ezekiel 24:1, 2) and for twenty-four centuries the day has been observed as a fast by the Jews in every land.

[The close of the era](#) is indicated in Scripture with equal definiteness, as "the four-and-twentieth day of the ninth month in the second year of Darius.[4] "Consider now" (the prophetic word declared) "from this day and upward – from the four-and- twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid – consider it: *from this day I will bless you.*" Now from the tenth day of Tebeth B.C. 589,[5] to the twenty-fourth day of Chisleu B.C. 520,[6] was a period of 25, 202 days; and seventy years of 360 days contain exactly 25, 200 days. We may conclude, therefore, that the era of the "desolations" was a period of seventy years of 360 days, beginning the day after the Babylonian army invested Jerusalem, and ending the day before the foundation of the second temple was laid.[7]

4. Haggai. 2:10, 15-19. The books of Haggai and Zechariah give in full the prophetic utterances which the narrative of Ezra (4:24; 5:1-5) mentions as the sanction and incentive under which the Jews returned to the work of setting up their temple.

5. The ninth year of Zedekiah. See [App. 1. post.](#)

6. The second year of Darius Hystaspes.

7. The date of the Paschal new moon, by which the Jewish year is regulated, was the evening of the 14th March in B. C. 589, and about noon on 1st April B. C. 520. According to the phases the 1st Nisan in the former year was probably the 15th or 16th March, and in the latter the 1st or 2nd April.

But this inquiry may be pressed still further. As the era of the "desolations" was fixed at seventy years, because of the neglect of the Sabbatic years, (2 Chronicles 36:21; Leviticus 26:34, 35) we might expect to find that a period of seven times seventy years measured back from the close of the seventy years of "indignation against Judah," would bring us to the time when Israel entered into their full national privileges, and thus incurred their full responsibilities. And such in fact will be found upon inquiry to be the case. From the year succeeding the dedication of Solomon's temple, to the year before the foundation of the second temple was laid, was a period of 490 years of 360 days.[8]

8. The temple was dedicated in the eleventh year of Solomon, and the second temple was founded in B. C. 520. The intervening period reckoned exclusively was 483 years = 490 lunisolar years of 360 days. It is noteworthy that the interval between the dedication of Solomon's temple and the dedication of the second temple (B. C. 515) was 490 years. A like period had elapsed between the entrance into Canaan and the foundation of the kingdom under Saul. These cycles of 70, and multiples of 70, in Hebrew history are striking and interesting. See App. 1.

It must be admitted, however, that no argument based on calculations of this kind is final.[9] The only data which would warrant our deciding unreservedly that the prophetic year consists of 360 days,

would be to find some portion of the era subdivided into the days of which it is composed. No other proof can be wholly satisfactory, but if this be forthcoming, it must be absolute and conclusive. And this is precisely what the book of the Revelation gives us.

9. Though it is signally confirmed by the undoubted fact that the Jewish Sabbatical year was conterminous, not with the solar, but with the ecclesiastical year.

As already noticed, the prophetic era is divided into two periods, the one of 7+ 62 heptades, the other of a single heptade.[10] Connected with these eras, two "princes" are prominently mentioned; first, the Messiah, and secondly, a prince of that people by whom Jerusalem was to be destroyed, – a personage of such pre-eminence, that on his advent his identity is to be as certain as that of Christ Himself. The first era closes with the "cutting off" of Messiah; the beginning of the second era dates from the signature of a "covenant," or treaty, by this second "prince," with or perhaps in favor of "the many,"[11] that is the Jewish nation, as distinguished probably from a section of pious persons among them who will stand aloof. In the middle of the heptade the treaty is to be violated by the suppression of the Jews' religion, and a time of persecution is to follow.

10. The division of the 69 weeks into 7 +62 is accounted for by the fact that the first 49 years, during which the restoration of Jerusalem was completed, ended with a great crisis in Jewish history, the close of the prophetic testimony. Forty-nine years from B. C. 445 brings us to the date of Malachi's prophecy.

11. "The multitude." – TREGELLES, *Daniel*, p. 97.

Daniel's vision of the four beasts affords a striking commentary upon this. The identity of the fourth beast with the Roman empire is not

doubtful, and we read that a "king" is to arise, territorially connected with that empire, but historically belonging to a later time; he will be a persecutor of "the saints of the Most High," and his fall is to be immediately followed by the fulfillment of Divine blessings upon the favored people – the precise event which marks the close of the "seventy weeks." The duration of that persecution, moreover, is stated to be "a time and times, and the dividing of time," – a mystical expression, of which the meaning might be doubtful, were it not that it is used again in Scripture as synonymous with three and a half years, or half a prophetic week. (Revelation 12:6, 14) Now there can be no reasonable doubt of the identity of the king of Daniel 7:25 with the first "beast" of the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. In the Revelation he is likened to a leopard, a bear, and a lion, – the figures used for Daniel's three first beasts. In Daniel there are ten kingdoms, represented by ten horns. So also in Revelation. According to Daniel, "he shall speak great words against the Most High, and wear out the saints of the Most High": according to Revelation, "he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God," "and it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them." According to Daniel, "they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time," or three and a half years: according to Revelation, "power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."

It is not impossible, of course, that prophecy may foretell the career of two different men, answering the same description, who will pursue a precisely similar course in similar circumstances for a similar period of three and a half years; but the more natural and obvious supposition is that the two are identical. Owing to the very nature of the subject, their identity cannot be logically demonstrated, but it rests upon precisely the same kind of proof upon which juries convict men of crimes, and convicted prisoners are punished.

Now this seventieth week is admittedly a period of seven years, and half of this period is three times described as "a time, times, and half a

time," or "the dividing of a time;" (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:14) twice as forty-two months; (Revelation 11:2; 13:5) and twice as 1, 260 days. (Revelation 11:3; 12:6) But 1, 260 days are exactly equal to forty-two months of thirty days, or three and a half years of 360 days, whereas three and a half Julian years contain 1, 278 days. It follows therefore that the prophetic year is not the Julian year, but the ancient year of 360 days.[12]

12. It is noteworthy that the prophecy was given at Babylon, and the Babylonian year consisted of twelve months of thirty days. That the prophetic year is not the ordinary year is no new discovery. It was noticed sixteen centuries ago by Julius Africanus in his *Chronography*, wherein he explains the seventy weeks to be weeks of *Jewish* (lunar) years, beginning with the twentieth of Artaxerxes, the fourth year of the 83rd Olympiad, and ending in the second year of the 202nd Olympiad; 475 Julian years being equal to 490 lunar years.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MYSTIC ERA OF THE WEEKS

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THE conclusions arrived at in the preceding chapter suggest a striking parallel between Daniel's earlier visions and the prophecy of the seventy weeks. History contains no record of events to satisfy the predicted course of the seventieth week. The Apocalypse was not even written when that period ought chronologically to have closed, and though eighteen centuries have since elapsed, the restoration of the Jews seems still but a chimera of sanguine fanatics. And be it remembered that the purpose of the prophecy was not to amuse or interest the curious. Of necessity some mysticism must characterize prophetic utterances, otherwise they might be "fulfilled to order" by designing men; but once the prophecy comes side by side with the events of which it speaks, it fails of one of its chief purposes if its relation to them be doubtful. If any one will learn the connection between prophecy and its fulfillment, let him read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and compare it with the story of the Passion: so vague and figurative that no one could have acted out the drama it foretold; but yet so definite and clear that, once fulfilled, the simplest child can recognize its scope and meaning. If then the event which constitutes the epoch of the seventieth week must be as pronounced and certain as Nehemiah's commission and Messiah's death, it is of necessity still future.

And this is precisely what the study of the seventh chapter of Daniel will have led us to expect. All Christian interpreters are agreed that between the rise of the fourth beast and the growth of the ten horns there is a gap or parenthesis in the vision; and, as already shown, that

gap includes the entire period between the time of Christ and the division of the Roman earth into the ten kingdoms out of which the great persecutor of the future is to arise. This period, moreover, is admittedly unnoticed also in the other visions of the book. There is therefore a strong *a priori* probability that it would be overlooked in the vision of the ninth chapter.

More than this, there is not only the same reason for this mystic foreshortening in the vision of the seventy weeks, as in the other visions,[1] but that reason applies here with special force. The seventy weeks were meted out as the period during which Judah's blessings were deferred. In common with all prophecy, the meaning of this prophecy will be unmistakable when its ultimate fulfillment takes place, but it was necessarily conveyed in a mystical form in order to shut up the Jews to the responsibility of accepting their Messiah. St. Peter's inspired proclamation to the nation at Jerusalem, recorded in the third chapter of Acts, was in accordance with this. The Jews looked merely for a return of their national supremacy, but God's first purpose was redemption through the death of the great Sin-bearer. Now, the sacrifice had been accomplished, and St. Peter pointed to Calvary as the fulfillment of that "which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets"; and he added this testimony, "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send the Christ, who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus." (Acts 3:19, 20, R.V.) The realization of these blessings would have been the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy, and the seventieth week might have run its course without a break. But Judah proved impenitent and obdurate, and the promised blessings were once again postponed till the close of this strange era of the Gentile dispensation.

1. See pp. 44-47, *ante*.

But it may be asked, Was not the Cross of Christ the fulfillment of these blessings? A careful study of the Angel's words (Daniel 9:24) will show that not so much as one of them has been thus accomplished. The sixty-ninth week was to end with Messiah's death; the close of the seventieth week was to bring to Judah the full enjoyment of the blessings resulting from that death. Judah's transgression has yet to be restrained, and his sins to be sealed up. The day is yet future when a fountain shall be opened for the iniquity of Daniel's people, (Zechariah 13:1) and righteousness shall be ushered in for them. In what sense were vision and prophet sealed up at the death of Christ, considering that the greatest of all visions was yet to be given, (The Revelation.) and the days were still to come when the words of the prophets were to be fulfilled? (Luke 21:22) And whatever meaning is to be put upon "anointing the most holy," it is clear that Calvary was not the accomplishment of it.[2]

2. All these words point to practical benefits to be conferred in a practical way upon the people, at the second advent of Christ. Isaiah 1:26 is a commentary on "bringing in righteousness." To take it as synonymous with declaring God's righteousness (Romans 3:25) is doctrinally a blunder and an anachronism. To any whose views of "reconciliation" are not based on the use of the word in Scripture, "making reconciliation for iniquity" will seem an exception. The Hebrew verb *caphar* (to make atonement or reconciliation) means literally "to cover over" sin (*see* its use in Genesis 6:14), to do away with a charge against a person by means of bloodshedding, or otherwise (*ex. gr.* by intercession, Exodus 32:30), so as to secure his reception into Divine favor. The following is a list of the passages where the word is used in the first three books of the Bible: Genesis 6:14 (*pitch*); 32:20 (*appease*); Exodus 29:33, 36, 37; 30:10, 15, 16; 32:30; Leviticus 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7,

8;14:18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 27, 32, 33, 34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:28. It will be seen that *caphar* is never used of the expiation or bloodshedding considered objectively, but of the results accruing from it to the sinner, sometimes immediately on the victim's death, sometimes conditional upon the action of the priest who was charged with the function of applying the blood. The sacrifice was not the atonement, but the means by which atonement was made. Therefore "the preposition which marks substitution is never used in connection with the word *caphar*" (Girdlestone's *Synonyms O. T.*, p. 214.) Making reconciliation, or atonement, therefore, according to the Scriptural use of the word, implies the removal of the practical estrangement between the sinner and God, the obtaining forgiveness for the sin; and the words in Daniel 9:24 point to the time when this benefit will be secured to Judah. "In *that day* there shall be a fountain opened to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness" (Zechariah 13:1); that is, the blessings of Calvary will be theirs; *reconciliation* will be accomplished for the people. In keeping with this, transgression will be *restrained* (see use of the word in Genesis 8:2; Exodus 36:6); *i. e.*, they will cease to transgress; sins will be sealed up, — the ordinary word for securing a letter (1 Kings 21:8), or a purse or bag of treasure (Job 14:17); *i. e.*, sins will be done with and put away in a practical sense; and vision and prophet will likewise be sealed up, *i. e.*, their functions will be at an end, for all will have been fulfilled.

But is it consistent with fair argument or common-sense to urge that an era thus chronologically defined should be indefinitely interrupted in its course? The ready answer might be given, that if common-sense and fairness — if human judgment, is to decide the question, the only

doubt must be whether the final period of the cycle, and the blessings promised at its close, be not for ever abrogated and lost by reason of the appalling guilt of that people who "killed the Prince of life." (Acts 3:15) There exists surely no presumption against supposing that the stream of prophetic time is tided back during all this interval of the apostasy of Judah. The question remains, whether any precedent for this can be discovered in the mystical chronology of Israel's history.

According to the book of Kings, Solomon began to build the temple in the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt. (1 Kings 6:1) This statement, than which none could, seemingly, be more exact, has sorely puzzled chronologers. By some it has been condemned as a forgery, by others it has been dismissed as a blunder; but all have agreed in rejecting it. Moreover, Scripture itself appears to clash with it. In his sermon at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:18-21) St. Paul epitomizes thus the chronology of this period of the history of his nation: forty years in the wilderness; 450 years under the judges, and forty years of the reign of Saul; making a total of 530 years. To which must be added the forty years of David's reign and the first three years of Solomon's; making 573 years for the very period which is described in Kings as 480 years. Can these conclusions, apparently so inconsistent, be reconciled?[3]

3. According to Browne (*Ordo Saec.*, §§. 254 and 268) the Exodus was on Friday the 10th April, B. C. 1586; the passage of Jordan was the 14th April, B. C. 1546; the accession of Solomon was B. C. 1016, and the foundation of the Temple was the 20th April, B. C. 1013. He therefore accepts St. Paul's statements unreservedly. Clinton conjectures that there was an interval of about twenty-seven years before the time of the Judges, and another of twelve years before the election of Saul, thus fixing on B. C. 1625 as the date of the Exode, extending the whole period to 612 years. Josephus reckons it 621 years, and this is adopted by

Hales, who calls the statement in Kings "a forgery." Other chronologers assign periods varying from the 741 years of Julius Africanus to the 480 years of Usher, whose date for the Exode — B. C. 1491 — has been adopted in our Bible, though clearly wrong by ninety-three years at least. The subject is fully discussed by Clinton in *Fasli Hell.*, vol. 1., pp. 312-313, and by Browne, reviewing Clinton's arguments, in *Ordo Sccec.*, §. 6, *etc.* Browne's conclusions have much to commend them. But if others are right in inserting conjectural periods, my argument remains the same, for any such periods, if they existed, were obviously excluded from the 480 years on the same principle as were the eras of the servitudes. (This subject is discussed further in App. 1.)

If we follow the history of Israel as detailed in the book of Judges, we shall find that for five several periods their national existence as Jehovah's people was in abeyance. In punishment for their idolatry, God gave them up again and again, and "sold them into the hands of their enemies." They became slaves to the king of Mesopotamia for eight years, to the king of Moab for eighteen years, to the king of Canaan for twenty years, to the Midianites for seven years, and finally to the Philistines for forty years.[4] But the sum of  $8 + 18 + 20 + 7 + 40$  years is 93 years, and if 93 years be deducted from 573 years, the result is 480 years. It is obvious, therefore, that the 480 years of the book of Kings from the Exodus to the temple is a mystic era formed by eliminating every period during which the people were cast off by God.[5] If, then, this principle were intelligible to the Jew in regard to history, it was both natural and legitimate to introduce it in respect of an essentially mystic era like that of the seventy weeks.

4. Judges 3:8, 14; 4:2, 3; 6:1; 13:1. The servitude of Judges 10:7, 9 affected only the tribes beyond Jordan, and did not suspend Israel's *national* position.

5. The Israelites were nationally God's people as no other nation ever can be; therefore they were dealt with in some respects on principles similar to those which obtain in the case of individuals. A life without God is death.

Righteousness must keep a strict account and sternly judge; or grace may pardon. And if God forgives, He likewise forgets the sin (Hebrews 10:17); which doubtless means that the record is wiped out, and the period it covers is treated as though it were a blank. The days of our servitude to evil are ignored in the Divine chronology.

But this conclusion does not depend upon argument however sound, or inference however just. It is indisputably proved by the testimony of Christ Himself. "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" the disciples inquired as they gathered round the Lord on one of the last days of His ministry on earth. (Matthew 24:3) In reply he spoke of the tribulation foretold by Daniel,[6] and warned them that the signal of that fearful persecution was to be the precise event which marks the middle of the seventieth week, namely, the defilement of the holy place by the "abomination of desolation," — some image of himself probably, which the false prince will set up in the temple in violation of his treaty obligations to respect and defend the religion of the Jews[7] That this prophecy was not fulfilled by Titus is as certain as history can make it;[8] but Scripture itself leaves no doubt whatever on the point.

6. thlipsis, Matthew 24:21; Daniel 12:1 (LXX)

7. kai epi to hieronn bdelugma ton eramoseon, Daniel 9:27; to bdelugma eramoseos, Daniel 12:11 (LXX.); hotan oun idate to bdelugma tas eramoseos to rathen dia Danial tou prophatou, estos en topo hagio, Matthew 24:15. *Comp.* 1 Maccabees 1:54, okodomasan bdelugma eramoseos epi to

phusiastapion. This passage in Matthew affords an unanswerable proof that all systems of interpretation which make the seventy weeks end with the coming or death of Christ, and therefore *before the destruction of Jerusalem by Tiffits*, are wholly wrong. And that that event was not in fact the terminus of the era is plain from Matthew 24:21-29, and Daniel 9:24.

8. Making all allowance for the contemptible time-serving of Josephus and his admiration for Titus, his testimony on this point is too full and explicit to admit of doubt (*Wars*, 6., 2, §. 4).

It appears from the passages already quoted, that the predicted tribulation is to last three and a half years, and to date from the violation of the treaty in the middle of the seventieth week. What is to follow is thus described by the Lord Himself in words of peculiar solemnity: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven 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 in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matthew 24:29) That it is to the closing scenes of the dispensation this prophecy relates is here assumed.[9] And as these scenes are to follow *immediately* after a persecution, of which the era is within the seventieth week, the inference is incontestable that the events of that week belong to a time still future.[10]

9. I am aware of systems of interpretation which flitter away the meaning of all such scriptures, but it is idle to attempt to refute them in detail. (*See chap 11 post, and App. Note C.*)

10. Such was the belief of the early Church; but the question has been argued at length out of deference to modern writers who have advocated a different interpretation of Daniel 9:27. Hippolytus, bishop and martyr, who wrote at the beginning of the third century, is most definite on the point. Quoting the verse, he says: "By one week he meant the last week, *which is to be at the end of the whole world*; of which week the two prophets Enoch and Elias will take up the half; for they will preach 1, 260 days, clothed in sackcloth" (Hip. on *Christ and Antichrist*). According to Browne (*Ordo Saec.* p. 386, note), this was also the view of the father of Christian chronologers, Julius Africanus. That half of the last week has been fulfilled, but the remaining three and a half years are still future, is maintained by Canon Browne himself (§ 339), who notices, what so many modern writers have missed, that the events belonging to this period are connected with the times of Antichrist.

We may conclude, then, that when wicked hands set up the cross on Calvary, and God pronounced the dread "*Lo-ammi*" (Romans 9:25, 26; cf. Hosea 1:9, 10) upon His people, the course of the prophetic era ceased to run. Nor will it flow on again till the autonomy of Judah is restored; and, with obvious propriety, that is held to date from the moment their readmission into the family of nations is recognized by treaty.[11] It will, therefore, be here assumed that the former portion of the prophetic era has run its course, but that the events of the last seven years have still to be accomplished. The last point, therefore, necessary to complete the chain of proof is to ascertain the date of "Messiah the Prince."

11. *i. e.*, the covenant mentioned in Daniel 9:27.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER VIII

### "MESSIAH THE PRINCE"

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JUST as we find that in certain circles people who are reputed pious are apt to be regarded with suspicion, so it would seem that any writings which claim Divine authority or sanction inevitably awaken distrust. But if the evangelists could gain the same fair hearing which profane historians command; if their statements were tested upon the same principles on which records of the past are judged by scholars, and evidence is weighed in our courts of justice, it would be accepted as a well-established fact of history that our Savior was born in Bethlehem, at a time when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria, and Herod was king in Jerusalem. The narrative of the first two chapters of St. Luke is not like an ordinary page of history which carries with it no pledge of accuracy save that which the general credit of the writer may afford. The evangelist is treating of facts of which he had "perfect understanding from the very first;" (Luke 1:3) in which, moreover, his personal interest was intense, and in respect of which a single glaring error would have prejudiced not only the value of his book, but the success of that cause to which his life was devoted, and with which his hopes of eternal happiness were identified.

