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The Destiny of Israel and Egypt in Bible Prophecy

IN reviewing events connected with our subject, it is well to remember that confrontation between Israel and the Arab nations goes back many years. We would like to draw attention to God's use of Egypt to save Israel from a devastating drought in the days of Jacob. Jacob's name, we know, was changed to Israel, and he was really the father of the nation of Israel. In Genesis 45 we have a record of Joseph in Egypt revealing his identity to his brethren, who had sold him into slavery. In verses 4-8 there is a most wonderful expression of forgiveness. Verses 7 and 8 read—"God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord to all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt." God was pleased to use Egypt on that occasion for the support of His ancient people Israel. This was fulfilling His plan that Israel spend a considerable time in the land of Egypt.

However, after the death of Joseph we find, in Exodus 1: 8, the words—"Now there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph." A great change then took place in the conditions of the Israelites in Egypt, and which finally brought about their deliverance from Egypt at the hands of Moses at the first Passover. Just as Israel's going to Egypt fulfilled an important part of God's plan, so their deliverance from Egypt fulfilled another and equally important part of the plan of God. The point of interest to us is that God was pleased to use Egypt at that period of time in the history of the human family.

When our Lord Jesus was born, some hundreds of years later, God again used Egypt to save the life of Jesus from King Herod, as recorded in Matt. 2: 13-15—"Behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."

From the time Israel became a nation at Jacob's death (Jacob being the father of Israel), Israel had enjoyed God's favour continuously until the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. But His favour was then, of necessity, withdrawn. Whatever the length of the period of favour, for an equal period of time Israel would be required to experience God's disfavour. The disfavour of God must come upon Israel for the same length of time as His favour was manifested. This is termed Israel's "double". Only when the period of disfavour was fulfilled would God again receive Israel back into favour. Three prophets of God give testimony respecting this matter, as follows:

In Jeremiah 16: 14, 15, we have the prophecy describing the return of the children of Israel "from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." This promise is in contrast to the former time when the children of Israel were brought "out of the land of Egypt." Then verse 18 reads—"First I will recompense their iniquity and their sin **double.**"

Then in Zechariah 9: 9-12 is recorded a prophecy of the coming of Messiah, with the statement in verse 12—"Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render **double** unto thee." The Hebrew word translated "double" in this verse, as in Jeremiah, means "a repetition, or a double amount."

Further, in Isaiah 40: 1, 2, we read—"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare (margin, appointed time) is accomplished, that her iniquity is

pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand **double** for all her sins." The Hebrew word for "double" in this text means "a duplicate."

It will be noticed that different prophetic viewpoints are presented in the three prophecies relating to Israel's double just quoted. Jeremiah foretold the time **would come** when Israel would be scattered among all nations, and after they had received double God would regather them to the land of their fathers, which would be of greater importance than their coming out of Egyptian bondage. Zechariah's words refer to the time of Messiah offering Himself to Israel as their King, and indicated that **in that day** their double commenced. It began there because they rejected the Lord as their wonderful Messiah, and He said—"Your house is left unto you desolate." Isaiah's message is written as though the end of the double had been reached. "Comfort ye, comfort ye", he says, as though Israel's double had been **completed**.

A message from Psa. 102: 13 is also in agreement with the foregoing, as it reads—"Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." It is clearly revealed that Jeremiah, Zechariah, Isaiah and the Psalmist were all inspired by the spirit of the Lord in their respective prophecies.

Our Lord also predicted the time of Israel's disfavour, when they would be scattered amongst the nations of the world following His rejection, in Luke 21: 20-24. ". . . they shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The Lord was there predicting the same period of disfavour for Israel, their double portion, as stated in the prophecies of Jeremiah, Zechariah, Isaiah and the Psalmist.