The matter has been treated as though this reference to Cyrenius were but an incidental allusion, in respect of which an error would be of no importance; whereas, in fact, it would be absolutely vital. That the true Messiah must be born in Bethlehem was asserted by the Jew and conceded by the Christian: that the Nazarene was born in Bethlehem the Jew persistently denied. If even today he could disprove that fact, he would justify his unbelief; for if the Christ we worship was not by

right of birth the heir to David's throne, He is not the Christ of prophecy. Christians soon forgot this when they had no longer to maintain their faith against the unbroken front of Judaism, but only to commend it to a heathen world. But it was not forgotten by the immediate successors of the apostles. Therefore it was that in writing to the Jews, Justin Martyr asserted with such emphasis that Christ was born during the taxing of Cyrenius, appealing to the lists of that census as to documents then extant and available for reference, to prove that though Joseph and Mary lived at Nazareth, they went up to Bethlehem to be enrolled, and that thus it came to pass the Child was born in the royal city, and not in the despised Galilean village.[1]

1. Bethlehem, "in which Jesus Christ was born, as you may also learn from the lists of the taxing which was made in the time of Cyrenius, the first Governor of yours in Judea."  
— *Apol.*, 1., § 34.

"We assert Christ to have been born a hundred and fifty years ago, under Cyrenius." — *Ibid.*, § 46.

"But when there was an enrollment in Judea, which was then made first under Cyrenius, he went up from Nazareth, where he lived, to Bethlehem, of which place he was, to be enrolled," etc. — *Dial. Trypho*, § 78.

And these facts of the pedigree and birth of the Nazarene afforded almost the only ground upon which issue could be joined, where one side maintained, and the other side denied, that His Divine character and mission were established by transcendental proofs. None could question that His acts were more than human, but blindness and hate could ascribe them to Satanic power; and the sublime utterances which in every succeeding age have commanded the admiration of millions, even of those who have refused to them the deeper homage of their faith, had no charm for men thus prejudiced. But these statements

about the taxing which brought the Virgin Mother up to Bethlehem, dealt with plain facts which required no moral fitness to appreciate them. That in such a matter a writer like St. Luke could be in error is utterly improbable, but that the error would remain unchallenged is absolutely incredible; and we find Justin Martyr, writing nearly a hundred years after the evangelist, appealing to the fact as one which was unquestionable. It may, therefore, be accepted as one of the most certain of the really certain things of history, that the first taxing of Cyrenius was made before the death of Herod, and that while it was proceeding Christ was born in Bethlehem.

Not many years ago this statement would have been received either with ridicule or indignation. The evangelist's mention of Cyrenius appeared to be a hopeless anachronism; as, according to undoubted history, the period of his governorship and the date of his "taxing" were nine or ten years later than the nativity. Gloated over by Strauss and others of his tribe, and dismissed by writers unnumbered either as an enigma or an error, the passage has in recent years been vindicated and explained by the labors of Dr. Zumpt of Berlin.

By a strange chance there is a break in the history of this period, for the seven or eight years beginning B.C. 4.[2] The list of the governors of Syria, therefore, fails us, and for the same interval P. Sulpicius Quirinus, the Cyrenius of the Greeks, disappears from history. But by a series of separate investigations and arguments, all of them independent of Scripture, Dr. Zumpt has established that Quirinus was *twice* governor of the province, and that his first term of office dated from the latter part of B.C. 4, when he succeeded Quinctilius Varus. The unanimity with which this conclusion has been accepted renders it unnecessary to discuss the matter here. But one remark respecting it may not be out of place. The grounds of Dr. Zumpt's conclusions may be aptly described as a chain of circumstantial evidence, and his critics are agreed that the result is reasonably certain.[3] To make that certainty absolute, nothing is wanting but the positive testimony of

some historian of repute. If, for example, one of the lost fragments of the history of Dion Cassius were brought to light, containing the mention of Quirinus as governing the province during the last months of Herod's reign, the fact would be deemed as certain as that Augustus was emperor of Rome. A Christian writer may be pardoned if he attaches equal weight to the testimony of St. Luke. It will, therefore, be here assumed as absolutely certain that the birth of Christ took place at some date not earlier than the autumn of B.C. 4.[4]

2. Josephus here leaves a gap in his narrative; and through the loss of MSS., the history of Dion Cassius, the other authority for this period, is not available to supply the omission.

3. Dr. Zumpt's labors in this matter were first made public in a Latin treatise which appeared in 1854. More recently he has published them in his *Das Geburtsjahr Christi* (Leipzig, 1869). The English reader will find a summary of his arguments in Dean Alford's *Greek Test.* (Note on Luke 2:1), and in his article, on *Cyrenius* in Smith's *Bible Dict.*; he describes them as "very striking and satisfactory." Dr. Farrar remarks, "Zumpt has, with incredible industry and research, all but established in this matter the accuracy of St. Luke, by proving the extreme *probability* that Quirinus was *twice* governor of Syria" (*Life of Christ*, vol. 1. p. 7, *note*). See also an article in the *Quarterly Review* for April 1871, which describes Zumpt's conclusions as "very nearly certain," "all but certain." The question is discussed also in Wieseler's *Chron. Syn.* (Venables's trans.) In his Roman history, Mr. Merivale adopts these results unreservedly. He says (vol. 4., p. 457), "A remarkable light has been thrown upon the point by the demonstration, as it seems to be, of Augustus Zumpt in his second volume of *Commentationes Epigraphicae*, that Quirinus (the Cyrenius of St. Luke 2.)

was first governor of Syria from the close of A. U. 750 (B. C. 4), to A. U. 753 (B. C. 1)."

4. The birth of our Lord is placed in B. C. 1, by Pearson and Hug; B. C. 2, by Scaliger; B. C. 3, by Baronius, Calvisius, Suskind, and Paulus; B. C. 4, by Lamy, Bengel, Anger, Wieseler, and Greswell; B. C. 5, by Ussher and Petavius; B. C. 7, by Ideler and Sanclementi (Smith's *Bible Dict.*, "Jesus Christ," p. 1075). It should be added that Zumpt's date for the nativity is fixed on independent grounds in B. C. 7. Following Ideler, he concludes that the conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, which occurred in that year, was the "Star" which led the Magi to Palestine.

The dictum of our English chronologer, than whom none more eminent or trustworthy can be appealed to, is a sufficient guarantee that this conclusion is consistent with everything that erudition can bring to bear upon the point. Fynes Clinton sums up his discussion of the matter thus. "The nativity was not more than about eighteen months before the death of Herod, nor less than five or six. The death of Herod was either in the spring of B.C. 4, *or the spring of B.C. 3*. The earliest possible date then for the nativity is the autumn of B.C. 6 (U. C. 748), eighteen months before the death of Herod in B.C. 4. *The latest will be the of B.C. 4 (U. C. 750)*, about six months before his death, assumed to be in spring B.C. 3." [5] This opinion has weight, not only because of the writer's eminence as a chronologist, but also because his own view as to the actual date of the birth of Christ would have led him to narrow still more the limits within which it must have occurred, if his sense of fairness had permitted him to do so. Moreover, Clinton wrote in ignorance of what Zumpt has since brought to light respecting the census of Quirinus. The introduction of this new element into the consideration of the question, enables us with absolute confidence, adopting Clinton's dictum, to assign the

death of Herod to the month Adar of B.C. 3, and the nativity to the autumn of B.C. 4.

5. *Fasti Romani*, A. D. 29.

That the least uncertainty should prevail respecting the time of an event of such transcendent interest to mankind is a fact of strange significance. But whatever doubt there may be as to the birth-date of the Son of God, it is due to no omission in the sacred page if equal doubt be felt as to the epoch of His ministry on earth. There is not in the whole of Scripture a more definite chronological statement than that contained in the opening verses of the third chapter of St. Luke. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."

Now the date of Tiberius Caesar's reign is known with absolute accuracy; and his fifteenth year, reckoned from his accession, began on the 19th August, A.D. 28. And further, it is also known that during that year, so reckoned, each of the personages named in the passage, actually held the position there assigned to him. Here then, it might be supposed, no difficulty or question could arise. But the evangelist goes on to speak of the beginning of the ministry of the Lord Himself, and he mentions that "He was about thirty years of age when He began." [6] This statement, taken in connection with the date commonly assigned to the nativity, has been supposed to require that "the fifteenth year of Tiberius" shall be understood as referring, not to the epoch of his reign, but to an earlier date, when history testifies that certain powers were conferred on him during the two last years of Augustus. All such hypotheses, however, "are open to one overwhelming objection, viz., that the reign of Tiberius, as beginning

from 19th August, A.D. 14, was as well known a date in the time of Luke, as the reign of Queen Victoria is in our own day; and no single case has ever been, or can be, produced, in which the years of Tiberius were reckoned in any other manner." [7]

6. Luke 3:23. Such is the right rendering of the verse. The Revised Version renders it: "And Jesus Himself, when He began *to teach*, was about thirty years of age."

7. Lewin, *Fasti Sacri*, p. 53. Diss., chap. 6: The joint-principate theory of the reign of Tiberius, elaborately argued for by Greswell, is essential with writers like him, who assign the crucifixion to A. D 29 or 30. Sanclementi, indeed, finding "that nowhere in histories, or on monuments, or coins, is a vestige to be found of any such mode of reckoning the years of this emperor," *disposes of* the difficulty by taking the date in Luke 3:1 to refer, not to John the Baptist's ministry, but to Christ's death. Browne adopts this in a modified form, recognizing that the hypothesis above referred to "falls under fatal objections." He remarks that "it is improbable to the last degree" that Luke, who wrote specially for a Roman officer, and generally for Gentiles, would have so expressed himself as to be certainly misunderstood by them. Therefore, though the statement of the evangelist clashes with his conclusion as to the date of the Passion, he owns his obligation to accept it. See *Ordo Saec.*, §§ 71 and 95.

Nor is there any inconsistency whatever between these statements of St. Luke and the date of the nativity (as fixed by the evangelist himself), under Cyrenius, in the autumn of B.C. 4; for the Lord's ministry, dating from the autumn of A.D. 28, may in fact have begun before His thirty-first year expired, and cannot have been later than a few months beyond it. The expression "*about* thirty years implies

some such margin.[8] As therefore it is wholly unnecessary, it becomes wholly unjustifiable, to put a forced and special meaning on the evangelist's words; and by the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar he must have intended what all the world would assume he meant, namely, the year beginning 19th August, A.D. 28. And thus, passing out of the region of argument and controversy, we reach at last a well-ascertained date of vital importance in this inquiry.

8. As Dean Alford puts it (*Gr. Test., in loco*): "This *hosei tpiakonta* admits of considerable latitude, but only in one direction, viz., *over thirty years*."

The first Passover of the Lord's public ministry on earth is thus definitely fixed by the Gospel narrative itself, as in Nisan A.D. 29. And we are thus enabled to fix 32 A.D. as the year of the crucifixion.[9]

9. "It seems to me absolutely certain that our Lord's ministry lasted for some period above three years" (Pusey, *Daniel*, p. 176, and *see* p. 177, *note* 7). This opinion is now held so universally, that it is no longer necessary to set forth in detail the grounds on which it rests; indeed, recent writers generally assume without proof that the ministry included four Passovers. The most satisfactory discussion of the question which I know of is in Hengstenberg's *Christology* (Arnold's trans., §§ 755-765). St. John mentions expressly three Passovers at which the Lord was present; and if the feast of John 5:1 be a Passover, the question is at an end. It is now generally admitted that that feast was either *Purim* or *Passover*, and Hengstenberg's proofs in favor of the latter are overwhelming. The feast of *Purim* had no Divine sanction. It was instituted by the decree of Esther, Queen of Persia, in the 13th year of Xerxes (B. C. 473), and it was rather a social and political

than a religious feast, the service in the synagogue being quite secondary to the excessive eating and drinking which marked the day. It is doubtful whether our Lord would have observed such a feast at all; but that, contrary to the usual practice, He would have specially gone up to Jerusalem to celebrate it, is altogether incredible.

This is opposed, no doubt, to the traditions embodied in the spurious *Acta Pilati* so often quoted in this controversy, and in the writings of certain of the fathers, by whom the fifteenth year of Tiberius was held to be itself the date of the death of Christ; "by some, because they confounded the date of the baptism with the date of the Passion; by others, because they supposed both to have happened in one year; by others, because they transcribed from their predecessors without examination." [10]

#### 10. Clinton's *Fasti Rom.*, A. D. 29.

An imposing array of names can be cited in support of any year from A.D. 29 to A.D. 33; but such testimony is of force only so long as no better can be found. Just as a seemingly perfect chain of circumstantial evidence crumbles before the testimony of a single witness of undoubted veracity and worth, and the united voice of half a county will not support a prescriptive right, if it be opposed to a single sheet of parchment, so the cumulative traditions of the Church, even if they were as definite and clear as in fact they are contradictory and vague, would not outweigh the proofs to which appeal has here been made.

One point more, however, claims attention. Numerous writers, some of them eminent, have discussed this question as though nothing more were needed in fixing the date of the Passion than to find a year, within certain limits, in which the paschal moon was full upon a Friday. But this betrays strange forgetfulness of the intricacies of the problem. True it is that if the system by which today the Jewish year is

settled had been in force eighteen centuries ago, the whole controversy might turn upon the week date of the Passover in a given year; but on account of our ignorance of the embolismal system then in use, no weight whatever can be attached to it.[11] While the Jewish year was the old lunisolar year of 360 days, it is not improbable they adjusted it, as for centuries they had probably been accustomed to do in Egypt, by adding annually the "complimentary days" of which Herodotus speaks.[12] But it is not to be supposed that when they adopted the present form of year, they continued to correct the calendar in so primitive a manner. Their use of the metonic cycle for this purpose is comparatively modern.[13] And it is probable that with the lunar year they obtained also under the Seleucidae the old eight years' cycle for its adjustment. The fact that this cycle was in use among the early Christians for their paschal calculations,[14] raises a presumption that it was borrowed from the Jews; but we have no certain knowledge upon the subject.

11. "The month began at the phases of the moon...and this happens, according to Newton, when the moon is eighteen hours old. Therefore the fourteenth Nisan might commence when the moon was 13d. 18h. old, and wanted 1d. oh. 22m. to the full. [The age of the moon at the full will be 14d. 18h. 22M.] But sometimes the *phases* was delayed till the moon was 1d. 17h. old; and then if the first Nisan were deferred till the *phases*, the fourteenth would begin only 1h. 22m. before the full. This precision, however, in adjusting the month to the moon did not exist in practice. The Jews, like other nations who adopted a lunar year, and supplied the defect by an intercalary month, failed in obtaining complete accuracy. We know not what their method of calculation was at the time of the Christian era" (*Fasti Rom.*, vol. 2., p. 240); A. D. 30 is the only year between 28 and 33 in which the phases of the full moon was on a Friday. In A. D. 29 the full moon was on Saturday, and the

phases on Monday. (*See Wurm's Table, in Wiesler's Chron. Syn., Venables's trans., p. 407*).

12. *Herod. 2:4*.

13. It was about A. D. 360 that the Jews adopted the metonic cycle of nineteen years for the adjustment of their calendar. Before that time they used a cycle of eighty-four years, which was evidently the calippic period of seventy-six years with a Greek octaeteris added. This is said by certain writers to have been in use at the time of our Lord, but the statement is very doubtful. It appears to rest on the testimony of the later Rabbins. Julius Africanus, on the other hand, states in his *Chronography* that "the Jews insert three intercalary months every eight years." For a description of the modern Jewish calendar see *Encyc. Brit.* (9th ed., vol. 5., p. 714).

14. Browne, *Ordo saec.*, § 424

Indeed, the only thing reasonably certain upon the matter is that the Passover did *not* fall upon the days assigned to it by writers whose calculations respecting it are made with strict astronomical accuracy,[15] for the *Mishna* affords the clearest proof that the beginning of the month was not determined by the *true* new moon, but by the first appearance of her disc; and though in a climate like that of Palestine this would seldom be delayed by causes which would operate in murkier latitudes, it doubtless sometimes happened "that neither sun nor stars for many days appeared." [16] These considerations justify the statement that in any year whatever the 15th Nisan may have fallen on a Friday.[17]

15. See *ex. gr.* Browne *Ordo saec.*, § 64. He avers that "if in a given year the paschal moon was at the full at any

instant between sunset of a Thursday and sunset of a Friday, the day included between the two sunsets was the *15th* Nisan; "and on this ground he maintains that A. D. 29 is the only possible date of the crucifixion. As his own table shows, however, no possible year (*i. e.*, no year between 28 and 33) satisfies this requirement; for the paschal full moon in A. D. 29 was on Saturday the *16th* April, not on Friday the *18th* March. This view is maintained also by Ferguson and others. It may be accounted for, perhaps, by the fact that till recent years the *Mishna* was not translated into English.

16. Acts 27:20. Treatise *Rosh Hashanah* of the *Mishna* deals with the mode in which, in the days of the "second temple," the feast of the new moon was regulated. The evidence of two competent witnesses was required by the Sanhedrin to the fact that they had *seen* the moon, and the numerous rules laid down for the journey and examination of these witnesses prove that not unfrequently they came from a distance. Indeed, the case of their being "a day and a night on the road" is provided for (ch. i., § 9). The proclamation by the Sanhedrin, therefore, may have been sometimes delayed till a day or even two after the phases, and sometimes the phases was delayed till the moon was 1d. 17h. old [Clinton, *Fasti Rom.*, vol. 2., p. 240]; so that the 1st Nisan may have fallen several days later than the true new moon. Possibly, moreover, it may have been still further delayed by the operation of rules such as those of the modern Jewish calendar for preventing certain festivals from falling on incompatible days. It appears from the *Mishna* ("*Pesachim*") that the present rules for this purpose were not in force; but yet there may have been similar rules in operation.

17. See *Fasli Rom.*, vol. 2., p. 240, as to the impossibility of determining in what years the Passover fell on Friday.

For example, in A.D. 32, the date of the true new moon, by which the Passover was regulated, was the night (10h 57m) of the 29th March. The ostensible date of the 1st Nisan, therefore, according to the phases, was the 31st March. It may have been delayed, however, till the 1st April; and in that case the 15th Nisan should apparently have fallen on Tuesday the 15th April. But the calendar may have been further disturbed by intercalation. According to the scheme of the eight years' cycle, the embolismal month was inserted in the third, sixth, and eighth years, and an examination of the calendars from A.D. 22 to A.D. 45 will show that A.D. 32 was the third year of such a cycle. As, therefore, the difference between the solar year and the lunar is 11 days, it would amount in three years to  $33 \frac{3}{4}$  days, and the intercalation of a thirteenth month (*Ve-adar*) of thirty days would leave an epact still remaining of  $3 \frac{3}{4}$  days; and the "ecclesiastical moon" being that much before the real moon, the feast day would have fallen on the Friday (11th April), exactly as the narrative of the Gospels requires.[18]

18. The following is the scheme of the octaeteris: "The solar year has a length of  $365 \frac{1}{4}$  days; 12 lunar months make 354 days. The difference, which is called the epact or epagomene, is  $11 \frac{1}{4}$  days. This is the epact of the first year. Hence the epact of the second year =  $22 \frac{1}{2}$  days; of the third,  $33 \frac{3}{4}$ . These  $33 \frac{3}{4}$  days make one lunar month of 30 days, which is added to the third lunar year as an intercalary or thirteenth month (embolismos), and a remainder or epact of  $3 \frac{3}{4}$  days. Hence the epact of the fourth year =  $11 \frac{1}{4} + 3 \frac{3}{4} = 15$  days; that of the fifth year =  $26 \frac{1}{4}$ ; of the sixth,  $37 \frac{1}{2}$ , which gives a second embolism of 30 days with an epact of  $7 \frac{1}{2}$ . The epact, therefore, of the seventh year is  $18 \frac{3}{4}$ , and of the

eighth =  $18 \frac{3}{4} + 11 \frac{1}{4} =$  just 30, which is the third embolism with no epact remaining." — BROWNE, *Ordo Saec.*, § 424. The days of the Paschal full moon in the years A. D. 22-37 were as follows; the embolismal years, according to the octaeteris, being marked "E":

### A. D

22 ... 5th April  
 23 ... 25th March  
 24 ... 12th April  
 25 ... 1st April  
 26 ... 21st March  
 27E ... 9th April  
 28 ... 29th March  
 29E ... 17th April  
 30 ... 6th April  
 31 ... 27th March  
 32E ... 14th April  
 33 ... 3rd April  
 34 ... 23rd March  
 35E ... 11th April  
 36 ... 30th March  
 37E ... 18th April

This, moreover, would explain what, notwithstanding all the poetry indulged in about the groves and grottoes of Gethsemane, remains still a difficulty. Judas needed neither torch nor lantern to enable him to track his Master through the darkest shades and recesses of the garden, nor was it, seemingly, until he had fulfilled his base and guilty mission that the: crowd pressed in to seize their victim. And no traitor need have been suborned by the Sanhedrin to betray to them at midnight the object of their hate, were it not that they dared not take Him save by stealth.[19] Every torch and lamp increased the risk of rousing the sleeping millions around them, for that night all Judah was gathered to

the capital to keep the Paschal feast.[20] If, then, the full moon were high above Jerusalem, no other light were needed to speed them on their guilty errand; but if, on the other hand, the Paschal moon were only ten or eleven days old upon that Thursday night, she would certainly have been low on the horizon, if she had not actually set, before they ventured forth. These suggestions are not made to confirm the proof already offered of the year date of the death of Christ, but merely to show how easy it is to answer objections which at first sight might seem fatal.

19. Luke 22: 2-6

20. Josephus testifies that an "innumerable multitude" came together for the feast (*Ant.*, 17., 9, § 3); and he computes that at a Passover before the siege of Jerusalem upwards of 2, 700, 200 persons actually partook of the Paschal Supper, besides the foreigners present in the city (*Wars*, 6., 9, § 3).

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PASCHAL SUPPER

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THE trustworthiness of witnesses is tested, not by the amount of truth their evidence contains, but by the absence of mistakes. A single glaring error may serve to discredit testimony which seemed of the highest worth. This principle applies with peculiar force in estimating the credibility of the Gospel narratives, and it lends an importance that can scarcely be exaggerated to the question which arises in this controversy, Was the betrayal in fact upon the night of the Paschal Supper? If, as is so commonly maintained, one or all of the Evangelists were in error in a matter of fact so definite and plain, it is idle to pretend that their writings are in any sense whatever God-breathed.[1]

1. theopneustos, 2 Timothy 3:16. See Browne's *Ordo Saec.*, §§ 65- 70, for an exhaustive discussion of this question, in proof that "the three first Gospels are at variance on this point with the fourth." The matter is treated of in books without number. I here deal only with the salient points in the controversy. Arguments based upon the Sabbatical observance of the 15th Nisan being inconsistent with the events of the morning of the crucifixion are worthless. "To strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" was characteristic of the men who were the actors in these scenes. If any one have doubts of it, let him read the *Mishna*. And points such as that the Jews were forbidden to leave their houses on the night of the Supper, depend upon confounding the commands given for the night of the Exodus with the law

relative to its annual celebration. As well might it be urged that the Lord sanctioned and took part in a violation of the law because He reclined at supper, instead of standing girded and shod as enjoined in Exodus 12.

The testimony of the first three Gospels is united, that the Last Supper was eaten at the Jewish Passover. The attempt to prove that it was an anticipatory celebration, without the paschal sacrifice, though made with the best of motives, is utterly futile. "Now on the first day of unleavened bread" (St. Matthew declares),[2] "the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt thou that we make ready for Thee to eat the Passover?" It was the proposal not of the Lord, but of the disciples, who, with the knowledge of the day and of the rites pertaining to it, turned to the Master for instructions. With yet greater definiteness St. Mark narrates that this took place on the first day of unleavened bread, *when they killed the Passover*. (Mark 14:12) And the language of St. Luke is, if possible, more unequivocal still:

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, *when the Passover must be killed*." (Luke 22:7)

But it is confidently asserted that the testimony of St. John is just as clear and unambiguous that the crucifixion took place upon the very day and, it is sometimes urged, at the very hour of the paschal sacrifice. Many an eminent writer may be cited to support this view, and the controversy waged in its defense is endless. But no plea for deference to great names can be tolerated for a moment when the point at issue is the integrity of Holy Writ; and despite the erudition that has been exhausted to prove that the Gospels are here at hopeless variance, none who have learned to prize them as a Divine revelation will be surprised to find that the main difficulty depends entirely on prevailing ignorance respecting Jewish ordinances and the law of Moses.

2. Matthew 26:17 (Revised Version). In the Authorized

Version our translators have perverted the verse. It was not the first day of the *feast*, but ta prota ton adzumon, or, as St. Luke calls it, ha hamera ton adzumon, viz., the day on which leaven was banished from their houses, the 14th Nisan, on the evening of which the Passover was eaten.

These writers one and all. confound the Paschal Supper with the festival which followed it, and to which it lent its name. The supper was a memorial. of the redemption of the firstborn of Israel on the night before the Exodus; the feast was the anniversary of their actual deliverance from the house of bondage. The supper was not a part of the: feast; it was morally the basis on which the feast was founded, just as the Feast of Tabernacles was based on the great sin-offering of the day of expiation which preceded it. But in the same way that the Feast of Weeks came to be commonly designated Pentecost, the feast of Unleavened Bread was popularly called the Passover.[3] That title was common to the supper and the feast, and included both; but the intelligent Jew would never confound the two; and if he spoke emphatically of the *feast* of the Passover, he would thereby mark the festival to the exclusion of the supper.[4]

3. See Luke 22:1., and compare Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:2, I, and 17:9, 3: "The feast of unleavened bread, *which we call the Passover.*"

4. Or if the emphasis rested on the last word, the distinction would be between Passover and Pentecost or Tabernacles.

No words can possibly express more clearly this distinction than those afforded by the Pentateuch in the final promulgation of the Law: "In the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord; and in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast." [5]

5. Numbers 28:16, 17. Compare Exodus 12:14-17, and

Leviticus 23:5, 6, and mark that in the enumeration of the *feasts* in the twenty-third chapter of Exodus, the Passover (*i. e.*, the Paschal Supper) is omitted altogether.

Opening the thirteenth chapter of St. John in the light of this simple explanation, every difficulty vanishes. The scene is laid at the Paschal Supper, on the eve of the festival, "before *the feast* of the Passover";[6] and after the narration or the washing of the disciples' feet, the evangelist goes on to tell of the hurried departure of Judas, explaining that, to some, the Lord's injunction to the traitor was understood to mean, "Buy what we have need of *against the feast*." (John 13:29) The feast day was a Sabbath, when trading was unlawful, and it would seem that the needed supply for the festival was still procurable far on in the preceding night; for another of the errors with which this controversy abounds is the assumption that the Jewish day was invariably reckoned a *nukthameron*, beginning in the evening.[7]

6. John 13:1. The reader must carefully distinguish between verses such as this and those verses where in our English version the word "feast" is in italics, denoting that it is not in the original.

7. Such, for instance, was the day of atonement (Leviticus 23:32) and also the weekly Sabbath. But though the Passover was eaten between six o'clock and midnight, this period was designated in the law, not the beginning of the 15th Nisan, but the evening or night of the 14th (compare Exodus 12:6-8, and Leviticus 23:5). The 15th, or feast day, was reckoned, doubtless, from six o'clock the following morning, for, according to the *Mishna* (Treatise *Berachoth*), the day began at six o'clock a. m. These writers would have us believe that the disciples supposed that they were there and then eating the Passover, and yet that they imagined Judas was dispatched to buy what was needed for

## the Passover!

Such, doubtless, was the common rule, and notably in respect of the law of ceremonial cleansing. This very fact, indeed, enables us without a doubt to conclude that the Passover on account of which the Jews refused to defile themselves by entering the judgment hall, was not the Paschal *Supper*, for that supper was not eaten till after the hour at which such defilement would have lapsed. In the language of the law, "When the sun is down he shall be clean, and shall afterwards eat of the holy things." (Leviticus 12:7) Not so was it with the holy offerings of the feast day, which they must needs eat before the hour at which their uncleanness would have ceased.[8] The only question, therefore, is whether partaking of the peace offerings of the festival could properly be designated as "eating the Passover." The law of Moses itself supplies the answer: "Thou shalt sacrifice the Passover unto the Lord thy God of the flock and *the herd...seven days* shalt thou eat unleavened bread *therewith*." (Deuteronomy 16:2, 3, and compare 2 Chronicles 35:7, 8.)

8. Because the day ended at six o'clock. Moreover, we know from Jewish writers that these offerings (called in the *Talmud* the *Chagigah*) were eaten between three and six o'clock, and ceremonial uncleanness continued until six o'clock.

If then the words of St. John are intelligible only when thus interpreted, and if when thus interpreted they are consistent with the testimony of the three first Evangelists, no element is lacking to give certainty that the events of the eighteenth chapter occurred upon the *feast-day*. Or if confirmation still be needed, the closing verses of this very chapter give it, for according to the custom cited, it was at the *feast* that the governor released a prisoner to the people (John 18:39; Compare Matthew 27:15; Mark 15:6; and Luke 23:17). Fearing because of the populace to seize the Lord upon the *feast-day*,

(Matthew 26:5; Mark 14:1, 2) the Pharisees were eager to procure His betrayal on the night of the Paschal Supper. And so it came to pass that the arraignment before Pilate took place upon the *festival*, as all the Evangelists declare.

But does not St. John expressly state that it was "the *preparation* of the Passover," and must not this necessarily mean the fourteenth of Nisan? The plain answer is, that not a single passage has been cited from writings either sacred or profane in which that day is so described; whereas among the Jews "the preparation" was the common name for the day before the Sabbath, and it is so used by all the Evangelists. And bearing this in mind, let the reader compare the fourteenth verse of the nineteenth chapter of St. John with the thirty-first and forty-second verses of the same chapter, and he will have no difficulty in rendering the words in question, "it was Passover Friday." [9]

9. in de paraskeua tou pascha, compare vers. 31 and 42, and also Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54. Josephus (*Ant.*, 16., 6, 2) cites an imperial edict relieving the Jews from appearing before the tribunals either on the Sabbath or after the ninth hour of the preparation day. It is unjustifiable to assert that the absence of the article in John 19:14 precludes our giving this meaning to the word paraskeua in that passage. In three of the other five verses cited the word is anarthrous, for in fact it had come to be the common name for the day, and the expression "Passover Friday" was as natural to a Jew as is "Easter Monday" to ourselves. (*See Alford's note on Mark 15:42. Still more valuable is his explanation of Matthew 27:62.*)

But yet another statement of St. John is quoted in this controversy. "That Sabbath day was an high day," he declares, and *therefore*, it is urged, it must have been the 15th of Nisan. The force of this

"therefore" partly depends upon overlooking the fact that all the great sacrifices to which the 15th of Nisan largely owed its distinctive solemnity, were repeated daily throughout the festival. (Numbers 28:19-24)[10] On this account alone that Sabbath was "an high day." But besides, it was specially distinguished as the day on which the firstfruits of the harvest were offered in the temple; for in respect of this ordinance, as in most other points of difference between the Karaite Jews, who held to the Scriptures as their only guide, and the Rabbinical Jews, who followed the traditions of the elders, the latter were entirely in the wrong.

10. Numbers 28:19-24. Compare Josephus, *Ant.*, 3:10, 5.

The law enjoined that the sheaf of the firstfruits should be waved before the Lord "on the morrow after the (paschal) Sabbath," (Leviticus 23:10, 11) and from that day the seven weeks were reckoned which ended with the feast of Pentecost. But as the book of Deuteronomy expressly ordains that the weeks should be counted from the first day of the harvest, (Deuteronomy 16:9; and compare Leviticus 23:15, 16) it is evident that the morrow after the Sabbath should not be itself a Sabbath, but a working day. The true day for the ordinance, therefore, was the day of the resurrection, "the first day of the week" following the Passover,[11] when, according to the intention of the law, the barley harvest should begin, and the first sheaf gathered should be carried to the Holy Place and solemnly waved before Jehovah. But with the Jews all this was lost in the empty rite of offering in the temple a measure of meal prepared from corn which, in violation of the law, had been garnered days before. This rite was invariably celebrated on the 16th of Nisan; and thus synchronizing with the solemnities both of the Paschal festival and of the Sabbath, that day could not fail to be indeed "an high day." [12]

11. The present Jewish calendar is so adjusted that the 14th of Nisan shall never fall upon their Sabbath (see *Encyc.*

*Brit.*, 9th ed., title, *Hebrew Calendar*); and this, doubtless, was so intended, for the duties of the day were inconsistent with the due observance of the fourth commandment. Therefore, the morrow after the Sabbath following would invariably be a working day, so that the law is perfectly consistent in providing that the sheaf should be waved on the first day of the harvest. It is only, therefore, in a cycle of years that the true day for offering the first-fruits falls on the third day from the Passover; but in the year of the crucifixion, the great antitype, the resurrection of Christ from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23), occurred upon the very day Divinely appointed for the rite. It follows that the true day of Pentecost must always be on the first day of the week (*see* Leviticus 23:15, 16), and therefore in that same year the true Pentecost was, not the Sabbath day on which the Jews observed the feast, but the day which followed it, a fact which confirms the presumption that the designedly ambiguous word used in Acts 2:1, means "accomplished," in the sense of *passed*, and that it was when assembled on "the first day of the week" that the Church received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

12. In truth it could not but have been the greatest Sabbath of the year, and it is idle to pretend that this is not sufficient to account for the mention made of it.

The argument in proof that the death of Christ was on the very day the paschal lamb was killed, has gained a fictitious interest and value from the seeming fitness of the synchronism this involves. But a closer investigation of the subject, combined with a broader view of the Mosaic types, will dissipate the force of this conclusion. The distinctive teaching of Calvinism is based on giving an exclusive place to the great sin-offering of Leviticus, in which substitution, in its most definite and narrowest sense, is essential. The Passover, on the other

hand, has ever been the most popular of types. But though the other typical sacrifices are almost entirely ignored in the systems of our leading schools of theology, they have no little prominence in Scripture. The offerings which are placed first in the book of Leviticus have a large share in the theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews, — the new Testament "Leviticus," whereas the Passover is not even once referred to.[13] Now these Leviticus offerings[14] marked the *feast-day*, (Numbers 28:17-24) on which, according to the Gospels, "the Messiah was cut off."

13. The *historical* mention of the Passover in Hebrews 11:28 is of course no exception. It has no place in the *doctrine* of the Epistle.

14. The burnt-offering, with its meat-offering, the peace-offering (the *chagigah* of the Talmud), and the sin-offering (Leviticus 1:4).

And other synchronisms are not wanting, still more striking and significant. During all His ministry on earth, albeit it was spent in humiliation and reproach, no hand was ever laid upon the Blessed One, save in importunate supplication or in devout and loving service. But when at times His enemies would fain have seized Him, a mysterious hour to come was spoken of, in which their hate should be unhindered. "This is your hour, and the power of darkness," He exclaimed, as Judas and the impious companions in his guilt drew round Him in the garden. (Luke 22:53) *His* hour, He called it, when He thought of His mission upon earth: *their* hour, when in the fulfillment of that mission He found Himself within their grasp.

The agonies inflicted on Him by men have taken hold on the mind of Christendom; but beyond and above all these the mystery of the Passion is that He was forsaken and accursed of God.[15] In some sense, indeed, His sufferings from men were but a consequence of

this; therefore His reply to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." If men seized and slew Him, it was because God had delivered Him up. When that destined hour had struck, the mighty Hand drew back which till then had shielded Him from outrage. His *death* was not the beginning, but the close of His sufferings; in truth, it was the hour of His triumph.

15. No reverent mind will seek to analyze the meaning of such words, save in so far as they testify to the great fact that His sufferings and death were in expiation of our sins. But the believer will not tolerate a doubt as to the reality and depth of their meaning.

The midnight agony in Gethsemane was thus; the great antitype of that midnight scene in Egypt: when the destroying angel flashed through the land. And as His death was the fulfillment of His people's deliverance, so it took place upon the anniversary of "that selfsame day that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies." [16]

16. Exodus 12:51. The Passover of the yearly celebration was but a memorial of the Passover in Egypt, which was the true type. It was killed, moreover, not at the hour of the Lord's death, but *after* that hour, between the ninth and the eleventh hour (Josephus, *Wars*, 6., 9, 3). "The elucidation of the doctrine of types, now entirely neglected, is an important problem for future theologians." This dictum of Hengstenberg's [*Christology* (Arnold's Ed.), § 765] may still be recorded as a deserved reproach upon theology, and much that has been written in this controversy might be quoted to prove its truth. The day of the resurrection was the anniversary of the crossing of the Red Sea, and again of the resting of the Ark on Ararat (Genesis 8:4). Nisan, which had been the seventh month, became the first month at the

Exodus. (*See* Exodus 12:2; *cf.* *Ordo. Saec.*, § 299.) On the 17th Nisan the renewed earth emerged from the waters of the flood; the redeemed people emerged from the waters of the sea; and the Lord Jesus rose from the dead.



# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER X

### FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY

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"THE secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children." (Deuteronomy 29:29) And among the "things which are revealed" fulfilled prophecy has a foremost place. In presence of the events in which it has been accomplished, its meaning lies upon the surface. Let the facts of the Passion be admitted, and their relation to the twenty-second Psalm is indisputable. There are profound depths of spiritual significance in the Psalmist's words, because of the nature of the facts which have fulfilled them; but the testimony which the prophecy affords is addressed to all, and he who runs may read it. Is it possible then, it may be asked, that the true interpretation of this prophecy of the Seventy Weeks involves so much inquiry and discussion?

Such an objection is perfectly legitimate; but the answer to it will be found in distinguishing between the difficulties which appear in the prophecy itself, and those which depend entirely on the controversy to which it has given rise. The writings of Daniel have been more the object of hostile criticism than any other portion of the Scripture, and the closing verses of the ninth chapter have always been a principal point of attack. And necessarily so, for if that single passage can be proved to be a prophecy, it establishes the character of the book as a Divine revelation. Daniel's visions admittedly describe historical events between the days of Nebuchadnezzar and of Antiochus Epiphanes; therefore skepticism assumes that the writer lived in Maccabean times. But this assumption, put forward without even a decent pretense of proof, is utterly refuted by pointing to a portion of

the prophecy fulfilled at a later date; and accordingly it is of vital moment to the skeptic to discredit the prediction of the Seventy Weeks.

The prophecy has suffered nothing from the attacks of its assailants, but much at the hands of its friends. No elaborate argument would be necessary to elucidate its meaning, were it not for the difficulties raised by Christian expositors. If everything that Christian writers have written on the subject could be wiped out and forgotten, the fulfillment of the vision, so far as it has been in fact fulfilled, would be clear upon the open page of history. Out of deference to these writers, and also in the hope of removing prejudices which are fatal to the right understanding of the subject, these difficulties have here been discussed. It now remains only to recapitulate the conclusions which have been recorded in the preceding pages.

The scepter of earthly power which was entrusted to the house of David, was transferred to the Gentiles in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, to remain in Gentile hands "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

The blessings promised to Judah and Jerusalem were postponed till after a period described as "seventy weeks"; and at the close of the sixty-ninth week of this era the Messiah should be "cut off."

These seventy weeks represent seventy times seven prophetic years of 360 days, to be reckoned from the issuing of an edict for the rebuilding of the city – "the street and rampart," of Jerusalem.

The edict in question was the decree issued by Artaxerxes Longitmanus in the twentieth year of his reign, authorizing Nehemiah to rebuild the fortifications of Jerusalem.

The date of Artaxerxes's reign can be definitely ascertained – not from

elaborate disquisitions by biblical commentators and prophetic writers, but by the united voice of secular historians and chronologers.

The statement of St. Luke is explicit and unequivocal, that our Lord's public ministry began in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar. It is equally clear that it began shortly before the Passover, The date of it can thus be fixed as between August A.D. 28 and April A.D. 29. The Passover of the crucifixion therefore was in A.D. 32, when Christ was betrayed on the night of the Paschal Supper, and put to death on the day of the Paschal Feast.

If then the foregoing conclusions be well founded we should expect to find that the period intervening between the edict of Artaxerxes and the Passion was 483 prophetic years. And accuracy as absolute as the nature of the case permits is no more than men are here entitled to demand. There can be no loose reckoning in a Divine chronology; and if God has deigned to mark on human calendars the fulfillment of His purposes as foretold in prophecy, the strictest scrutiny shall fail to detect miscalculation or mistake.