Students of the Scriptures are largely in agreement that the "Times of the Gentiles" was a period of 2,500 years, and this time feature had fulfilment about 1914-1918. From this time Jerusalem has been no longer fully trodden down of the Gentiles, for since then there has been progress in the land of Israel, and wonderful progress at that. The deliverance of the Holy Land from the Turks in 1917 is well established as the beginning of the rehabilitation of the country and the return of the exiles from many countries of the world.

At the time of the Second World War came the fulfilment of the words of Jeremiah 16: 16, with the return of many Israelites to the Holy Land. The verse reads—"Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." During the Second World War and since there were favourable inducements, "fishers", for them to return, and the "hunters" used force in some countries. Many were lost in the process, but many returned to the Land of Promise, and rejoiced to gain that haven from Germany particularly, and other lands. Even now many Israelites desire to return to the Holy Land, particularly from Russia. The Lord may have this in store for them also in the not too distant future.

Since the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948, and in view of the extra territory they gained in the Six-Day War of 1967, it is interesting to note the promise God gave to Abraham in Gen. 15: 18—"The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." That is a great tract of country that is yet to be given to the seed of Abraham. This does not mean that Abraham's descendants are to obtain this land through their own war efforts, but God has guaranteed this Land of Promise to the seed of Abraham, and they will receive it in due time from God's hand, not by their own acts of war.

While Abraham's earthly seed was stated to be as "the sand of the seashore" for multitude, we read in Gen. 16: 10 concerning Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, "And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." This, we know, has reference to Ishmael, who was the father of the Arabs generally, and with whom the Egyptians are closely allied.

Then we have a most interesting reference in Gen. 21: 9-13 after Isaac, the son of promise, was born. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." The mocking of Isaac by Ishmael probably typified the mocking of representatives of Israel down the centuries to our own day. God made the promise that Isaac was to be the principal seed, but God was also going to make a nation from the seed of the bondwoman. This helps us to see the situation as we have it in the Middle East today, with the Arab nations surrounding Israel, who, though scattered among the nations down the centuries has kept herself more or less separate, as God instructed.

We have seen how God has used “fishers” and “hunters” to bring back the Israelites to their Promised Land, and it seems, Jer. 30: 4-11 has its fulfilment when there is a considerable number established in the Holy Land, as is the case today. “These are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace . . . Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. . . . Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.” The very father of Israel, Jacob, is shown as returning literally; in due course all the wonderful patriarchs will be resurrected to be the leaders of Israel under their New Covenant administration. Verse 11 reads, “For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.” Israel needs to be punished in the severe experiences of “Jacob’s trouble” but is promised deliverance from that humbling experience.

From verse 18 of this 30th chapter of Jeremiah we read—”Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob’s tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap . . . Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.” Just how will the Lord punish those who oppress Israel? We may not know the details, but Zech. 12: 2, 3, very clearly shows that the Lord intends to protect Israel to the full. The Lord speaks—”Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” God at the psychological moment is going to deal severely with all who seek to destroy the nation of Israel now gathered in the Holy Land for the past fifty years or more.

In Ezekiel 38th chapter is given a detailed description in symbolic language of the siege to come upon regathered Israel. All nations throughout the world will know about this great happening, and God’s defence and deliverance of Israel in the great demonstration of His power. Verse 23 of this chapter reads—”Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself: and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

God’s promises on behalf of Israel are continued in Ezek. 39. From verse 23 we read—”And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies . . . When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations: then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.” These are surely very wonderful promises that God makes on behalf of His ancient people, and we can accept them as being absolutely sure of fulfilment.

Again from Jer. 31, we read—”Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.” (Verses 10-12.)

When God delivers Israel from her enemies, that will be a great and wonderful experience for that people, but there will be something greater and more blessed than mere deliverance and triumph over enemies that they will experience, and that is God’s final conquest over them. God is going to conquer Israel. That will be the real turning point of importance, for when they know God is really their Deliverer from their enemies, and their hearts are turned to Him, that will be far greater for their eternal welfare than any conquests Israel has gained over the Egyptians or any Arab nation.