The Persian edict which restored the autonomy of Judah was issued in the Jewish month of Nisan. It may in fact have been dated the *1st* of Nisan, but no other day being named, the prophetic period must be reckoned, according to a practice common with the Jews, from the Jewish New Year's Day.[1] The seventy weeks are therefore to be computed from the 1st of Nisan B.C. 445.[2]

1. "On the 1st of Nisan is a new year for the computation of the reign of kings, and for festivals." – *Mishna*, treatise "*Rosh Hash.*"

2. The wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days" (Nehemiah 6: 15). Now fifty-two days, measured back from the 25th Elul, brings us

to the 3rd Ab. Therefore Nehemiah must have arrived not later than 1st Ab, and apparently some days earlier (Nehemiah 2:11). Compare this with Ezra's journey thirteen years before. "For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month (Ab) came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him" (Ezra 7:9). I infer therefore that Nehemiah also set out *early* in the first month.

The chronological parallelisms between the respective journeys of Ezra and Nehemiah have suggested the ingenious theory that both went up to Jerusalem together, Ezra 7 and Nehemiah 2 relating to the same event. This is based upon the supposition that the regnal years of Artaxerxes, according to Persian computation, were reckoned from his birth, a supposition, however, which is fanciful and arbitrary, though described by its author as "by no means unlikely" (*Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, 2., 110: Rev. D. H. Haigh, 4th Feb., 1873).

Now the great characteristic of the Jewish sacred year has remained unchanged ever since the memorable night when the equinoctial moon beamed down upon the huts of Israel in Egypt, bloodstained by the Paschal sacrifice; and there is neither doubt nor difficulty in fixing within narrow limits the Julian date of the 1st of Nisan in any year whatever. In B.C.. 445 the new moon by which the Passover was regulated was on the 13th of March at 7h. 9m. A. M.[3] And accordingly the 1st Nisan may be assigned to the 14th March.

3. For this calculation I am indebted to the courtesy of the Astronomer Royal, whose reply to my inquiry on the subject is appended:

"ROYAL OBSERVATORY, GREENWICH."

*June 26th, 1877.*

"SIR, – I have had the moon's place calculated from Largeteau's Tables in Additions to the *Connaissance des Temps* 1846, by one of my assistants, and have no doubt of its correctness. The place being calculated for – 444, March 12d. 20h., French reckoning, or March 12d. 8h. P. M., it appears that the said time was short of New Moon by about 8h. 47m., and therefore the New Moon occurred at 4h. 47m. A. M., March 13th, Paris time."

I am, etc.,

" (Signed,) G. B. AIRY."

The new moon, therefore, occurred at Jerusalem on the 13th March, B. C. 445 (444 Astronomical) at 7h. 9m. A. M.

But the language of the prophecy is clear: "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem *unto Messiah the Prince* shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks." An era therefore of sixty-nine "weeks," or 483 prophetic years reckoned from the 14th March, B.C. 445, should close with some event to satisfy the words, "unto the Messiah the Prince."

The date of the nativity could not possibly have been the termination of the period, for then the sixty-nine weeks must have ended thirty-three years before Messiah's death.

If the beginning of His public ministry be fixed upon, difficulties of another kind present themselves. When the Lord began to preach, the kingdom was not presented as a fact accomplished in His advent, but as a hope the realization of which, though at the very door, was still to

be fulfilled. He took up the Baptist's testimony, "The kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." His ministry was a preparation for the kingdom, leading up to the time when in fulfillment of the prophetic Scriptures He should publicly declare Himself as the Son of David, the King of Israel, and claim the homage of the nation. It was the nation's guilt that the cross and not the throne was the climax of His life on earth.

No student of the Gospel narrative can fail to see that the Lord's last visit to Jerusalem was not only in fact, but in the purpose of it, the crisis of His ministry, the goal towards which it had been directed. After the first tokens had been given that the nation would reject His Messianic claims, He had shunned all public recognition of them. But now the twofold testimony of His words and His works had been fully rendered, and His entry into the Holy City was to proclaim His Messiahship and to receive His doom. Again and again His apostles even had been charged that they should not make Him known. But now He accepted the acclamations of "the whole multitude of the disciples," and silenced the remonstrance of the Pharisees with the indignant rebuke, "I tell you if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:39, 40)

The full significance of the words which follow in the Gospel of St. Luke is concealed by a slight interpolation in the text. As the shouts broke forth from His disciples, "Hosanna to the Son of David! blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!" He looked off toward the Holy City and exclaimed, "If *thou* also hadst known, even *on this day*, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes!" [4] The time of Jerusalem's visitation had come, and she knew it not. Long ere then the nation had rejected Him, but this was the predestined day when their choice must be irrevocable, – the day so distinctly signaled in Scripture as the fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold *thy King cometh unto thee!*" (Zechariah 9:9) Of all the days of the ministry of Christ on

earth, no other will satisfy so well the angel's words, unto Messiah the Prince."

4. ei egnos kai su kai ge en ta hamera tauta ta pros eipanan sou k. t. l. (Luke 19:42). The received text inserts sou after hamera, but the best MSS. (*Alex. Vat. Sin., etc.*) agree in omitting it. kai sou, "thou also, as well as these my disciples." kai ge et quidem – "even" (Alford, *Gr. Test. in loco*). The Revised Version reads, "If thou hadst known *in this day,*" etc.

And the date of it can be ascertained. In accordance with the Jewish custom, the Lord went up to Jerusalem upon the 8th Nisan, "six days before the Passover." [5] But as the 14th, on which the Paschal Supper was eaten, fell that year upon a Thursday, the 8th was the preceding Friday. He must have spent the Sabbath, therefore, at Bethany; and on the evening of the 9th, after the Sabbath had ended, the Supper took place in Martha's house. Upon the following day, the 10th Nisan, He entered Jerusalem as recorded in the Gospels. [6]

5. "When the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread on the *eighth* day of the month Xanthicus," *i. e.*, Nisan (Josephus, *Wars*, 6. 5, 3). "And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand, and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem, before the Passover, to purify themselves... Then Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany" (John 11:55; 12:1).

6. Lewin, *Fasti Sacri*, p. 230.

The Julian date of that 10th Nisan was Sunday the 6th April, A.D. 32. What then was the length of the period intervening between the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the public advent of "Messiah the Prince," – between the 14th March, B.C. 445, and the 6th

April, A.D. 32? THE INTERVAL 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]

7. The 1st Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (the edict to rebuild Jerusalem) was 14th March, B. C. 445. The 10th Nisan in Passion Week (Christ's entry into Jerusalem) was 6th April, A. D. 32. The intervening period was 476 years and 24 days (the days being reckoned inclusively, as required by the language of the prophecy, and in accordance with the Jewish practice).

But  $476 \times 365 = 173,740$  days

Add (14 March to 6th April, *both* inclusive) 24 days

Add for leap years 116 days

Equals a total of 173,880 days

And 69 weeks of prophetic years of 360 days (or  $69 \times 7 \times 360$ ) 173,880 days.

It may be well to offer here two explanatory remarks. First; in reckoning years from B. C. to A. D., one year must always be omitted; for it is obvious, ex. gr., that from B. C. 1 to A. D. 1 was not *two* years, but one year. B. C. 1 ought to be described as B. C. 0, and it is so reckoned by astronomers, who would describe the historical date B. C. 445, as 444. And secondly, the Julian year is 11m. 10 46s., or about the 129th part of a day, longer than the mean solar year. The Julian calendar, therefore, contains three leap years too many in four centuries, an error which had amounted to eleven days in A. D. 17527 when our English calendar was corrected by declaring the 3rd

September to be the 14th September, and by introducing the Gregorian reform which reckons three secular years out of four as common years; *ex. gr.*, 1700, 1800 and 1900 are common years, and 2000 is a leap year. "Old Christmas day" is still marked in our calendars, and observed in some localities, on the 6th January; and to this day the calendar remains uncorrected in Russia. (See Appendix 4, p. 306 note 8.)

Much there is in Holy Writ which unbelief may value and revere, while utterly refusing to accept it as Divine; but prophecy admits of no half-faith. The prediction of the "seventy weeks" was either a gross and impious imposture, or else it was in the fullest and strictest sense *God-breathed*. [8] It may be that in days to come, when Judah's great home-bringing shall restore to Jerusalem the rightful owners of its soil, the Jews themselves shall yet rake up from deep beneath its ruins the records of the great king's decree and of the Nazarene's rejection, and they for whom the prophecy was given will thus be confronted with proofs of its fulfillment. Meanwhile what judgment shall be passed on it by fair and thoughtful men? To believe that the facts and figures here detailed amount to nothing more than happy coincidences involves a greater exercise of faith than that of the Christian who accepts the book of Daniel as Divine. There is a point beyond which unbelief is impossible, and the mind in refusing truth must needs take refuge in a misbelief which is sheer credulity.

8. theopneustos (2 Timothy 3:16).

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER XI

### PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

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"THIS is a work which I find deficient; but it is to be done with wisdom, sobriety, and reverence, or not at all." Thus wrote Lord Bacon in treating of what he describes as "history of prophecy."

"The nature of such a work," he explains, "ought to be that every prophecy of the Scripture be sorted with the event fulfilling the same, throughout the ages of the world, both for the better confirmation of faith and for the better illumination of the Church touching those parts of prophecies which are yet unfulfilled: allowing, nevertheless, that latitude which is agreeable and familiar unto Divine prophecies; being of the nature of their Author with whom a thousand years are but as one day, and therefore are not fulfilled punctually at once, but have springing and germinant accomplishment throughout many ages, though the height or ruiness of them may refer to some one age."

If the many writers who have since contributed to supply the want Lord Bacon noticed, had given due heed to these wise and weighty words, prophetic study might possibly have escaped the reproach which comes of its followers being divided into hostile camps. With the Christian the fulfillment of prophecy does not belong to the region of opinion, nor even of fact, merely; it is a matter of *faith*. We have a right, therefore, to expect that it shall be definite and clear. But though the principles and maxims of interpretation gained by the study of that part of prophecy which was accomplished within the era of Holy Writ are by no means to be thrown aside when we pass out into post-apostolic times, surely there is no presumption against our finding

hidden in the history of these eighteen centuries a primary and partial fulfillment even of prophecies which will unquestionably receive a final and complete accomplishment in days to come.

Only let us not forget the "wisdom, sobriety, and reverence" which such an inquiry demands. In our day prophetic students have turned prophets, and with mingled folly and daring have sought to fix the very year of Christ's return to earth, – predictions which possibly our children's children will recall when another century shall have been added to the history of Christendom. If such vagaries brought discredit only on their authors, it were well. But though broached in direct opposition to Scripture, they have brought reproach on Scripture itself, and have given a stimulus to the jaunty skepticism of the day. We might have hoped that whatever else might be forgotten, the last words which the Lord Jesus spoke on earth would not be thus thrust aside:

"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." (Acts 1:7)

But what was denied to inspired apostles in days of pristine faith and power, the prophecy-mongers of these last days have dared to claim; and the result has been that the solemn and blessed hope of the Lord's return has been degraded to the level of the predictions of astrologers, to the confusion and grief of faithful hearts, and the amusement of the world.

Any man who, avoiding extravagant or fanciful views, both of history and of Scripture, points to events in the present or the past as the correlatives of a prophecy, deserves a calm and unprejudiced hearing from thoughtful men. But let him not forget that though the Scriptures he appeals to may thus receive "germinant accomplishment," "the height or fullness of them may refer" to an age still future. What is true of all Scripture is specially true of prophecy. It is ours to assign to it a meaning; but he who really believes it to be Divine, will hesitate to

limit its meaning to the measure of his own apprehension of it.

The prophecies of Antichrist afford a signal and most apt illustration of this. Were it not for the prejudice created by extreme statements, prophetic students would probably agree that the great apostasy of Christendom displays in outline many of the main lineaments of the Man of Sin. There is, indeed, in our day a spurious liberality that would teach us to forego the indictment which history affords against the Church of Rome; but while no generous mind will refuse to own the moral worth of those who, in England at least, now guide the counsels of that Church, the real question at issue relates to the character, not of individuals, but of a *system*.

It is the part, therefore, not of intolerant bigotry, but of true wisdom, to search the records of the past – terrible records, truly – for the means of judging of that system. The inquiry which concerns us is not whether good men are found within the pale of Rome – as though all the moral excellence of earth could avail to cover the annals of her hideous guilt! Our true inquiry is whether she has suffered any real change in these enlightened days. Is the Church of Rome *reformed*? With what vehemence the answer would be shrieked from every altar within her pale! And if not, let but dark days come again, and some of the foulest scenes and blackest crimes in the history of Christendom may be re-enacted in Europe. "The true test of a man is not what he does, but what, with the principles he holds, he would do"; and if this be true of individuals, it is still more intensely true of communities. They do good service, therefore, who keep before the public mind the real character of Rome as the present day development of the apostasy.

But when these writers go on to assert that the predictions of the Antichrist have their full and final realization in the Papacy, their position becomes a positive danger to the truth. It is maintained at the cost of rejecting some of the most definite of the prophecies, and of putting a lax or fanciful interpretation upon those very Scriptures to

which they appeal.

Indeed, the chief practical evil of this system of interpretation is that it creates and fosters a habit of reading the Scriptures in a loose and superficial manner. General impressions, derived from a cursory perusal of the prophecies, are seized upon and systematized, and upon this foundation a pretentious superstructure is built up. As already noticed, the Church of Rome displays the chief moral lineaments of the Man of Sin. Therefore it is an axiom of interpretation with this school that the ten-horned beast is the Papacy. But of the beast it is written that "power was given to him over all kindreds and tongues and nations, and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life." (Revelation 13:7, 8) Are these commentators aware that one-half of Christendom is outside the pale of Rome, and in antagonism to the claims of the Papacy? Or do they suppose that all who belong to the Greek and Protestant Churches are enrolled in the book of life? By no means. But they would tell us the verse does not mean exactly what it says.[1]

1. According to these interpreters, such a statement must be taken *cum grano salis*, as we term it; and the like remark applies to their rendering of *every verse* of the thirteenth chapter of Revelation.

Again, the ten-horned beast is the Papacy; the second beast, the false prophet, is the Papal clergy; Babylon is Papal Rome. And yet when we turn to the vision of the judgment of Babylon, we find that it is *by the agency of the beast* that her doom is accomplished! "And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, *these shall hate the whore* (Babylon), and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire; for God hath put in their hearts to fulfill His will, and to agree, *and give their kingdom unto the beast*, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." "These have one mind, *and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*"[2] The governments of

Christendom, therefore, are to lend their power to the Roman Pontiff and priesthood in order to the destruction of Papal Rome![3] Can absurdity be more transparent and complete?

2. Revelation 17:16, 17, 18. In ver. 16 the best reading, as given in the Revised Version, is "*and* the beast," instead of "*upon* the beast."

3. Mr. Elliott's romance on this subject is disposed of by the events of recent years, which have made Rome the peaceful capital of Italy. Of the beast and false prophet it is written, "These both were cast alive into a lake of fire" (Revelation 19:20). It may be pleasing to Protestant zeal to suppose the Roman hierarchy and priesthood are "reserved" for such a fate.

The question here at issue must not be prejudiced by misrepresentations, or shirked by turning away to collateral points of secondary moment. It is not whether great crises in the history of Christendom, such as the fall of Paganism, the rise of the Papacy and of the Moslem power, and the Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century, be within the scope of the visions of St. John. This may readily be conceded. Neither is it whether the fact that the chronology of some of these events is marked by cycles of years composed of the precise multiples; of seventy specified in the book of Daniel and the Apocalypse, be not a further proof that all forms; part of one great plan. Every fresh discovery of the kind ought to be welcomed by all lovers of the truth. Instead of weakening confidence in the accuracy and definiteness of the prophecies, it ought to strengthen the faith which looks for their absolute and literal fulfillment. The question is not whether the history of Christendom was within the view of the Divine Author of the prophecies, but whether those prophecies have been *fulfilled*; not whether those Scriptures have the scope and meaning which historical interpreters assign to them, but whether their

scope and meaning be exhausted and satisfied by the events to which they appeal as the fulfillment of them. It is unnecessary, therefore, to enter here upon an elaborate review of the historical system of interpretation, for if it fails when tested at some one vital point, it breaks down altogether.

Does the Apocalypse, then, belong to the sphere of prophecy accomplished? Or, to reduce the controversy to a still narrower issue, have the visions of the seals and trumpets and vials been fulfilled? No one will dispute the fairness of this mode of stating the question, and the fairest possible method of dealing with it will be to set forth some one of the leading visions, and then quote fully and *verbatim* what the historical interpreters put forward as the meaning of it.

The opening of the sixth seal is thus recorded by St. John:" And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:12-17)

The following is Mr. Elliott's commentary upon the vision:

"When we consider," he declares, "the terrors of these Christ-blaspheming kings of the Roman earth, thus routed with their partisans before the Christian host, and miserably flying and perishing, there

was surely that in the event which, according to the usual construction of such Scripture figures, might well be deemed to answer to the symbols of the profigurative vision before us: in which vision kings and generals, freemen and slaves, appeared flying to and seeking the caves of the rocks to hide them: to hide them from the face of Him that sat on the throne of power, even from the wrath of the Lamb.

"Thus under the first shocks of this great earthquake had the Roman earth been agitated, and the enemies of the Christians destroyed or driven into flight and consternation. Thus, in the political heavens, had the sun of pagan supremacy been darkened, the moon become eclipsed and blood-red, and of the stars not a few been shaken violently to the ground. But the prophecy had not as yet received its entire fulfillment. The stars of the pagan heaven had not all fallen, nor had the heaven itself been altogether rolled up like a scroll and vanished away. On Constantine's first triumph, and after the first terrors of the opposing emperors and their hosts, though their imperial edict gave to Christianity its full rights and freedom, yet it allowed to the heathen worship a free toleration also. But very soon there followed measures of marked preference in the imperial appointments to the Christians and their faith. And at length, as Constantine advanced in life, in spite of the indignation and resentment of the pagans, he issued edicts for the suppression of their sacrifices, the destruction of their temples, and the toleration of no other form of public worship but the Christian. His successors on the throne followed up the same object by attaching penalties of the severest character to the public profession of paganism. And the result was that, before the century, had ended, its stars had all fallen to the ground, its very heaven, or political and religious system, vanished, and on the earth the old pagan institutions, laws, rites, and worship been all but annihilated." [4]

4. *Horae Apoc.*, vol. 1., pp. 219, 220.

"A more notable instance of inadequate interpretation cannot be

imagined." [5] What wonder if men scoff at the awful warnings of coming wrath, when they are told that THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH [6] is past, and that it amounted to nothing more than the rout of the pagan armies before the hosts of Constantine, – an event which has been paralleled a thousand times in the history of the world? [7]

5. "Another such landmark is found, I believe, in the interpretation of the *sixth seal*: if it be not indeed already laid down in what has just been said. We all know what that imagery means in the rest of Scripture. Any system which requires it to belong to another period than the close approach of the great day of the Lord, stands thereby self-condemned. I may illustrate this by reference to Mr. Elliott's continuous historical system, which requires that it should mean the downfall of paganism under Constantine. A more notable instance of inadequate interpretation cannot be imagined. Closely connected with this last is another fixed point in interpretation. As the seven seals, so the seven trumpets and the seven vials run on to the time close upon the end. At the termination of each series, the note is unmistakably given that such is the case. Of the seals we have already spoken. As to the trumpets, it may suffice to refer to ch. 10:7; 11:18; as to the vials, to their very designation *tas eschatas*, and to the *gegonen* of ch. 16:17. Any system which does not recognize this common ending of the three, seems to me to stand thereby convicted of error." – ALFORD, *Gr. Test.*, 4., Part 2., ch. 8., §§ 5, 21, 22.

6. *ha hamera ha megala tas orgas autou* (Revelation 6:17).

7. If such statements were put forward in wantonness, and not in folly, they would suggest a reference to the solemn words, "If any man shall *take away* from the words of the

book of this prophecy –" (Revelation 22:19).

For, let the point at issue be clearly kept in view. If the reign of Constantine or some other era in the history of Christendom were appealed to as affording an intermediate fulfillment of the vision, it might pass as a feeble but harmless exposition; but these expositors daringly assert that the prophecy has no other scope or meaning.[8] They are bound to prove that the vision of the sixth seal has been *fulfilled*; else it is obvious that all which follows it claims fulfillment likewise. If, therefore, their system failed at this point alone, its failure would be absolute and complete; but in fact the instance quoted is no more than a fair example of the manner in which they fritter away the meaning of the words they profess to explain.