Formerly, when God gave Israel victory over their enemies, they were soon proud in heart, but that will never be so again. The great Messiah who comes to conquer their foes comes also to subdue their hearts. This combined work of the Lord was revealed to the prophet Zechariah in chapter 12, verses 9 and 10—”And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bit-

terness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.” Not that they will literally see the Lord whom they pierced. Rather, their minds will go back to the very time that happened; they will be so touched and grieved at heart that they brought about the Lord’s crucifixion. They will be thoroughly humiliated and that will be the turning point for their real salvation, and God will bless them as His covenant people as never before.

As with Israel, the Bible also assures us that the national life of Egypt will not be extinguished. God has a future for Egypt. Various Scriptures tell us that Egypt shall yet know Jehovah—”All the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord.” “And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed.” “Thus will I execute judgment in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the Lord.” (Ezek. 29: 6; 30: 8, 19.) God requires obedience, but has no pleasure in the destruction of His human beings, whoever they are, Egyptians, Israelites or Arabs, but all mankind must be humbled and subdued before God to receive the blessings of His wonderful kingdom. In Isa. 19: 22 we read—”And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.” (See also Zech. 14: 16-19.)

Continuing in Isa. 19: 23-25, we read—”In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria . . . In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.” The nations now at loggerheads and endeavouring to consume one another are going to be comrades in this wonderful time when the Lord establishes His kingdom, and when His spirit is being implanted into the hearts of Israel and the other nations round about. When we read of a “highway” out of Egypt to Assyria, we are reminded of the wonderful highway presented in Isa. 35, which will be for the peoples of all nations as they walk up this “highway of holiness” back to harmony with God through Christ Jesus.

We noted previously the lovely disposition of Joseph in respect of his brethren, and this is the disposition surely that people of all nations will need to show to each other to receive the blessings of the Lord in due time. From Gen. 50: 15-21, we read—”When Joseph’s brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of thy servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him . . . And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.” That is a very lovely disposition on the part of Joseph. He seemed to be a type of Christ, picturing His great salvation and the lovely disposition of humility and forgiveness that our Lord exemplified so beautifully throughout His life.

So all nations will need to take that same spirit into their hearts. There will never be any conflict or friction once God’s spirit is received in the hearts of people. Haggai says, “the desire of all nations shall come”, after God has shaken all men’s sinful systems and iniquity out of existence, and only Christ’s Kingdom is operative throughout the earth to mellow the hearts of all who respond to the laws of that kingdom. We rejoice that Israel is to be blessed particularly “for the fathers’ sakes”—not that those in Israel today are really religious. They need to be conquered by God, even now. It will be a greater victory for them when that is accomplished than all the victories of the past or future gained over the Egyptians or others. When God subdues all, Israelites, Egyptians and people of all nations, they will be ready for His blessing, and the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and mankind will be blessed and uplifted, to live to His praise for all time.

End of the World

THE following short article appeared in our “Peoples Paper” in 1925, and is reprinted exactly as it appeared at that time. It is felt it will be of equal interest to our readers today as it was 45 years ago.

In almost every age, seers arise to prophesy exactly the end of the world. They generally inspire a panic of greater or lesser violence. It is an astonishing fact that not even the learned can free themselves from the end-of-the-world obsession. It is only a little over six years ago that Professor Porta, of Michigan University, spread panic and dismay in the United States by deducing destruction from the giant sunspot of that year, and even fixed the date for December 17, 1919.

Even more recently, in May, 1922, Dr. George T. Harding, brother of the late President Harding, and a promi-

ment leader of the Seventh Day Adventists, warned his followers that all would be over before his brother left office. The President died in August, 1923, but the world still rolled on.

The Seventh Day Adventists have now decided that the end will not come until 6,000 years after the Creation, or approximately the year 1996. On the other hand, Professor Flinders Petrie gave the earth another eight million years' run, and Dr. Charles Nordmann, the great French scientist, calculated that we might carry on for 10,000,000,000 years.—"News", W.A.

The above are but samples of the many predictions respecting the ending of the world. It is not strange that Christians should expect "the present evil world", as the Apostle terms it, to come to an end, but the general expectation as to what will happen, and how the world will end, is remarkable. There have, of course, always been those connected with Christianity, whose minds delight in dwelling upon the marvellous and mysterious things, and in matters of futurity. Such temperaments are usually excitable, easily stirred and imaginative. It is an easy matter for them to seize upon any seeming ground for the fixing of dates and details of future events, particularly on such an important matter as the ending of the present dispensation and the coming of Christ.

Some had fixed upon the present year for the great event, although they had previously declared that the world had ended, and that Christ's Kingdom had commenced some years ago. One can hardly keep track of the many refixings of the date, always with the same positiveness, and yet the "Prince of Darkness" still controls the affairs of men. Far from learning righteousness and enjoying the consequent peace, the poor old world grows worse every day, and becomes more and more "as in the days that were before the flood", and "as in the days of Lot." There can be no doubt that we are living in "the time of the end", Dan. 12: 1-4, and that the end cannot be a great way off, so that if anyone perseveres in postponing their guesses they may some time strike the date near enough to be able to say, "I told you so!"

The Seventh Day Adventist view, referred to above, is no doubt a Scriptural thought, that is, that the 7th thousand years period will be the period of Messiah's reign. The difficulty is to make certain just when the 6,000 years since the Adamic fall into sin will be completed. The data on which chronology is based is too uncertain to allow anyone to wisely dogmatise on the subject.

While we agree with the above thought of the Seventh Day Adventists respecting the 7th thousand years period, we differ very greatly respecting their anticipations. They, like others, expect the earth to be literally burned up, and the reign of Messiah is to be over a void and charred earth, and their view of the work of Messiah, and the saints who reign with Him, appears to be simply the examining of records, and allotting punishment or rewards upon the dead.

The Scriptural view is undoubtedly that the reign of Christ for 1,000 years is to be a great rest day for the poor groaning creation, the great antitype of the Jewish sabbath. Peter (2 Pet. 3) certainly speaks of "the heavens and the earth which are now" being reserved unto fire, and of the earth and the works therein being burned up, but a careful reading of the chapter will show that the Apostle was speaking in highly symbolic language. It will be noticed that he refers to "the heavens and the earth", which were before the flood, wherein the world that was being overflowed with water perished, yet it is the same world we live on today. What happened was that that order of things passed away; the "heavens" refer to the spiritual or religious arrangements, and the "earth" refers to the social and national institutions. After the destruction of that "heavens and earth" God made promise to Noah, Gen. 8: 21, that He would nevermore destroy every living thing as He had done. The present "heavens and earth" will pass away in a fiery time of trouble, but some of humanity will pass through as is indicated by our Lord, Matt. 24: 21, 22. He describes the trouble as being greater than anything in the past, and nothing so bad shall ever be again. It is to be such that if the days were not shortened no flesh could come through, but for the elects' sake the days will be shortened, so that some people will live through it. This is very definitely stated also in Zeph. 3: 8, 9, which clearly shows that it is not a literal burning up of the material earth that is meant, "For all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy, for then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent."

It is then that the promises to Abraham and to Israel shall be fulfilled, which could never be so if the literal earth was destroyed. It is then that the Lord's prayer will be answered: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven", or "all the ends of the earth will remember, and turn to the Lord. For the kingdom is the Lord's and He is Governor among the nations."—Psalm 22: 27, 28. The promise is that "all the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep." What purpose could there be in destroying such a happy world? No, the Lord "made not the earth in vain." The present age, with its dispensation of grace, will pass away, but Peter again says, "We look for a new heavens (the heavenly rule of the Lord and His saints), and a new earth (Israel restored and a new order of society in the world for all nations, the world to come),

wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Watch

(Contributed Address.)