8. When the historical interpreters approach the Second Advent, they lose the courage of their opinions, and earnestly contend for literalness, though if their scheme be genuine, the predicted return of Christ may surely have its fulfillment in the present revival of religion and the concurrent spread of Christianity.

We are now, they tell us, in the era of the Vials. At this very hour the wrath of God is being poured out upon the earth.[9] Surely men may well exclaim, – comparing the present with the past, and judging this age to be more favored, more desirable to live in than any age which has preceded it, – Is this all the wrath of God amounts to! The vials are the seven last plagues, "for in them *is filled up the wrath of God*," and we are told that the sixth is even at this moment being fulfilled in the disruption of the Turkish Empire! Can any man be so lost in the dreamland of his own lucubrations as to imagine that the collapse of the Turkish power is a Divine judgment on an unrepentant world![10] Such it may appear to be to the clique of Pachas, who, ghoulishly, fatten on the misery around them; but untold millions would hail it as a blessing to suffering humanity, and ask with wonder, If this be a

crowning token of the wrath of God, how are simple souls to distinguish between the proofs of His favor and of His direst anger!

9. And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God...And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues...And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever...And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth" (Revelation 15:1, 6, 7; 16:1).

10. The Austrian *Pester Lloyd* of 21st Nov., 1879, in commenting on the British line of policy with regard to Turkish affairs, charged Lord Beaconsfield's government with "confounding Mohammedanism with the Turks, the latter having been always regarded as the scum of Mohammedanism by all Mohammedan nations who were conscious of their own strength." Prophetic students appear to be thoroughly possessed by this error.

If the event were cited as a *primary* fulfillment, within this day of grace, of a prophecy which strictly belongs to the coming day of wrath, it would merit respectful attention; but to appeal to the dismemberment of Turkey as the full realization of the vision, is the merest trifling with the solemn language of Scripture, and an outrage on common sense.

But there are principles involved in this system of interpretation far deeper and more momentous than any which appear upon the surface. It is in direct antagonism with the great foundation truth of Christianity.

St. Luke narrates (Luke 4:19, 20) how, after the temptation, the Lord "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee," and entering the synagogue of Nazareth on the Sabbath day, as His custom was, He stood up to read. There was handed Him the book of Isaiah's prophecy, and all eyes being fastened on Him, He opened it and read these words, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

"And the day of vengeance of our God" are the words which followed, without a break, upon the open page before Him; but, the record adds, "He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down." In an age to come, when the prophecy shall have its ultimate fulfillment, the day of vengeance shall mingle with blessing to His people.[11] But the burden of His ministry on earth was only peace.[12] And it is the burden of the gospel still. God's attitude toward men is grace. "GRACE REIGNS." It is not that there is grace for the penitent or the elect, but that grace is the principle on which Christ now sits upon the throne of God. "Upon His head are many crowns, but His pierced hand now holds the only scepter," for the Father has given Him the kingdom; all power is His in heaven and on earth. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son"; (John 5:22; Compare 3:17; 12:47) but His mission to earth was not to judge, but only to save. And He who is thus the only Judge is now exalted to be a Savior, and the throne on which He sits is a throne of grace. Grace is reigning, through righteousness, unto eternal life. (Romans 5:21) "The light of this glorious gospel now shines unhindered upon earth. Blind eyes may shut it out, but they cannot quench or lessen it. Impenitent hearts may heap up wrath against the day of wrath, but they cannot darken this day of mercy or mar the glory of the reign of grace." [13]

11. Compare Isaiah 63:4: "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

12. "He came and preached peace" (Ephesians 2:17).

13. *The Gospel and its Ministry*, p. 136. True it is that the great principles of God's moral government of the world remain unchanged, and sin is thus ever working out its own punishment. But this must not be confounded with immediate Divine action in judgment. "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust *to the day of judgment*, to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9). Or, according to Romans 2:5, "After thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against *the day of wrath*."

It will be in "the day of wrath" that the "seven last plagues," wherein is "filled up the wrath of God," shall run their course; and it is merely trifling with solemn and awful truths to talk of their being now fulfilled. Whatever intermediate fulfillment the vision may be now receiving, the full and final realization of it belongs to a future time.

And these pages are not designed to deal with the primary and historical fulfillment of the prophecies, or, as Lord Bacon terms it, their "springing and germinant accomplishment throughout many ages." My subject is exclusively the absolute and final fulfillment of the visions in that "one age" to which, in their "height and fullness," they belong.

The Scripture itself affords many striking instances of such intermediate or primary fulfillment; and in these the main outlines of the prophecy are realized, but not the details. The prediction of Elijah's advent is an instance.[14] In the plainest terms the Lord declared the Baptist's ministry to be within the scope of that prophecy. In terms as clear He announced that it would be *fulfilled* in days to come, by the

reappearance upon earth of the greatest of the prophets. (Matthew 11:14; 17:11, 12) St. Peter's words at Pentecost afford another illustration. Joel's prophecy shall yet be realized to the letter, but yet the baptism of the Holy Ghost was referred to it by the inspired Apostle. (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21.)

14. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Malachi. 4:5).

To speak of the *fulfillment* of these prophecies as already past, is to use language at once unscriptural and false. Far more unwarrantable still is the assertion of finality, so confidently made, of the prophecies relating to the apostasy. There is not a single prophecy, of which the *fulfillment* is recorded in Scripture, that was not realized with absolute accuracy, and in every detail; and it is wholly unjustifiable to assume that a new system of fulfillment was inaugurated after the sacred canon closed.

Two thousand years ago who would have ventured to believe that the prophecies of Messiah would receive a literal accomplishment!

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." (Isaiah 7:14)

"Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zechariah 9:9)

"They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver;" "And I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." (Zechariah 11:12, 13; Compare Matthew 27:5, 7)

"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." (Psalm 22:18 Compare John 19:23, 24.)

"They pierced my hands and my feet." (Psalm 22:16)

"They gave me vinegar to drink." (Psalm 69:21)

"He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was He stricken." (Isaiah 53:8)

To the prophets themselves, even, the meaning of such words was a mystery. (1 Peter 1:10-12) For the most part, doubtless, men regarded them as no more than poetry or legend. And yet these prophecies of the advent and death of Christ received their fulfillment in every jot and tittle of them. Literalness of fulfillment may therefore be accepted as an axiom to guide us in the study of prophecy.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER XII

### FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES

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THE main stream of prophecy runs in the channel of Hebrew history. This indeed is true of all revelation. Eleven chapters of the Bible suffice to cover the two thousand years before the call of Abraham, and the rest of the old Testament relates to the Abrahamic race. If for a while the light of revelation rested on Babylon or Susa, it was because Jerusalem was desolate, and Judah was in exile. For a time the Gentile has now gained the foremost place in blessing upon earth; but this is entirely anomalous, and the normal order of God's dealings with men is again to be restored. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel *until* the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written." [1]

1. Romans 11:25, 26. The coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles must not be confounded with the fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24). The one refers to spiritual blessing, the other to earthly power. Jerusalem is not to be the capital of a free nation, independent of Gentile power, until the true Son of David comes to claim the scepter.

The Scriptures teem with promises and prophecies in favor of that nation, not a tithe of which have yet been realized. And while the impassioned poetry in which so many of the old prophecies are couched is made a pretext for treating them as hyperbolic descriptions of the blessings of the Gospel, no such plea can be urged respecting the Epistle to the Romans. Writing to Gentiles, the Apostle

of the Gentiles there reasons the matter out in presence of the facts of the Gentile dispensation. The natural branches of the race of Israel have been broken off from the olive tree of earthly privilege and blessing, and, "contrary to nature," the wild olive branches of Gentile blood have been substituted for them. But in spite of the warning of the Apostle, we Gentiles have become "wise in our own conceits," forgetting that the olive tree whose "root and fatness" we partake of, is essentially Hebrew, for "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

The minds of most men are in bondage to the commonplace facts of their experience. The prophecies of a restored Israel seem to many as incredible as predictions of the present triumphs of electricity and steam would have appeared to our ancestors a century ago. While affecting independence in judging thus, the mind is only giving proof of its own impotence or ignorance. Moreover, the position which the Jews have held for eighteen centuries is a phenomenon which itself disposes of every seeming presumption against the fulfillment of these prophecies.

It is not a question of how a false religion like that of Mahomet can maintain an unbroken front in presence of a true faith; the problem is very different. Not only in a former age, but in the early days of the present dispensation, the Jews enjoyed a preference in blessing, which practically amounted almost to a monopoly of Divine favor. In its infancy the Christian Church was essentially Jewish. The Jews within its pale were reckoned by thousands, the Gentiles by tens. And yet that same people afterwards became, and for eighteen centuries have continued to be, more dead to the influence of the Gospel than any other class of people upon earth. How can "this mystery," as the Apostle terms it, be accounted for, save as Scripture explains it, namely, that the era of special grace to Israel closed with the period historically within the Acts of the Apostles, and that since that crisis of their history "blindness in part is happened" to them?

But this very word, the truth of which is so clearly proved by public facts, goes on to declare that this judicial hardening is to continue only "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in"; and the inspired Apostle adds, "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant unto them." [2]

2. Romans 11:25, 26. Not every Israelite, but Israel as a nation (Alford, *Gr. Test.*, in loco).

But, it may with reason be demanded, does not this imply merely that Israel shall be brought within the blessings of the Gospel, not that the Jews shall be blessed on a principle which is entirely inconsistent with the Gospel? Christianity, as a system, assumes the fact that in a former age the Jews enjoyed a peculiar place in blessing:

"Christ was *a minister of the circumcision* for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy." (Romans 15:8, 9)

But the Jews have lost their vantage-ground through sin, and they now stand upon the common level of ruined humanity. The Cross has broken down "the middle wall" which separated them from Gentiles. It has leveled all distinctions. As to guilt "there is no difference, for *all* have sinned"; as to mercy "there is no difference, for the same Lord over all is rich unto *all* that call on Him." How then, if there be no difference, can God give blessing on a principle which implies that there is a difference? In a word, the fulfillment of the promises to Judah is absolutely inconsistent with the distinctive truths of the present dispensation.

This question is one of immense importance, and claims the most earnest consideration. Nor is it enough to urge that the eleventh

chapter of Romans itself supposes that in this age the Gentile has an advantage, though not a priority, and, therefore, Israel may enjoy the like privilege hereafter. It is part of the same revelation, that although grace stoops to the Gentile just where he is, it does not confirm him in his position *as a Gentile*, but lifts him out of it and *denationalizes* him; for in the Church of this dispensation "there is neither Jew nor Gentile." [3] Judah's promises, on the contrary, imply that blessing will reach the Jew as a Jew, not only recognizing his national position, but confirming him therein.

3. Galatians 3:28. Contrast these with the Lord's words in John 4:22, "Salvation is of the Jews."

The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable, that before God can act thus, the special proclamation of grace in the present dispensation must have ceased, and a new principle of dealing with mankind must have been inaugurated.

But here the difficulties only seem to multiply and grow. For, it may be asked, does not the dispensation run its course until the return of Christ to earth? How then can Jews be found at His coming in a place of blessing *nationally*, akin to that which they held in a bygone age? All will admit that Scripture seems to teach that such will be the case. [4] The question still remains whether this be really intended. Does Scripture speak of any crisis in relation to the earth, to intervene before "the day when the Son of man shall be revealed"?

4. In proof of this, appeal may be made to these very prophecies of Daniel; and later prophecies testify to it still more plainly, notably the book of Zechariah.

No one who diligently seeks the answer to this inquiry can fail to be impressed by the fact that at first sight some confusion seems to mark the statements of Scripture with respect to it. Certain passages testify

that Christ will return to earth, and stand once more on that same Olivet on which His feet last rested ere He ascended to His Father; (Zechariah 14:4; Acts 1:11, 12) and others tell us as plainly that He will come, not to earth, but to the air above us, and call His people up to meet Him and be with Him. (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17) These Scriptures again most clearly prove that it is His believing people who shall be "caught up," (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52) leaving the world to run its course to its destined doom; while other Scriptures as unequivocally teach that it is not His people but the wicked who are to be weeded out, leaving the righteous "to shine forth in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:40-43) And the confusion apparently increases when we notice that Holy Writ seems sometimes to represent the righteous who are to be thus blessed as Jews, sometimes as Christians of a dispensation in which the Jew is cast off by God.

These difficulties admit of only one solution, a solution as satisfactory as it is simple; namely, that what we term the second advent of Christ is not a single event, but includes several distinct manifestations. At the first of these He will call up to Himself the righteous dead, together with His own people then living upon earth. With this event this special "day of grace" will cease, and God will again revert to "the covenants" and "the promises," and that people to whom the covenants and promises belong (Romans 9:4) will once more become the center of Divine action toward mankind.

Everything that God has promised is within the range of the believer's hope;[5] but this is its near horizon. All things wait on its accomplishment. Before the return of Christ to earth, many a page of prophecy has yet to be fulfilled, but not a line of Scripture bars the realization of this the Church's special hope of His coming to take His people to Himself. Here, then, is the great crisis which will put a term to the reign of grace, and usher in the destined woes of earth's fiercest trial – "the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be

fulfilled." (Luke 21:22)

5. "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth" (2 Peter 3:13). Long ages of time and events innumerable must intervene before the realization of this hope, and yet the believer is looking for it.

To object that a truth of this magnitude would have been stated with more dogmatic clearness is to forget the distinction between doctrinal teaching and prophetic utterance. The truth of the second advent belongs to prophecy, and the statements of Scripture respecting it are marked by precisely the same characteristics as marked the Old Testament prophecies of Messiah.[6]

6. For an admirable treatise on these characteristics of prophecy, see Hengstenberg's *Christology*, Kregel Publications.

"The sufferings of Christ and the glories which should follow" were foretold in such a way that a superficial reader of the old Scriptures would have failed to discover that there were to be two advents of Messiah. And even the careful student, if unversed in the general scheme of prophecy, might have supposed that the two advents, though morally distinct, should be intimately connected in time. So is it with the future. Some regard the second advent as a single event; by others its true character is recognized, but they fail to mark the interval which must separate its first from its final stage. An intelligent apprehension of the truth respecting it is essential to the right understanding of unfulfilled prophecy.

But having thus clearly fixed these principal landmarks to guide us in the study, we cannot too strongly deprecate the attempt to fill up the interval with greater precision than Scripture warrants. There are definite events to be fulfilled, but no one may dogmatize respecting

the time or manner of their fulfillment. No Christian who estimates aright the appalling weight of suffering and sin which each day that passes adds to the awful sum of this world's sorrow and guilt, can fail to long that the end may indeed be near; but let him not forget the great principle that "the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation," (2 Peter 3:15) nor yet the language of the Psalm, "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." (Psalm 90:4) There is much in Scripture which seems to justify the hope that the consummation will not be long delayed; but, on the other hand, there is not a little to suggest the thought that before these final scenes shall be enacted, civilization will have returned to its old home in the east, and, perchance, a restored Babylon shall have become the center of human progress and of apostate religion.[7]

7. Isaiah 13 appears to connect the final fall of Babylon with the great day that is coming (*comp.* Vers. 1, 9, 10, 19.); and in Jeremiah 1 the same event is connected with the future restoration and union of the two houses of Israel (ver. 20). I make the suggestion, however, merely as a *caveat* against the idea that we have certainly reached the last days of the dispensation. If the history of Christendom should run on for another thousand years, the delay would not discredit the truth of a single statement in Holy Writ.

To maintain that long ages have yet to run their course would be as unwarrantable as are the predictions so confidently made that all things shall be fulfilled within the current century. It is only in so far as prophecy is within the seventy weeks of Daniel that it comes within the range of chronology at all, and Daniel's vision primarily relates to Judah and Jerusalem.[8]

8. No one of Daniel's visions, indeed, has a wider scope. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel treat of Israel (or the ten tribes); but Daniel deals only with Judah.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER XIII

### SECOND SERMON ON THE MOUNT

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THE connecting link between the past and the future, between the fulfilled and the unfulfilled in prophecy, will be found in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

The chief Messianic promises are grouped in two great classes, connected respectively with the names of David and of Abraham, and the New Testament opens with the record of the birth and ministry of Messiah as "the Son of David, the son of Abraham"; (Matthew 1:1) for in one aspect of His work He was "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." (Romans 15:8) The question of the Magi, "Where is He that is born king of the Jews?" aroused a hope which was part of the national politics of Judah; and even the base Idumean who then usurped the throne was sensible of its significance: "Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." [1]

1. Matthew 2:3. It must not be imagined that it was any *religious* emotion which disturbed the king. The announcement of the Magi was to him what the news of the birth of an heir is to an heir-presumptive. The Magi asked, "Where is He that is born *King of the Jews*?" Herod's inquiry, therefore, to the Sanhedrin was, "Where should *Messiah* be born?" and on being referred to the prophecy which so plainly designated Bethlehem, he determined to destroy every infant child in that city and district. Herod and the Sanhedrin had not learned to spiritualize the

prophecies.

And when the proclamation afterwards was made, first by John the Baptist, and finally by the Lord and His apostles, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," the Jews knew well its import. It was not "the Gospel," as we understand it now, but the announcement of the near fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy.[2] And the testimony had a twofold accompaniment. "The Sermon on the Mount" is recorded as embodying the great truths and principles which were associated with the Kingdom Gospel; and the attendant miracles gave proof that all was Divine. And in the earlier stages of the ministry of Christ, His miracles were not reserved for those whose faith responded to His words; the only qualification for the benefit was that the recipient should belong to the favored race. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." [3] Such was the commission under which the twelve went forth through that little land, to every corner of which their Master's fame had gone before them. (Matthew 4:24, 25)

2. Cf. Pusey, Daniel, p. 84

3. Matthew 10:5-8. The chapter is prophetic, in keeping with the character of the book, and reaches on to the testimony of the latter days (*see ex. gr.*, ver. 23).

But the verdict of the nation, through its accredited and responsible leaders, was a rejection of His Messianic claims.[4] The acts and words of Christ recorded in the twelfth chapter of Matthew were an open and deliberate condemnation and defiance of the Pharisees, and their answer was to meet in solemn council and decree His death. (Matthew 12:1- 14) From that hour His ministry entered upon a new

phase. The miracles continued, for He could not meet with suffering and refuse to relieve it; but those whom thus He blessed were charged "that they should not make Him known." (Matthew 12:16) The Gospel of the Kingdom ceased; His teaching became veiled in parables,[5] and the disciples were forbidden any longer to testify to His Messiahship. (Matthew 16:20)

4. In our own time the Jews have had the temerity to publish a translation of the *Mishna*, and the reader who will peruse its treatises can judge with what contempt and loathing the Lord must have regarded the religion of those miserable men. The treatise *Sabbath* will afford an invaluable commentary on the twelfth of Matthew. The *Mishna* is a compilation of the oral traditions of the Rabbins, made in the second century, A. D., to prevent their being lost by the dispersion – the very traditions, many of them, which prevailed when the Lord was on earth, and which He so unsparingly condemned as undermining the Scriptures, for then as now the Jews regarded them as possessing a Divine sanction. (Cf Lindo's *Jewish Cal.*, Introd.; Milman's *Hist. Jews*, Book 18.)

5. Matthew 13:3, 13. "From the expression *ardzato* in Mark, compared with the question of the disciples in ver. 10, – and with ver. 34, – it appears that this was the *first beginning of our Lord's teaching by parables*, expressly so delivered, and properly so called. And the natural sequence of things here agrees with and confirms Matthew's arrangement against those who would place (as Ebrard) all this chapter before the Sermon on the Mount. He there spoke *without parables*, or mainly so; and continued to do so till the rejection and misunderstanding of His teaching led to His judicially adopting the course here indicated, *choris par. ouden elalei autois.*" – ALFORD, *Gr. Test*,

## Matthew 13:3.

The thirteenth chapter is prophetic of the state of things which was to intervene between the time of His rejection and His return in glory to claim the place which in His humiliation was denied Him. Instead of the proclamation of the Kingdom, He taught them "the *mysteries* of the Kingdom." (Matthew 13:11) His mission changed its character, and instead of a King come to reign, He described Himself as a Sower sowing seed. Of the parables which follow, the first three, spoken to the multitude, described the outward results of the testimony in the world; the last three, addressed to the disciples,[6] speak of the hidden realities revealed to spiritual minds.