In the number of times we find the word “watch” in the New Testament, the majority are either directly or indirectly associated with events that have to do with the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom upon earth. Anyone who carefully reads the prophecy of Jesus relating to the winding up of this present order, “the heavens and earth which are now” (2 Pet. 3: 7), as it is narrated in Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, will note that Jesus concludes His remarks by urging His listeners to “watch”, so that they will discern the fulfilment of His words.

To whom does the exhortation to “watch” apply most—to the disciples of Jesus’ day, or to us living at the end of the age? Perhaps the tendency has been to accentuate watching on the age-end saints, and to conclude that it was not of the same importance to the earlier church; whereas it seems it has been of equal importance to all right down the age.

Many have concluded that a time was to come at the end of the age when the then living generation would see the complete culmination and winding up of the Gospel Age. This has been adduced from Jesus’ words—“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matt. 24: 34; Mark 13: 30; Luke 21: 32). Nearly twenty years ago the “Bible Study Monthly” brethren in England pointed out that close study of the Greek reveals that it is more probable that what Jesus said was—“This generation shall not pass till all these things begin to come to pass” (or begin to happen).

Following this up caused me once before to speak on this subject, and the matter was printed in the “Peoples Paper” of December, 1961, under the title—“A Study in Matthew 24: 34.” Nothing has happened since that time to change my mind. However, there are other Bible students, just as sincere, and just as anxious to arrive reverently at the truth of God’s Word, who believe that the interpretation of Matt. 24: 34 in that article is controversial. For us all, then, shall we continue “watching”, that we may all see clearer as the days and years pass. What is now presented has not been mentioned in the article referred to, but seems to further confirm those thoughts.

Using Young’s Concordance, on page 180, the occasions when the Greek word “ginomai” is variously rendered “come, came, was come, etc.,” flee meaning is given as “to become.” The same meaning is given to the same word in a further long list of Scriptures on pages 73 and 74 of the Concordance. Further, the same Greek word is given three times on page 378, as having the same meaning, yet in these three texts it is rendered “fulfilled” in our Authorized Version—“This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.”

Let us note three additional Scriptures where the Greek word “ginomai” is used and which are helpful for comparison. The word is used in Luke 21: 7 when the disciples asked Jesus the question—“When shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things **shall come to pass?**” Note carefully here that it would not do to translate the word as “fulfilled.” When all these things are “fulfilled” in the complete sense, signs would be of no use. The “signs” clearly apply to the time when these things **are coming to pass, are in the course of fulfilment.** Next, we find the same word in Luke 21: 31—“When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Obviously the meaning is, “when you see these things fulfilling.” The same Greek word is used in Luke 24: 12, where, after our Lord’s death and burial, Peter arrives at the tomb, and we read —“stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that **which was come to pass**” (or that which **had happened**).

In all the long lists previously mentioned on the various pages of the Concordance the same variation is found. Sometimes “ginomai” is used in the sense of things coming to pass, and sometimes in the sense of things fulfilled. The sense is defined from the context. The point may be clarified by using an illustration from our own language. Taking the word “read”, I may take a book and say, I have read this book—something fulfilled. Or I may say, I am going to read this book—something that will come to pass. Exactly the same word, spelt the same, referring to something fulfilled, or something to be fulfilled. Readers are left to decide what our Lord meant when He said, “This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” To my understanding it means “till all these things begin to come to pass.”

Whether as the result of our studies we agree or not as to what is the correct interpretation or translation of these phrases, we will surely agree in this—that ever since Jesus first spoke the words, Christians have witnessed His prophecies fulfil. Those of His own day saw them commence, and others, even to our day, have seen them continue to fulfil. This generation--to whom Jesus spoke “watch”—and you will see these things **commence** to fulfil.

“And what I say unto you, I say unto all (succeeding generations), watch.” (Mark 13: 37.)

Watching Christians of Jesus’ own generation discerned the approaching sacking of Jerusalem and fled the city. When they beheld the temple destroyed, not one stone left upon another, it was only 70 A.D., less than forty years after Jesus first spoke the words, “this generation shall not pass”, etc. At this time was fulfilled what Jesus referred to in Matt. 23: 34-36 (please read). Upon “this generation”, those of Jesus’ own day, was to fall this punishment.