6. As were also the interpretations of the Parables of the Sower and of the Tares.

But these very parables, while they taught the disciples in the plainest terms that everything was postponed which the prophets had led them to look for in connection with the Kingdom, taught them no less clearly that the day would surely come when all should be fulfilled; when evil should be rooted out, and the Kingdom established in righteousness and peace. (Matthew 13:41-43) They thus learned that there was to be an "age" of which prophecy took no account, and another "Advent" at its close; and "the second Sermon on the Mount" was the Lord's reply to the inquiry, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?"[7]

7. Matthew 24:3. "As He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him." Compare Matthew 5:1 "He went up into a mountain, and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him." The Sermon on the Mount unfolded the principles on which the Kingdom would be set up. The King having been rejected by the nation, the second Sermon on the Mount unfolded the events which must

precede His return.

The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew has been well described as "the anchor of apocalyptic interpretation," and "the touchstone of apocalyptic systems." [8] The fifteenth verse specifies an event and fixes an epoch, by which we are enabled to connect the words of the Lord with the visions of St. John, and both with the prophecies of Daniel. The entire passage is obviously prophetic, and its fulfillment clearly pertains to the time of the end. The fullest and most definite application of the words must therefore be to those who are to witness their accomplishment. To them it is that the warning is specially addressed, against being deceived through a false hope of the *immediate* return of Christ. [9]

8. Alford, *Gr. Test.*, vol. 4., Pt. 2. *Proleg. Rev.*

9. Matthew 24:4, 6. That is, the final stage of the advent; not His coming as foretold in 1 Thessalonians 4 and elsewhere, which has no signs preceding.

To refer verse 5 to the times of Barcochab involves a glaring anachronism. The *primary* reference in vers. 15-20, and, therefore, of the earlier portion of the prophecy, was to the period ending with the destruction of Jerusalem.

A series of terrible events are yet to come; but "these are the *beginning* of sorrows"; "the end is not yet." How long these "sorrows" shall continue is not revealed. The first sure sign that the end is near will be the advent of the fiercest trial that the redeemed on earth have ever known. The fulfillment of Daniel's vision of the defilement of the Holy Place is to be the signal for immediate flight; "for then shall be *the great tribulation*," (Vers. 15-21. Compare Daniel 11:1.) unparalleled even in Judah's history. But, as already noticed, this last great persecution belongs to the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week,

and therefore it affords a landmark by which we can determine the character and fix the order of the chief events which mark the closing scenes foretold in prophecy.

With the clew thus obtained from the Gospel of St. Matthew, we can turn with confidence to study the Apocalyptic visions of St. John. But first it must be clearly recognized that in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, as in the book of Daniel, Jerusalem is the center of the scene to which the prophecy relates; and this of necessity implies that the Jews shall have been restored to Palestine before the time of its fulfillment.[10]

10. The question of their restoration to a place of blessing spiritually has already been discussed.

Objections based on the supposed improbability of such an event are sufficiently answered by marking the connection between prophecy and miracle. The history of the Abrahamic race, to which prophecy is so closely related, is little else than a record of miraculous interpositions. "Their passage out of Egypt was miraculous. Their entrance into the promised land was miraculous. Their prosperous and their adverse fortunes in that land, their servitudes and their deliverances, their conquests and their captivities, were all miraculous. The entire history from the call of Abraham to the building of the sacred temple was a series of miracles. It is so much the object of the sacred historians to describe these that little else is recorded... There are no historians in the sacred volume of the period in which miraculous intervention was withdrawn. After the declaration by the mouth of Malachi that a messenger should be sent to prepare the way, the next event recorded by any inspired writer is the birth of that messenger. But of the interval of 400 years between the promise and the completion no account is given." [11]

11. Clinton, *Fasti H.*, vol. 1., p. 243.

The seventy years from Messiah's birth to the dispersion of the nation were fruitful in miracle and prophetic fulfillment. But the national existence of Israel is as it were the stage on which alone the drama of prophecy can, in its fullness, be displayed; and from the Apostolic age to the present hour, not a single public event can be appealed to as affording indisputable proof of *immediate* Divine intervention upon earth.[12] A silent heaven is a leading characteristic of the dispensation in which our lot is cast. But Israel's history has yet to be completed; and when that nation comes again upon the scene, the element of miraculous interpositions will mark once more the course of events on earth.

12. There is, doubtless, what may be called the private miracle of individual conversion, and the believer has transcendental proof not only of the existence of God, but of His presence and power with men.

On the other hand, the analogy of the past would lead us to expect a merging of the one dispensation in the other, rather than an abrupt transition; and the question is one of peculiar interest on general grounds, whether passing events are not tending towards this very consummation, the restoration of the Jews to Palestine.

The decline of the Moslem power is one of the most patent of public facts; and if the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire be still delayed, it is due entirely to the jealousies of European nations, whose rival interests seem to render an amicable distribution of its territories impossible. But the crisis cannot be deferred indefinitely; and when it arrives, the question of greatest moment, next to the fate of Constantinople, will be, What is to become of Palestine? Its annexation by any one European state is in the highest degree improbable. The interests of several of the first-rate Powers forbid it. The way will thus be kept open to the Jews, whenever their

inclinations or their destinies lead them back to the land of their fathers.

Not only would no hostile influence hinder their return, but the probabilities of the case (and it is with *probabilities* that we are here concerned) are in favor of the colonization of Palestine by that people to whom historically it belongs. There is some reason to believe that a movement of this kind has already begun; and if, whether by the Levant becoming a highway to India, or from some other cause, any measure of prosperity should return to those shores that were once the commercial center of the world, the Jews would migrate thither in thousands from every land.

True it is that to colonize a country is one thing, while to create a nation is another. But the testimony of Scripture is explicit that Judah's national independence is not to be regained by diplomacy or the sword. Jerusalem is to remain under Gentile supremacy until the day when Daniel's visions shall be realized. In the language of Scripture, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." [13] But long ere then the Cross must supplant the Crescent in Judea, else it is incredible that the Mosque of Omar should give place to the Jewish Temple on the Hill of Zion.

13. Luke 21:24. That is, till the end of the period during which earthly sovereignty, entrusted to Nebuchadnezzar twenty-five centuries ago, is to remain with the Gentiles.

If the operation of causes such as those above indicated, conjointly with the decay of the Moslem power, should lead to the formation of a protected Jewish state in Palestine, possibly with a military occupation of Jerusalem by or on behalf of some European Power or Powers, nothing more need be supposed than a religious revival among the Jews, to prepare the way for the fulfillment of the prophecies. [14]

14. The following extract from the *Jewish Chronicle* of 9th Nov., 1849, is quoted in Mr. Newton's *Ten Kingdoms* (2nd Ed., p. 401): "The European Powers will not need to put themselves to the trouble of restoring the Jews individually or collectively. Let them but confer upon Palestine a constitution like that of the United States...and the Jews will restore *themselves*. They would then go cheerfully and willingly, and would there piously bide their time for a heaven-inspired Messiah, who is to restore Mosaism to its original splendor."

"God has not cast away His people;" and when the present dispensation closes, and the great purpose has been satisfied for which it was ordained, the dropped threads of prophecy and promise will again be taken up, and the dispensation historically broken off in the Acts of the Apostles, when Jerusalem was the appointed center for God's people on earth,[15] will be resumed. Judah shall again become a nation, Jerusalem shall be restored, and that temple shall be built in which the "abomination of desolation" is to stand.[16]

15. Gentiles were then admitted within the pale, not on an equality, but in some sense as proselytes had been received within the nation. The Church was essentially Jewish. The temple was their place of resort (Acts 2:46; 3:1, 5:42). Their testimony was in the line of the old prophecies to the nation (*ibid.* 3:19-26.), and even when scattered by persecution, the apostles remained in the metropolis, and those who were driven abroad evangelized only among the Jews (*ibid.* 8:1, 4, and 11:19). Peter refused to go among Gentiles save after a special revelation to him (*ibid.* 10.), and he was put on his defense before the Church for going at all (*ibid.* 11:2-18. Comp. chap. 15.)

16. Scattered among the people will be a "remnant," who

will "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17); Jews, and yet Christians; Jews, but believers in the Messiah, whom the *nation* will continue to reject until the time of His appearing. It must be obvious to the thoughtful mind that such prophecies as the twenty-fourth of Matthew imply that there will be a believing people to be comforted and guided by them at the time and in the scene of their fulfillment.

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE PATMOS VISIONS

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NARROWNESS of interpretation is the bane of apocalyptic study. "The words of this prophecy," "Things which must shortly come to pass" such is the Divine description of the Book of the Revelation and of its contents. No one, therefore, is justified in denying to any portion of it a future application. The Book in its entirety is prophetic. Even the seven epistles, though they were undoubtedly addressed to Churches then existing, and though their intermediate reference to the history of Christendom is also clear, may well have a special voice in days to come for those who are to enter the fierce trials that shall precede the end.[1]

1. The Bible is not intended for the present dispensation only, but for the people of God in every age; and it is incredible that they who are to be so severely tried shall fail to find in it words specially fitted and intended to counsel and comfort them in view of what they are to endure. "This prophecy" is the Divine description of the Apocalypse as a whole (Revelation 1:3). Compare the "must shortly come to pass" of Revelation 1:1 with the "must shortly be done" of 22:6. The salutation (1:4, 5) seems to fix the *dispensational* place of the Book as future. It is not the Father, but Jehovah; not the Lord Jesus Christ, but "Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the Prince of the kings of the earth"; and the Book speaks from a time when the Holy Spirit, *as a person*, will again be in heaven, to join in the salutation, which He never does in the Epistles of the New Testament.

Revelation 1:19 is frequently quoted to prove that the Book is divided, and that the latter part only is prophetic. In refutation of this, I appeal to the most candid of apocalyptic commentators, Dean Alford, who thus translates the verse: "Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and what things they signify, and the things which are about to happen after these." He explains "the things which thou sawest" to be "the vision which was but now vouchsafed thee," and the closing words as "the things which shall succeed these, *i. e.*, a future vision" (*Greek Test., in loco*).

In ch. 4:1, Alford inclines to give to the second meta tauta the general meaning of "hereafter." But the presumption is; that the words are used at the end of the verse in the same sense as at the beginning, *i. e.*, "after these things." The words imply that the fulfillment of the subsequent visions should be future, relatively to the fulfillment of the preceding vision, and not relatively merely to the time when the vision was given, which was a matter of course.

In the fourth chapter the throne is set in heaven. Judgment now waits on grace; but when the day of grace is past, judgment must intervene ere the promises and covenants, with all their rich store of blessings, can be fulfilled. But who can unfold that scroll that lies on the open hand of Him who sits upon the throne? (Revelation 5:2) No creature in the universe<sup>[2]</sup> may dare to look on it, and God Himself will not break a single seal of it, for the Father has ceded the prerogative of judgment. The ministry of grace may be shared by all whom grace has blessed, but the Son of man is the only Being in the universe who can take the initiative in judgment; (John 5:22-27) and amid the anthems of the heavenly beings round the throne, and the swelling chorus of myriads of myriads of angels, echoed back by the whole creation of God, the Crucified of Calvary, "a Lamb, as it had been slain," takes up the book and prepares to break the seals. (Revelation 5:5-14)

2. Revelation 3. It is not, as in English Version, "no *man*," but *oudeis*. The Revised Version properly reads "no one."

It is at the fifth seal that the vision crosses the lines of the *chronology* of prophecy.[3] Of the earlier seals, therefore, it is unnecessary to speak in detail. They are evidently descriptive of the events to which the Lord referred in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, as preceding the great final persecution; – wars and unceasing threats of war, kingdoms in arms rushing on one another to destruction; and then famine, to be followed again by pestilence, hunger and the sword still claiming their victims, and others being seized by strange and nameless deaths in the ever-gathering horrors of these cumulative woes. (Revelation 6:2-8)

3. Because the fifth seal relates to the great persecution of the future, which, as already noticed, is within the seventieth week. The first four seals relate to the events preceding in time the fulfillment of the fifteenth verse of the twenty-fourth of Matthew. Compare the sixth and seventh verses of that chapter with Revelation 6:1-8.

According to the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, the tribulation is to be followed immediately by the signs and portents which the old prophets have declared will herald "the great and terrible day of the Lord." So in the Apocalypse the martyrs of the tribulation are seen in the fifth seal, (Revelation 9) and in the sixth, the advent of the great day of wrath is proclaimed, the precise events being named which the Lord had spoken of on the Mount of Olives, and Joel and Isaiah had foretold long centuries before.[4]

4. "The day of the Lord cometh...The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:1-31). "The

day of the Lord cometh...The sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine" (Isaiah 13:9, 10). "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven" (Matthew 24:29). "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars" (Luke 21:25). "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood" (compare Joel 2:31), "and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth" (Revelation 6:12, 13).

I entirely agree with the following note of Dean Alford's (*Greek Test.*, Matthew 24:29): "Such prophecies are to be understood *literally*, and indeed, without such understanding would lose their truth and significance. The physical signs shall happen as accompaniments and intensification's of the awful state of things which the description typifies." Not of course that the moon will really become blood, any more than that the stars will fall. The words describe *phenomena* which men will witness, and which will strike terror into their hearts.

Like the dull, oppressive calm which precedes the fiercest storms, there is silence in heaven when the last seal is broken, (Revelation 8:1) for the day of vengeance has dawned. The events of the earlier seals were Divine judgments, doubtless, but of a providential character, and such as men can account for by secondary causes. But God has at length declared Himself, and as it has been in the past, so now, the occasion is an outrage committed on His people. The cry of martyrs is come up in remembrance before God, (Revelation 3) and it is the signal for the trumpet blasts which herald the outpouring of the long-pent-up wrath. (Revelation 6)

To write a commentary on the Apocalypse within the limits of a

chapter would be impossible, and the attempt would involve a departure from the special purpose and subject of these pages. But it is essential to notice and keep in view the character and method of the Apocalyptic visions. The seer, be it remembered, was not privileged to read a single line of what was written "within and on the back side" of the sealed scroll of the fifth chapter; but as each seal was broken, some prominent characteristic of a portion of its contents was communicated to him in a vision. The main series of the visions, therefore, represent events in their chronological sequence. But their course is occasionally interrupted by parenthetical or episodal visions; sometimes, as between the sixth and seventh seals, reaching on to the time of the end, and more frequently, as between the sixth and seventh trumpets, representing details chronologically within the earlier visions. The first and most important step, therefore, towards a right understanding of the Apocalypse is to distinguish between the serial and the episodal visions of the Book, and the following analysis is offered to promote and assist inquiry upon the subject.[5] –

5. The passages containing the parenthetical visions are marked in square brackets.

Chap. 6. – The visions of the first six seals; representing events in their chronological order.

[Chap. 7. – Parenthetical; the first vision relating either to the faithful remnant of the fifth seal, or to an election in view of the judgments of the seventh seal; the second, reaching on to the final deliverance.]

Chaps. 8, 9. – The opening of the seventh seal. The visions of the first six *trumpets*; consecutive judgments, in their chronological order.

[Chaps. 10. -11. 13. – *Parenthetical*, containing the hidden

mystery of the seven thunders (10:3, 4) and the testimony of the witnesses (the latter being probably within the era of the fifth seal.)]

Chap. 11:15-19. – The seventh trumpet; the third and last woe (comp. 8:13; 9:12; 11:14), preceding the establishment of the kingdom (comp. 10:7; 11:15).

[Chaps. 12. -18. – *Parenthetical*]

Chap. 13. – The rise and career of the two great blasphemers and persecutors of the last days.

Chap. 14. – The remnant of chap. 7. seen in blessedness. The everlasting Gospel (vers. 6, 7). The fall of Babylon (ver. 8). The doom of the worshippers of the Beast (vers. 9-11). The revelation of Christ, and final judgments, (vers. 14-20).

Chap. 15. – A vision of events chronologically within chapter 8., the opening the seventh seal. (This appears from the fact that the faithful of the fifth seal are here represented as praising God in view of the judgments impending, – see vers. 2-4; which judgments are within the seventh seal.)

Chap. 16. – The seven vials; a second series of visions of the events of the seven trumpets. This appears –

First, because the seventh trumpet and the seventh vial both relate to the final catastrophe. Under the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God is finished (10:7), and the temple of God is opened, and there are lightnings, voices, thunders, and an earthquake (11:19). Under the seventh vial, "It is done!" is heard from the temple, and there are voices, thunders, lightnings, and an earthquake (16:17, 18).

Second, because the sphere of the judgments is the same in the

correlative visions of both series:

- 1, The earth.
- 2, The sea.
- 3, The rivers.
- 4, The sun.
- 5, The pit, the seat of the beast.
- 6, Euphrates.
- 7, Heaven, the air.

[Chaps. 17., 18. – Detailed visions of the development and doom of Babylon, "the harlot," whose fall has been within the seventh trumpet and seventh vial; the last series of judgments of the seventh seal (11:18; 16:19).]

Chap. 19: The doom of the harlot being accomplished (ver. 2), the glory of the bride follows (ver. 7); the glorious revelation of Christ, and the destruction consequent thereon of the beast and false prophet (ver. 20).

Chap. 20. – Satan is bound. The millennial reign of the saints (vers. 1-4). After the millennial reign, Satan is loosed, and once more deceives the nations. Satan is cast into the lake of fire. The judgment of the Great White Throne.

Chaps. 21., 22:1-5. – The new heaven and new earth

Chap. 22:6-21. – Conclusion.[6]

6. I purposely pass over chap. 12, because of the exceptional difficulties which attend the interpretation of it. "Anything within reasonable regard for the analogies and symbolism of the text seems better than the now too commonly received historical interpretation, with its wild fancies and arbitrary assignments of words and figures" (Alford, *Greek Test.*, Revelation 12:15, 16). The only reasonable interpretation I have seen is that which regards the "man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron," and who "was caught up to God and His throne," as being the Lord Jesus Christ, and the woman as representing that people of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came" (Romans 9:5). But the objections to this are considerable. First, past historical facts are thus introduced into a vision relating to the future. I am not aware of any other instance of this in Scripture. Secondly, the main features of the vision after ver. 5 are not accounted for by the facts.

The following remarks are offered merely to assist inquiry and not at all as expressing a formed opinion on the matter. The 1, 260 days during which the woman is persecuted is precisely the period of "the great tribulation." Ver. 7 declares that during the woman's flight, Michael the Archangel fought on her behalf. Daniel 12:1, referring to the time of Antichrist's power, states that "at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of the people; and there shall be a time of trouble," *etc.*, describing "the great tribulation" which is to continue 1, 260 days.

Again, the Old Scriptures clearly point to the career of a future David, a deliverer of the Jews, who will become their earthly leader at that time, and reign over them in Jerusalem afterwards. See, *e. g.*, Ezekiel 22-25, about

David the Prince, who is certainly not Christ, seeing he is to have a palace in Jerusalem and a definite inheritance in the land, and who, moreover, is to offer burnt-offerings, etc. (Ezekiel 45:17). I suppose this is the great military conqueror of Isaiah 43:1-3. May not the Revelation 12 refer to this personage, who is to be Christ's vicegerent on earth, and who will, in fact, rule over all nations.

As the last trumpet and the last vial embrace the final judgments of the day of vengeance, which precede the advent of the glorious kingdom, they necessarily include the doom of the two great antichristian powers of the last days, – the imperial represented by the ten-horned beast, and the ecclesiastical typified by the scarlet woman. The visions of the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters, therefore, are interposed, descriptive of the rise and development of these powers. These accordingly give us details which relate to events within the earlier seals, for the martyrs of the fifth seal are the victims of the great persecutor of the thirteenth chapter.

If the foregoing scheme be correct in the main, the eras included in the Revelation may be divided thus:

1. The seven Churches; the transitional period following the close of the Christian dispensation." [7]
2. The seven seals; the period during which all that prophecy has foretold shall precede the kingdom will be fulfilled.
3. The kingdom; to be followed, after a final interval of apostasy, by –
4. The eternal state; the new heaven and new earth.
7. That is, assuming that this portion of the Book has a

prophetical aspect.

It is manifestly within the period of the seals that the prophecies of Daniel have their fulfillment, and the next inquiry should be directed to ascertain the points of contact between the visions of St. John and the earlier prophecies.