Further, about 46 A.D., we hear Paul declare in Acts 13: 46—”It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” The Jews were God’s people; from them must come the kingdom. Had they not heard Jesus say more than once that He was sent to minister only to Israel, and had He not charged them not to go to the Gentiles—Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.” But in the prophecy we have been considering, in answer to the question as to when He would set up His kingdom, Jesus said—”this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached **in all the world**, .. and then shall the end come.” “In all the world”—then it was clear that former restrictions were to be lifted and the “watching” saints even in the generation of Jesus day saw this **commence**, and the gospel must first be published among all nations” (Mark 13: 10).

Many generations later, in the times now designated “the dark ages”, the “watching” saints of that time would understand what Jesus meant when He said—”they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all men, for my sake.” It was later still before nation began to rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and wars and rumours of wars filled the news sheets, but “watching” saints of the time knew Jesus’ prophecy was still in course of fulfilment.

Watching Christians of our generation have witnessed angels (messengers) going forth with a trumpet (of truth), gathering the elect from the four winds of heaven (from every quarter of Christendom). They have seen a “fig tree budding”, and “other trees putting forth leaves.” We are seeing other things too, but the end is not yet; a few more we are still to see if we continue to “watch”, but maybe there are not many. We have seen enough of Jesus prophecy fulfilled to know that the kingdom is near, even at the doors. But watching prophecy is not all we are to watch, though it is important.

After the account by Mark of the prophecies we have been considering, we find a parable given by Jesus, in Mark 13: 34. The going away of the Son of man was to be like a man taking a long journey; he would not be expected to return for quite some time, but he left everything planned and in order—”he gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.” The Amplified Version renders this verse 34—”It is like a man going on a journey; when he leaves home he puts his servants in charge, each with his particular task, and he gives his orders to the doorkeeper to be constantly alert and on the watch.” Note it is **not all watching**. Though **all** are to watch, there is also **work to be done**. Not work of our **own** volition, but work that the Master has set us. Not a frenzied disorderly preaching of the gospel, but a calm presentation of the stately stepping of our God through ages and dispensations. Not “winning the world for Christ” now, but “taking out a people for His name”, who will be ready when the Master returns, to associate with Him in establishing the kingdom.

The following phrases are from the “Daily Manna” comment for August 7th. “Jesus observed God’s times and seasons and methods . . . He did not make long prayers . . . to be **heard of men**, nor exhort the multitude with noisy harangue . . . He chose God’s methods which are rational and wise, and which are effective in selecting from among men the class which He desires to be heirs of the promised kingdom. Let those who would so run as to obtain the prize, mark these footprints of the Master, and be filled more and more with His spirit.” “Be filled more and more with His spirit”—this is what, above everything else, we have to watch. The only ones who can profitably watch history fulfil prophecy, are those who daily walk in those paths which increase the inflow of God’s holy spirit. Some watch prophecy with merely a curious mechanical attitude, and these are often loud in expressing interpretations of same. The exercise does not profit them nor their hearers. The really important “watching” for God’s saints in this time, is “walking after the spirit”, the putting away of everything that hinders spiritual progress. We must watch our words and our actions, even more importantly the thoughts of the heart and the mind, for from them proceed our words and our deeds.

What a time in which we are living. What pressures are daily upon the Lord’s people. Who shall stand! “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.” Let us pray not only for ourselves, but for all the brethren. “Let us pray for one another, helping thus the weakest stand”, go the lines of the hymn. If I see a weakness in your character that I don’t think you are conscious of, it is my privilege to pray for you, and the same of you for me. On the other hand, some brethren seem so conscious of their weaknesses that they seem browbeaten into despondent inactivity. They need our prayers that they may find a stronger confidence in the Lord. We can have too much

confidence, and not enough; we truly have plenty to “watch.” The Amplified Version gives a very full definition of Mark 13: 37—”And what I say to you, I say to everybody: give strict attention, be cautious, active, alert, and watch.”

Pilgrim Way Ended

JUST as the last issue of “Peoples Paper” was being printed, the following information was received from Adelaide with reference to the passing of our Sister Cains in that city.

On 20th July our dear Sister M. A. Coins reached the end of her pilgrim journey after a long and trying illness. Our Sister had received the message of present truth at Gawler, South Australia, some fifty years ago. Sister Cains was zealous in the study of God’s Word, and in attending the Bible Class until failing health and strength prevented her doing so.

We rejoice in our Sister’s faithfulness to the Lord, and to the truth, and to the brethren. We are reminded of the Apostle’s words in Heb. 6: 10—”God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints.” We feel these words are appropriate in respect of our Sister Cains. Much sympathy is extended to the members of our Sister’s family, in the loss of a faithful mother. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” “They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” Mal. 3: 17.

Prayer Brings Peace

BEING in an agony, He prayed,” is the record of our Saviour’s Gethsemane experience. The lesson stands for all time. Like a bright lamp, the little sentence shines amid the olive trees of the garden. It shows us the path to comfort in our time of sorrow. Never before or since was there such grief as the Redeemer’s that night, but in His prayer He found comfort. As we watch Him the hour through, we see the agony changing as He prayed, until at last its bitterness was all gone, and sweet, blessed peace took its place. The gate of prayer is always the gate to comfort. There is no other place to go. We may learn also from our Lord’s Gethsemane how to pray in our Gethsemanes. God will never blame us for asking to have the cup removed nor for the intensity of our supplication; but we must pray with submission. It is when we say in our deepest intensity, “Not my will, but Thine,” that comfort comes, that peace comes.

Perfect loyalty to Christ brings perfect peace into the heart. The secret of Christ’s own peace was His absolute devotion to His Father’s will. We can find peace in no other way. Any resistance to God’s will, and disobedience of His law, any wrenching of our lives out of His hand must break the peace of our hearts. No lesson that He gives ever mars our peace, if we receive it with willing, teachable spirit, and strive to learn it just as He has written it out for us. If we take the lessons just as they are given to us, we shall make our life music and we shall find peace.—Selected.

It is a great lesson that, if only our hearts are right and true, we may find Christ—or, rather may be found of Him—in the traffic of secular affairs. May we so learn this lesson, as to know it, not in theory only, but by experience. —Goulburn.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information for the present from—Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne, Vic., 3101.

Our toil is sweet with thankfulness,
Our burden is our boon;
The curse of earth’s gray morning is
The blessing of its noon.

Whittier

COMMUNION OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled some time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$11.50.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, **Is** now available at \$9.50.

"Begin the day with God;
Kneel down to Him in prayer;
Lift up thy heart to Him above,
And seek His love to share.

"Open the Book of God
And read a portion there,
That it may hallow all thy thoughts,
And sweeten all thy care.

"Go through the day with God,
Whate'er thy work may be;
Where're thou art—at home, abroad,
He is still near to thee.

"Lie down at night with God,
Who gives His servants sleep;
And when thou tread'st the vale of death,
He will thee guard and keep."
--Selected

BIBLE STUDENTS HYMNAL

A circular letter has been received from our brethren in England asking if any of our readers are desirous of placing orders for copies of a proposed new edition of the music "Bible Students Hymnal". This hymnal is a splendid collection of almost 500 hymns with music, many additions having been made to the "Hymns of Dawn". The price is likely to be in excess of \$2.00. Friends are invited to place orders as soon as possible, but not to send money at present.

GOD'S BEST GIFT

A booklet for children—"God's Best Gift"—compiled on the Divine Plan of the Ages years ago in U.S.A., has been produced in our office again recently. Written in childish language it is a splendid little book to convey the main outlines of God's Plan for both young and old. To cover cost of materials it is supplied at 10c per copy, 15c posted.