As already noticed, it is only in so far as prophecy falls within the seventy weeks that it comes within the range of human chronology. And further, the seventieth week will be a definite period, of which the epoch of the middle and the end are definitely marked. The epoch of the first week, that is, of the prophetic period as a whole, was not the return of the Jews from Babylon, nor yet the rebuilding of their temple, but the signing of the Persian decree which restored their national position. So also the beginning of the last week will date, not from their restoration to Judea, nor yet from the future rebuilding of their shrine, but from the signing of the treaty by "the coming Prince," which probably will once more recognize them as a nation.[8]

8. I do not assert that he will have reached the zenith of his power before that date. On the contrary, it seems extremely probable that the treaty with the Jews will be one of the steps by which he will raise himself to the place he is destined to hold, and that as soon as he has attained his end, he will throw off the mask and declare himself a persecutor. So Irenaeus teaches, and he possibly gives what was the tradition of the apostolic age.

But it is obvious that this personage must have attained to power before the date of that event; and it is expressly stated (Daniel 7:24) that his rise is to be *after* that of the ten kingdoms which are hereafter to divide the Roman earth. It follows, therefore, that the development of these kingdoms, and the rise of the great Kaiser who is to wield the imperial scepter in the last days, must be prior to the beginning of the

seventieth week.[9]

9. He is neither king of the north nor of the south, for both these kings shall invade his territory (ver. 40), *i. e.*, the powers which shall then respectively possess Syria and Egypt.

And within certain limits, we can also fix the order of the subsequent events. The violation of the treaty by the defilement of the Holy Place is to occur "in the midst of the week." (Daniel 9:27) That event, again, is to be the epoch of the great persecution by Antichrist, (Matthew 24:15- 21) which is to last precisely three and a half years; for his power to persecute the Jews is to be limited to that definite period. (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5) "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." (Matthew 24:29) Such is the statement of the twenty-fourth of Matthew; and the sixth of Revelation exactly coincides with it, for the vision of the fifth seal embraced the period of "the tribulation"; and when the sixth seal was opened, "the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood," and the cry went forth, "The great day of His wrath is come." (Revelation 6:12, 17) In keeping with this, again, is the prophecy of Joel. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." (Joel 2:31) The events of this day of vengeance are the burden of the vision of the seventh seal, including the judgment of Babylon, the scarlet woman – or the religious apostasy – by the agency of the imperial power (Revelation 17:16, 17) the beast, whose fearful end is to bring the awful drama to a close. (Revelation 19:20) We have definite grounds, therefore, for assigning the following order to the events of the last days:

1. The development of the ten kingdoms.
2. The appearance within the territorial limits of these kingdoms

of an eleventh "king," who will subdue three of the ten, and will ultimately be accepted as Suzerain by all.

3. The making of a treaty by this king with, or in favor of, the Jews. *The epoch of the seventieth week.*

4. The violation of the treaty by this king after three and a half years.

5. "The great tribulation" of Scripture, the awful persecution of the last days, which shall continue three and a half years.

6. The deliverance of the Jews from their great enemy, to be followed by their final establishment in blessing. *The close of the seventieth week.*

7. "The great and terrible day of the Lord," the period of the seventh seal, beginning with a revelation of Christ to His people in Jerusalem, accompanied by appalling manifestations of Divine power and ending with His last glorious advent.

That the seventieth week will be the last seven years of the dispensation, and the term of the reign of Antichrist, is a belief as old as the writings of the Ante-Nicene Fathers. But a careful examination of the statements of Scripture will lead to some modification of this view. The fulfillment to Judah of the blessings specified in Daniel 9:24 is all that Scripture expressly states will mark the close of the seventieth week. Antichrist will then be driven out of Judea; but there is no reason whatever to suppose he will otherwise lose his power. As already shown, the seventieth week ends with the period of the fifth seal, whereas the fall of Babylon is within the era of the seventh seal. No one may assert that that era will be of long duration, and it will probably be brief; but the only certain indication of its length is that it will be within a single lifetime, for at its close the Antichrist is to be

seized alive, and hurled to his awful doom (Revelation 19:20).

The analogy of the past might lead us to expect that the events foretold to occur at the end of the seventieth week would follow immediately at its close. But the Book of Daniel expressly teaches that there will be an interval. Whatever view be taken of the earlier portion of the eleventh of Daniel, it is clear that "the king" of the thirty-sixth and following verses is the great enemy of the last days. His wars and conquests are predicted,[10] and the twelfth chapter opens with the mention of the predicted time of trouble, "the great tribulation" of Matthew and Revelation. The seventh verse specifies the duration of the "time of trouble" as "a time, times, and a half," which, as already shown, is the half week, or 1, 260 days. But the eleventh verse expressly declares that from the date of the event which is to divide the week, and which, according to Matthew 24., is to be the signal of persecution, there shall be 1, 290 days; and the twelfth verse postpones the blessing to 1, 335 days, or seventy-five days beyond the close of the prophetic weeks.

10. The day of battle" (Zechariah 14:3). The prophet adds: "And His feet shall stand on that day upon the Mount of Olives." I cannot conceive how any one can suppose this to be the great: and final advent in glory as described in Matthew 24:30 and other Scriptures. "The prophecy (Zechariah 14) seems literal. If Antichrist be the leader of the nations, it seems inconsistent with the statement that he will at this time be sitting in the temple as God at Jerusalem; thus Antichrist outside would be made to besiege Antichrist within the city. But difficulties do not set aside revelations; the event will clear up seeming difficulties" (Fausset's *Commentary, in loco*). It is idle to speculate on such a matter, but I presume the city will have revolted against the great enemy during his absence at the head of the armies of the empire, and that thereupon he will

turn back to reconquer it. History repeats itself. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that he will reside in Jerusalem, though presumably he will have a palace there, and as part of a blasphemous pageant, will sit enthroned in the temple. That Jerusalem should be captured by a hostile army at such a time will seem less strange if it be remembered first that the true people of God therein shall have warning to leave the city at the beginning of these troubles (Matthew 24:15, 16.), and secondly, that the deliverance of the capital is to be the last act in the deliverance of Judah (See Zechariah 12:7).

If therefore "the day of the Lord" follows immediately upon the close of the seventieth week, it seems that Judah's complete deliverance is not to take place until after that final period has begun. And this is expressly confirmed by the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah. It is a prophecy than which none is more definite, and the difficulties which beset the interpretation of it are in no degree overcome by refusing to read it literally. It seems to teach that at that time Jerusalem is to be taken by the allied armies of the nations, and that at the moment when a host of prisoners are being led away, God will intervene in some miraculous way, as when He destroyed the army of Pharaoh at the Exodus[11]

11. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall "the sun 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 in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:29, 30).

Comparison with the prophecy of the twenty-fourth chapter of St.

Matthew is the surest and strictest test which can be applied to these conclusions. After fixing the epoch and describing the character of the great persecution of the last days, the Lord thus enumerates the events which are to follow at its close:— First the great natural phenomena predicted; then the appearance of the sign of the Son of man in heaven; then the mourning of the tribes of the land;[12] and finally the glorious advent.

12. kopsontai pasai ai phulai tas gas. Comp. Zechariah 12:12 (LXX), kopsetai ha ga kata phulas phulas.

That there will be *no* interval between the persecution and the "great signs from heaven" (Luke 21:11) which are to follow it, is expressly stated; they are to occur "*immediately* after the tribulation." That an interval shall separate the other events of the series is equally clear. From the defilement of the Holy Place, to the day when the tribulation shall end, and the "fearful sights" and "great signs" from heaven shall strike terror into men's hearts, shall be a definite period of 1,260 days;[13] and yet when He goes on to speak of the Advent, the Lord declares that that day is known to the Father only: it should be His people's part to watch and wait. He had already warned them against being deceived by expecting His Advent before the fulfillment of all that must come to pass (Matthew 24:4-28). Now He warns them against apostasy after the accomplishment of all things, because of the delay which even then shall still mark His coming.[14]

13. Therefore if the Advent synchronized with these events, any one then living would be able to fix the date of it, once the epoch of the tribulation were known; whereas the chapter clearly shows that an interval will follow after all has been fulfilled, long enough to weed out mere professors, who, tired of waiting, will apostatize (Matthew 24:48), and to lull, even true disciples to a sleep from which their Lord's return will rouse them (*Ibid.* 25:5).

14. Matthew 24:42-51, and 25:10-13: "THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." tote, "*at the period spoken of at the end of the last chapter, viz., the coming of the Lord to His personal reign*" (Alford, *Gr. Test., in loco.*)] Though applicable to every age in which there is a waiting people on earth, the parable will have its full and special application in the last days to those who shall be looking back on the complete page of prophecy fulfilled. The entire passage from chap. 24:31, to chap. 25:30, is parenthetical, relating especially to that time.

The words of Christ are unequivocally true, and He never enjoins upon His people to live in expectation of His coming, save at a time when nothing intervenes to bar the fulfillment of the hope. Fatalism is as popular among Christians as with the worshippers of Mahomet; and it is forgotten that though the dispensation has run its course these eighteen centuries, it might have been brought to a close at any moment. Hence the Christian is taught to live, "looking for that blessed hope." (Titus 2:12, 13) It will be otherwise in days to come, when the present dispensation shall have closed with the first stage of the Advent. Then the word will be, not "Watch, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come," (Matthew 24:42) – that belongs to the time when all shall have been fulfilled, – but "Take heed that no man deceive you, all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." (Matthew 4:6)

# The Coming Prince

## CHAPTER XV

### THE COMING PRINCE

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"WHAT is it that all Europe is looking for?" – the words are quoted from a leading article in the *Times* newspaper, on the recent finding of Agamemnon's tomb.[1] "What is it that all Europe is looking for? It is the KING OF MEN, the great head of the Hellenic race, the man whom a thousand galleys and a hundred thousand men submitted to on a simple recognition of his personal qualities, and obeyed for ten long years...The man who can challenge for his own the shield of Agamemnon, now waiting for the challenge, is the true Emperor of the East, and the easiest escape from our present difficulties."

1. The *Times*, Monday, 18th December, 1876.

The realization of this dream will be the fulfillment of prophecy.

True it is that popular movements characterize the age, rather than the power of individual minds. It is an age of mobs. Democracy, not despotism, is the goal towards which civilization is tending. But democracy in its full development is one of the surest roads to despotism. First, the revolution; then, the *plebiscites*; then, the despot. The Caesar often owes his scepter to the mob. A man of transcendent greatness, moreover, never fails to leave his mark upon his times. And the true King of Men must have an extraordinary combination of great qualities. He must be "a scholar, a statesman, a man of unflinching courage and irrepressible enterprise, full of resources, and ready to look in the face a rival or a foe." [2] The opportunity too must synchronize with his advent. But the voice of prophecy is clear, that

the HOUR is coming, and the MAN.

2. The *Times*, 18th December, 1876.

In connection with this dream or legend of the reappearance of Agamemnon, it is remarkable that the language of Daniel's second vision has led some to fix on Greece as the very place in which the Man of prophecy shall have his rise;[3] and it leaves no doubt whatever that he will appear within the territorial limits of the old Grecian empire.

3. That Antichrist is to arise from the eastern part of the Roman empire, and from that part of the east which fell under the rule of Alexander's successors, is rendered unquestionable by this chapter. But, seeing that in the eleventh chapter he is mentioned as conflicting with the king of the north (*i. e.*, the king of Syria), and also with the king of the south (*i. e.*, the king of Egypt), it is plain that he does not arise either from Egypt or Syria. He must, therefore, arise either from Greece or from the districts immediately contiguous to Constantinople. It is true that if he arose from the latter, or indeed from either of the four, he would be esteemed Greek in origin, because all the four were divisions of the Greek empire; but it seems far more probable that Greece proper will be the place of his rise. He is described as 'waxing great towards the south and towards the east, and towards the pleasant land'; that is, toward Egypt, Syria, and Palestine – a description that would geographically suit the position of one who was supposed to be in Greece.

"Moreover, a 'little horn' (an emblem not of that which he is as an individual, but of that which he is as a monarch) is a symbol that well suits one who should arise from one of

those petty principalities which once abounded in Greece, and have even still their memorial in the throne of the sovereigns of Montenegro." – NEWTON *Ten Kingdoms*, p. 193.

Having predicted the formation of the four kingdoms into which Alexander's conquests became divided at his death, the angel Gabriel – the divinely-appointed interpreter of the vision – proceeded thus to speak of events which must take place in days to come. "In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also, he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." [4]

4. Daniel 8:23-25. The entire passage is quoted *ante* (note).

In the vision of the seventh chapter, the last great monarch of the Gentiles was represented only as a blasphemer and a persecutor: "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High;" but here he is described as being also a general and a diplomatist. Having thus obtained a recognized place in prophecy, he is alluded to in the vision which follows as "the Prince who is coming," (Daniel 9:26) – a well-known personage, whose advent had already been foretold; and the mention of him in Daniel's fourth and final vision is so explicit, that having regard to the vital importance of establishing the personality of this "King," the passage is here set forth at length.

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt

himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished. for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate he shall honor the God of forces; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape out of his hand, even 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: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in 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 which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." [5]

5. Daniel 11:36-45; 12:1. I am inclined to believe that the entire passage from ver. 5 of Daniel 11: will receive a future fulfillment, and I have no doubt of this as regards the

passage beginning with ver. 21. See especially ver. 31. But the future application of the portion quoted in the text is unquestionable. Although the chapter in part refers to Antiochus Epiphanes, "there are traits which have nothing to correspond to them in Antiochus, which are even the exact contradictory of the character of Antiochus, but which do reappear in St. Paul's account of the Antichrist to come." I quote from Dr. Pusey. He adds (*Daniel* p. 93): "The image of the Antichrist of the Old Testament melts into the lineaments of the Antichrist himself... One trait only of the anti-religious character of Antichrist was true of Antiochus also; 'he shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods.' Blasphemy against God is an essential feature of any God-opposed power or individual. It belongs to Voltaire as much as to Antiochus. All besides has no place in him ...The characteristics of this infidel king are (1) self-exaltation above every god; 'he shall magnify himself above every god'; (2) contempt of all religion; (3) blasphemy against the true God; (4) apostasy from the God of his fathers; (5) disregarding the desire of women; (6) the honoring of a god whom his fathers knew not. Of all these six marks, one only, in the least, agrees with Antiochus." The entire passage is valuable, and the arguments conclusive. A remark at p. 96 suggests that Dr. Pusey identifies this king with the second "Beast" of Revelation 13., and this view is maintained by others on the ground that a "Beast" in prophecy typifies kingly power. This is true generally, but the second beast of Revelation 13: is expressly called "the false Prophet" (Revelation 19:20); and the passage proves that he is immediately connected with the first beast, and claims no position independently of him. The difficulties in the way of supposing him to be a king in his own right are insuperable.

The burden of Daniel's prophecies is Judah and Jerusalem, but the Apocalyptic visions of the beloved disciple have a wider scope. The same scenes are sometimes presented, but they are displayed upon a grander scale. The same actors appear, but in relation to larger interests and events of greater magnitude. In Daniel, the Messiah is mentioned only in relation to the earthly people, and it is in the same connection also that the false Messiah comes upon the stage. In the Apocalypse the Lamb appears as the Savior of an innumerable multitude "out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues," (Revelation 7:9) and the Beast is seen as the persecutor of all who name the name of Christ on earth. The visions of St. John, moreover, include an opened heaven, while the glimpses Daniel was vouchsafed of "things to come" are limited to earth.

The attempt to fix the meaning of every detail of these visions is to ignore the lessons to be derived from the Messianic prophecies fulfilled at the first advent.[6] The old Scriptures taught the pious Jew to look for a personal Christ – not a system or a dynasty, but a *person*. They enabled him, moreover, to anticipate the leading facts of His appearing. Herod's question, for example, "Where should Christ be born?" admitted of a definite and unhesitating answer, "In Bethlehem of Judea." (Matthew 2:4; Cf. Micah 5:2) But to assign its place and meaning to every part of the mingled vision of suffering and glory was beyond the power even of the inspired prophets themselves." (1 Peter 1:10-12) So also is it with the prophecies of Antichrist. The case indeed is stronger still, for while they "who waited for redemption in Israel" had to glean the Messianic prophecies from Scriptures which seemed to the careless reader to refer to the sufferings of the old Hebrew prophets or the glories of their kings, the predictions of Antichrist are as distinct and definite as though the statements were historical and not prophetic.[7]

6. A similar remark applies to the refusal to recognize the main outlines of the character and history of Antichrist.

Fulfilled prophecy is our only safe guide in studying the unfulfilled.

7. The religious skeptic may refuse to accept their literal meaning, and the profane skeptic, in rejecting the fanciful interpretations of the pious, may dismiss the prophecies themselves as incredible; but this is only a further proof that their definiteness is too pronounced to admit of the half-faith accorded to other Scriptures.

And yet the task of the expositor is beset with real difficulties. If the book of Daniel might be read by itself no question whatever could arise. "The Coming Prince" is there presented as the head of the revived Roman empire of the future, and a persecutor of the saints. There is not a single statement respecting him that presents the smallest difficulty. But some of the statements of St. John seem inconsistent with the earlier prophecies. According to Daniel's visions the sovereignty of Antichrist appears confined to the ten kingdoms, and his career seems limited to the duration of the seventieth week. How then can this be reconciled with the statement of St. John that "power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations, and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him"?[8] Is it credible, moreover, that a man endowed with such vast supernatural powers, and filling so marvelous a place in prophecy, will be restrained within the narrow limits of the Roman earth?

8. Revelation 13:7, 8. In the best reading of ver. 7, the same four words occur as in 7:9 – "nations, kindred's, people, and tongues."

If these points be urged as objections to the truth of Scripture it is enough to mark that the prophecies of Christ were beset with kindred difficulties. Such prophecies are like the disjointed pieces of an elaborate and intricate mosaic. To fit each into its place would baffle

our utmost ingenuity. To discover the main design is all we can expect; or if more be demanded of us, it is enough to show that no part is inconsistent with the rest. And these results will reward the student of the Apocalyptic visions of Daniel and St. John, if only he approach them untrammelled by the crude views which prevail respecting the career of Antichrist.

These visions are not a history, but a drama. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we see the woman in her travail. In the twenty-first chapter she is manifested in her final glory. The intervening chapters afford brief glimpses of events which fill up the interval. It is with the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters that we have specially to do in connection with the present subject, and it is clear that the later vision unfolds events which come first in the order of time.

The false church and the true are typified under kindred emblems. Jerusalem, the Bride, has its counterpart in Babylon, the Harlot. In the same sense in which the New Jerusalem is the Jewish church, so likewise Babylon is the apostasy of Rome. The heavenly city is mother of the redeemed for ages past (Galatians 4:26) the earthly city is mother of the harlots and abominations of the earth. (Revelation 17:5) The victims who have perished in the persecutions of Antichristian Papal Rome are estimated at *fifty millions* of human beings; but even this appalling record will not be the measure of her doom. The blood of "holy apostles and prophets," – the martyred dead of ages before the Papacy arose, and even of pre-Messianic times, will be required of her when the day of vengeance comes.[9]

9. Revelation 18:20. So also in 17:6, the *saints* (the slaughtered dead of Old Testament times) are distinguished from the martyrs of Jesus. Luke 11:50, 51 sets forth the principle of God's judgments.

As it is only in its Jewish aspect that the Church is expressly

symbolized as the Bride,[10] so also it is at a time when this, their normal relationship, has been regained by the covenant people, that the apostate church of Christendom, in the full development of its iniquity, appears as the Harlot[11] The vision clearly indicates moreover a marked revival of her influence. She is seen enthroned upon the ten-horned Beast, herself arrayed in royal hues and decked with gold and costliest gems. The infamous greatness of Papal Rome in times gone by shall yet be surpassed by the splendor of her glories in dark days to come, when, having drawn within her pale it may be all that usurps the name of Christ on earth,[12] she will claim as her willing vassal the last great monarch of the Gentile world.

10. In Scripture the church of this dispensation is symbolized as the Body of Christ, never as the Bride. From the close of John Baptist's ministry the Bride is never mentioned until she appears in the Apocalypse (John 3:29; Revelation 21:2, 9). The force of the "nevertheless" in Ephesians 5:33 depends on the fact that the Church is the *Body*, not the Bride. The earthly relationship is readjusted by a heavenly standard. Man and wife are not one body, but Christ and His church are one body, therefore a man is to love his wife "*even as himself.*"

11. This, I believe, is the element of truth in the view of Auberlen and others, that the woman of chap. 17 is the woman of chap. 12., "the faithful city become an harlot" (Isaiah 1:21).

12. "I incline to think that the judgment (chap. 18:2) and the spiritual fornication (chap. 18:3), though finding their culmination in Rome, are not restricted to it, but comprise the whole apostate church, Roman, Greek, and even Protestant, in so far as it has been seduced from its first love to Christ, and (has) given its affections to worldly

pomps and idols." – REV. A. R. FAUSSET'S *Commentary*.

As regards the duration of this period of Rome's final triumphs, Scripture is silent; but the crisis which brings it to a close is definitely marked. "The ten horns and the Beast shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire." (Revelation 17:16)

One point in the angel's description of the Beast in relation to the harlot claims special notice. The seven heads have a twofold symbolism. When viewed in connection with the harlot, they are "seven mountains on which the woman sits;" but in their special relation to the Beast they have a different significance. The angel adds, "*and they are seven kings*"; that is "kingdoms," the word being used "according to its strict prophetic import, and to the analogy of that portion of the prophecy which is here especially in view." [13]

### 13. ALFORD, *Greek Test. in loco*. Comp. Daniel 7:17-23.

In the seventh chapter of Daniel the Beast is identified with the Roman Empire. In the thirteenth of Revelation he is identified also with the lion, the bear, and the panther, the three first "kingdoms" of Daniel's vision. But here he is seen as the heir and representative, not of these alone, but of all the great world-powers which have set themselves; in opposition to God and to His people. The seven heads typify these powers. "Five are fallen, and one is." Egypt, Nineveh, Babylon, Persia, Greece, had fallen; and Rome then held the scepter of earthly sovereignty, the sixth in succession to the empires already named. [14] "And the other is not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue a short space," Here the prophecy is marked by the same strange "foreshortening" already noticed in each of Daniel's visions. While Rome was the sixth kingdom, the seventh is the confederacy of the latter days, heading up in "the Coming Prince." The Coming Prince himself, in the full and final development of his power, is called the

eighth, though belonging to the seven,[15] The importance of these conclusions will appear in the sequel.

14. Just as the mention of the ten horns upon the beast has set men trying to discover in the past a tenfold division of the Roman earth, so also these seven heads have suggested the idea of seven successive forms of government in the Roman empire. Neither of these conceptions would ever have been heard of, but for the prophecy of which they are supposed to be the fulfillment. The second, though not so visionary as the first, is open to the special objection that the word *pipto* betokens a violent fall, such as the catastrophe of ancient Babylon, or of the Babylon of the Apocalypse (comp. Revelation 18:2). It is wholly unsuitable to express such changes as marked the government of ancient Rome.

15. Revelation 17:10 expressly states that the duration of the seventh will be brief. Dean Alford's comment on this is not marked by his usual candor. The words in ver. 11 are *ek ton hepta*, but this cannot mean merely that the Beast is "the successor and result of the seven" (Alford), for ver. 10 limits the entire succession to seven. Though because of his awful pre-eminence he is described as the eighth, yet he is really the supreme head of the seventh.

The subject of the twelfth chapter is the dragon, the woman in her travail, the birth of the man-child and his rapture to heaven; the conflict in heaven between the archangel and the dragon; (Verse 7; Compare Daniel 12:1.) the dragon's banishment to earth; his persecution of the woman, and her flight to the wilderness, where she is sustained for "a time, and times, and half a time," or 1, 260 days (Verses 6, 14.) (the second half of Daniel's seventieth week). The chapter ends by the statement that, baffled in attempting to destroy the

woman, the dragon "went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." The thirteenth chapter, crossing the lines of Daniel's visions, represents the fulfillment of the dragon's purpose through the agency of the man of prophecy, whom he energizes to this end. Whatever meaning be attached to the birth and rapture of the woman's child, there can be no reasonable doubt that the obedient, faithful "remnant of her seed" is the Jewish Church of the latter days, the persecuted "saints of the Most High" of Daniel's prophecy.

The serpent, the woman, and the man, appear together on the earliest page of Scripture, and they reappear upon the latest. But how significant and terrible the change! No longer the subtle tempter, Satan is now displayed in all his awfulness as the great fiery dragon,[16] who seeks to destroy the woman's promised seed. And instead of the humbled penitent of Eden, the man appears as a wild beast,[17] a monster, both in power and wickedness. The serpent's victim has become his willing slave and ally.

16. drakon purrhos megas, Revelation 12:3. "He is purrhos perhaps, for the combined reasons of the wasting properties of fire, and the redness of blood" (Alford, *Greek Test., in loco*). Compare ver. 9, "The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan." The dragon both of Scripture and of heathen mythology is a serpent, and both refer to Satan. It is described by Homer as of huge size, coiled like a snake, of blood-red or dark color, and many-headed. "He seems to use the words drakon and ophis indifferently for a serpent" (Liddell and Scott).

17. The tharion or wild-beast of Revelation 8., *etc.*, must not be confounded with the dzoon or living-being of chap. 4., most unfortunately rendered *beast* in E. V.

God has found a man to fulfill all His will, and to Him He has given up His throne, with all power in heaven and "on earth." This will hereafter be travestied by Satan, and the coming man shall have the dragon's "power, and his throne, and great authority." (Revelation 8:2) Both the Dragon and the Beast are seen crowned with royal diadems. (Revelation 12:3; 13:1.) Once, and only once, again in Scripture the diadem is mentioned, and then it is as worn by Him whose name is "King of kings and Lord of lords." (Revelation 19:12-16) It must be as pretenders to His power that the Beast and the Dragon claim it.

The personality of Satan and his interest in and close connection with our race throughout its history, are among the most certain though most mysterious facts of revelation. The popular classification of angels, men, and devils, as including intelligent creation, is misleading. The *angels*[18] that fell are "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the Great Day." (Jude 6) *Demons* are frequently mentioned in the narrative of the Gospels, and they have also a place in the doctrine of the Epistles. But THE DEVIL is a being who, like the Archangel, seems, in his own domain, to have no peer[19]

18. That is, the beings who before their fall were angels of God. The word *angel* in its secondary sense means no more than a messenger or attendant, and Satan has his angels (Revelation 12:7). The word is used of John Baptist's disciples in Luke 7:24.

19. Our translators have used the word *devil* as a generic term for fallen beings other than men, but the word from which it is derived has not this scope in Greek. A *diabolos* is a slanderer, and the word is so used in 1 Timothy 3:11; 2 Timothy 3:3; Titus 2:3. But *the diabolos* is Satan, of whom alone the term is used elsewhere in the New Testament, save only in John 6:70, where it is applied to Judas Iscariot.

The word daimonion, which occurs fifty-two times in the Gospels, and seven times in the rest of the New Testament, is invariably rendered *devil*, save in Acts 17:18 (gods). In classical Greek it means generally the Deity, especially an inferior god; and in the New Testament, an evil spirit, a *demon*.

The ultimate reference of Ezekiel 28: appears to be to Satan, and in the passage beginning, "Thou hast been in Eden in the garden of God," he is apostrophized as "the anointed cherub" (ver. 14). The cherubim appear to have some special relation to our race and world, hence their connection with the tabernacle. Can it be that our earth was at one time their domain, that Satan was of their number, and that he recognized in Adam a creature appointed to succeed him in the very scene of his glory and his fall?

Another fact which claims notice here is the hold which serpent worship has had upon mankind. Among the nations of the ancient world there was scarcely one in whose religious system it had not a place. In heathen mythology there is scarcely a hero or a god whose history is not connected in some way with the sacred serpent. "Wherever the devil reigned the serpent was held in some peculiar veneration." [20]

20. Bp. Stillingfleet; quoted in *Encyc. Metro.*, article on "Serpent Worship," q. v. In Bryant's *Ancient Mythology* will be found a chapter on Ophiolatry (vol. 2., p. 197, 3rd ed., and see also p. 458) which fully warrants the general statements of the text.

The true significance of this depends on a just appreciation of the nature of idol worship. It may be questioned whether idolatry as popularly understood has ever prevailed except among the most

debased and ignorant of races. It is not the emblem that is worshipped, but a power or being which the emblem represents. When the Apostle warned the Corinthian Church against participating in anything devoted to an idol, he was careful to explain that the idol in itself was nothing. "But" (he declared) "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to *demons*, not to God, and I would not that ye should have fellowship with demons." (1 Corinthians 10:20.)

This will afford an insight into the character of the predicted serpent worship of the last days.[21] Satan's master lie will be a travesty of the incarnation: he will energize a man who will claim universal worship as being the manifestation of the Deity in human form. And not only will there be a false Messiah, but another being, his equal in miraculous power, yet having for his only mission to obtain for him the homage of mankind. The mystery of the Godhead will thus be parodied by the mystery of iniquity, and the Father, the Son, and the Spirit will have their counterpart in the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet.[22]

21. "All the world wondered after the Beast; and they worshipped the Dragon (serpent) which gave power unto the Beast; and they worshipped the Beast" (Revelation 13:3, 4).

22. The lamb-like Beast of Revelation 13:11, called the False Prophet in Revelation 19:20. The language of 13:3, 12, suggests that there will be some impious travesty of the resurrection of our Lord.

A silent heaven marks this age of grace. Whirlwind and earthquake and fire may awe, yet, as in the days of the old Hebrew prophet,[23] God is not in these, but in the "still small voice" which tells of mercy and seeks to win lost men from the power of darkness to Himself. But the very silence which betokens that the throne of God is now a throne

of grace is appealed to as the crowning proof that God is but a myth; and the coarse blasphemer's favorite trick is to challenge the Almighty to declare Himself by some signal act of judgment. In days to come, the impious challenge will be taken up by Satan, and death shall seize on men who refuse to bow before the image of the Beast.[24]

23. The Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire, *a still small voice*" (1 Kings 19:11, 12).

24. In the persecutions under Pagan Rome, death was often the penalty for refusing to worship Caesar's image; but Revelation 13:15 clearly points to some mysterious death which shall result in the very presence of the image of the future Caesar. The same power which will enable the False Prophet to give life to the image, will destroy the life of him who refuses to worship it.

The Antichrist will be more than a profane and brutal persecutor like Antiochus Epiphanes and some of the Emperors of Pagan Rome; more than a vulgar impostor like Barcochab.[25] Miracles alone can silence the skepticism of apostates, and in the exercise of all the Dragon's delegated power, the Beast will command the homage of a world that has rejected grace. "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life." (Revelation 8:8) If it were possible, the very elect would be deceived by his mighty "signs and wonders"; (Matthew 24:24) but faith, divinely given, is a sure, as it is the only, safeguard against credulity and superstition.

25. In one of the darkest hours of their history, when the continued persecution of the Jews threatened the race with

utter extinction, Barcochab proclaimed himself the Messiah, and led them in a revolt against the Romans, which ended in a carnage of the ill-fated people more horrible than any which had preceded it (A. D. 130-132). The man seems to have been a contemptible impostor who duped the people by juggler's tricks, such as blowing fire from his mouth; and yet he attained to such an eminence, and brought about disasters so terrible, that some have sought to find in his career the fulfillment of the prophecies of Antichrist.

But this is what he will become in the zenith of his career. In his origin he is described as a "little horn," (Daniel 7:8) – like Alexander of Macedon, the king of a petty kingdom. Possibly he will be the head of some new Principality to arise in the final dismemberment of Turkey; it may be on the banks of the Euphrates, or perhaps upon the Asian shore of the Aegean Sea. The name of Babylon is strangely connected with events to come, and Pergamus, so long the home of serpent worship in its vilest forms, is the only place on earth which Scripture has identified with Satan's throne (Revelation 2:13).

Of the great political changes which must precede his advent, the most conspicuous are the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and the predicted division of the Roman earth. The former of these events has already been considered in a previous chapter, and as regards the latter there is but little to be said. The attempt to enumerate the ten kingdoms of the future would involve a profitless inquiry.[26] History repeats itself; and if there be any element of periodicity in the political diseases by which nations are afflicted, Europe will inevitably pass through another crisis such as that which darkened the last decade of the eighteenth century. And should another revolution produce another Napoleon, it is impossible to foretell how far kingdoms may become consolidated, and boundaries may be changed. Moreover in forecasting the fulfillment of these prophecies, we are dealing with

events which, while they may occur within the lifetime of living men, may yet be delayed for centuries. Our part is not to prophecy, but only to interpret; and we may well rest content with the certainty that when the Apocalyptic visions are in fact fulfilled, their fulfillment will be clear, not merely to minds educated in mysticism, but to all who are capable of observing public facts.

26. See [App. 2.](#), Note D.

Through the gradual unfolding, it may be, of influences even now in operation; or far more probably as the outcome of some great European crisis in the future, this confederation of nations[27] shall be developed, and thus the stage will be prepared on which shall appear that awful Being, the great leader of men in the eventful days which are to close the era of Gentile supremacy.

27. I say *nations*, not kingdoms, advisedly, for though they will ultimately be kingdoms, *i. e.*, under monarchical government, yet *before* the advent of the Kaiser such *may* not be the case. That this division of the Roman earth will take place before his appearance is expressly stated; but whether a year, a decade, or a century before, we are not informed.

If we are to understand aright the predicted course of the Antichrist's career, certain points connected with it must be clearly kept in view. The first is that up to a certain epoch he will be, notwithstanding his pre-eminence, no more than human. And here we must judge of the future by the past. At two-and-twenty years of age, Alexander crossed the Hellespont, the prince of a petty Grecian state. Four years later he had founded an Empire and given a new direction to the history of the world.

In the career of Napoleon Bonaparte, modern history affords a parallel

still more striking and complete. When, now just a hundred years ago, he entered the French military school at Brienne, he was an unknown lad, without even the advantages which rank and wealth afford. So utterly obscure was his position that, not only did he owe his admission to the school to the influence of the Governor of Corsica, but calumny has found it possible to use that trifling act of friendly patronage to the disparagement of his mother's name. If then such a man, by the gigantic force of his personal qualities, combined with the accident of favoring circumstances, could attain the place which history has assigned to him, the fact affords the fullest answer to every objection which can be urged against the credibility of the predicted career of the man of prophecy.

Nor will it avail to urge that the last fifty years have so developed the mental activity of civilized races, and have produced such a spirit of independence, that the suggestion of a career like Napoleon's being repeated in days to come involves an anachronism. "In proportion as the general standard of mental cultivation is raised, and man made equal with man, the ordinary power of genius is diminished, but its extraordinary power is increased, its reach deepened, its hold rendered more firm. As men become familiar with the achievements and the exercise of talent, they learn to despise and disregard its daily examples, and to be more independent of mere men of ability; but they only become more completely in the power of gigantic intellect, and the slaves of pre-eminent and unapproachable talent." [28]

28. Alford, *Gr. Test.* Proleg. 2 Thessalonians, § 36.

By the sheer force of transcendent genius the man of prophecy will gain a place of undisputed pre-eminence in the world; but if the facts of his after career are to be understood, considerations of a wholly different kind must be taken into account. A strange crisis marks his course. At first the patron of religion, a true "eldest son of the church," he becomes a relentless and profane persecutor. At first no more than a

king of men, commanding the allegiance of the Roman earth, he afterwards claims to be divine, and demands the worship of Christendom.

And we have seen how this extraordinary change in his career takes place at that epoch of tremendous import in the history of the future, the beginning of the 1, 260 days of the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week. Then it is that that mysterious event takes place, described as "war in heaven" between the Archangel and the Dragon. As the result of that amazing struggle, Satan and his angels are "cast out into the earth," and the Seer bewails mankind because the devil is come down into their midst, "having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:7, 12).

The next feature in the vision is the rise of the ten-horned Beast. (Revelation 13:1) This is not the event described in the seventh of Daniel. The Beast, doubtless, is the same both in Daniel and the Apocalypse, representing the last great empire upon earth; but in the Apocalypse it appears at a later stage of its development. Three periods of its history are marked in Daniel. In the first it has *ten* horns. In the second it has *eleven*, for the little horn comes up *among* the ten. In the third, it has but *eight*, for the eleventh has grown in power, and three of the ten have been torn away by it. Up to this point Daniel's vision represents the Beast merely as "the fourth kingdom upon earth," the Roman empire as revived in future times, and here the vision turns away from the history of the *Beast* to describe the action of the little horn as a blasphemer and persecutor.[29]

29. The passage (Daniel 7:2-14) is quoted in full *ante*. The distinctions above noticed clear up the seeming inconsistency between Daniel's visions and the Revelation alluded to *ante*.

It is at this epoch that the thirteenth chapter of Revelation opens. The

three first stages of the history of the empire are past, and a fourth has been developed. It is no longer a confederacy of nations bound together by treaty, with a Napoleon rising up in the midst of them and struggling for supremacy; but a confederacy of kings who are the lieutenants of one great Kaiser, a man whose transcendent greatness has secured to him an undisputed pre-eminence. And this is the man whom the Dragon will single out to administer his awful power on earth in days to come. And from the hour in which he sells himself to Satan he will be so energized by Satan, that "ALL power and signs and lying wonders" shall characterize his after course.[30]

30. ho anomos ... ou estin ha parousia kat energeian tou  
Satana en pasa dunamei, kai sameiois, kai tepasi pseudous  
(2 Thessalonians 2:8, 9).

There is a danger lest in dwelling on these visions as though they were enigmas to be solved, we should forget how appalling are the events of which they speak, and how tremendous the forces which will be in exercise at the time of their accomplishment. During this age of grace Satan's power on earth is so restrained that men forget his very existence. This, indeed, will be the secret of his future triumphs. And yet how unspeakably terrible must be the dragon's power, witness the temptation of our Lord! It is written, "The devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time; and the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it. If Thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be Thine." (Luke 4:5-7)

It is this same awful being who shall give to the Beast his throne, his power, and great authority, (Revelation 8:2) – all that Christ refused in the days of His humiliation. The mind that has realized this stupendous fact will not be slow to accept what follows:

"And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb" (Revelation 13:7, 8).

Of the events which afterwards must follow upon earth, it behooves us to speak with deep solemnity and studied reserve. The phenomenon of sudden and absolute darkness is inconceivably terrible, even when eagerly looked for with full intelligence of the causes which produce it.[31] How unspeakable then would be its awfulness, if unexpected, unaccounted for, and prolonged, it may be for days together. And such shall be the sign which Holy Writ declares shall mark the advent of earth's last great woe.[32] The signs and wonders of Satanic power shall still command the homage of mankind, while the thunders of a heaven no longer silent will break forth upon the apostate race. Then will be the time of "the seven last plagues," wherein "is *filled up* the wrath of God," – the time when "the vials of the wrath of God" shall be poured out upon the earth. (Revelation 15:1; 16:1.) And if in this day of grace the heights and depths of God's longsuffering mercy transcend all human thoughts, His WRATH will be no less Divine. "The day of vengeance of our God," "the great and the terrible day of the Lord," – such are the names divinely given to describe that time of unexampled horror.

31. The Astronomer Royal (Sir G. B. Airy) used these words in a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, 4th July, 1853, upon the total solar eclipses of 1842 and 1851: "The phenomenon, in fact, is one of the most terrible that man can witness, and no degree of partial eclipses gives any idea of its horror."

32. "The sun shall be turned into darkness... before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:31).

And yet when in the midnight darkness of the last apostasy, Divine longsuffering will only serve to blind and harden, mercy itself shall welcome the awful breaking of the day of vengeance, for blessing lies beyond it. Another day is still to follow. Earth's history, as unfolded in the Scriptures, reaches; on to a Sabbatic age of blessedness and peace; an age when heaven shall rule upon the earth, when, "the Lord shall rejoice in all His works," (Psalm 104:31) and prove Himself to be the God of every creature He has made (Psalm 145:9-16).

Further still, the veil is raised, and a brief glimpse afforded us of a glorious eternity beyond, when every trace of sin shall have been wiped out for ever, when heaven will join with earth, and "the tabernacle of God" – the dwelling place of the Almighty – shall be *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"[33]

33. Revelation 21:3. The order of these events is noticed, *ante*.

It was a calamity for the Church of God when the light of prophecy became dimmed in fruitless controversy, and the study of these visions, vouchsafed by God to warn, and guide, and cheer His saints in evil days, was dismissed as utterly unprofitable. They abound in promises which God designed to feed His people's faith and fire their zeal, and a special blessing rests on those who read, and hear, and cherish them. (Revelation 1:3) One of the most hopeful features of the present hour is the increasing interest they everywhere excite; and if these pages should avail to deepen or direct the enthusiasm even of a few in the study of a theme which is inexhaustible, the labor they have cost will be abundantly rewarded.