

An Outline of Things to Come.

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Extracted from Scripture Truth, Volume 38, 1953, page 184.

First, the Lord will come for His own, as stated in 1 Thessalonians 4. This is commonly spoken of as "the Rapture." The dead in Christ will rise first: the living will be changed; and all caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. "We shall be like Him." This will be manifested when He is manifested, but it will have taken place at the rapture.

Referring to 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, we may connect "The Lord Himself" as uttering His "shout" for the Church; the "voice of the archangel" for those of Israel who were of faith, the "trump of God" for those Gentiles who died in faith during the past dealings of God. Not alone shall the Church be caught up to have part in this blessed first resurrection, but all those that "are Christ's at His coming."

This will be followed by the Judgment Seat of Christ, of which we read in 2 Corinthians 5, and other scriptures. Then will take place a review of our lives in the light of His perfect judgment. No penal punishment here, for we shall then be "like Him," and the word "shall not come into condemnation [judgment]" (John 5: 24) stands true. Everything that was of God in life and service will meet with manifest, Divine approval. Everything contrary will receive disapproval. Individuals will receive reward or loss, as stated in 1 Corinthians 3: 13-15, and in the parables of Luke 19 and Matthew 25.

At this time God will have resumed on earth His work and dealings amongst the Jews. His ways with Israel have long been in abeyance. He had last of all sent His Son, saying, "It may be they will reverence Him when they see Him." They replied, "This is the Heir: come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours" (Luke 20: 13, 14), and so they crucified Him. On the cross He prayed for them — "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Hence they had been mercifully treated, as having sinned ignorantly. Presented consequently with the glorified Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Stephen, by his martyrdom they sent an embassy after Him, saying, "We will not have this Man to reign over us."

Thus, during the out-gathering of the Church, according to eternal purpose, Israel was set aside. Now that the Church is removed, God reverts to His promises to Israel, and raising up messengers He calls a remnant in heart and conscience to Himself. His witnesses will go out in resumption of the testimony given once to His disciples, but interrupted, as is indicated by Matthew 10: 23. Their testimony will be effectual in the earth, and the sealed remnant of the tribes of Israel together with the innumerable host from amongst the Gentiles, as recorded in Revelation 7, are the fruit of this testimony.

A tremendous movement will simultaneously be taking place amongst the nations. Roman imperialism will revive in its final ten-kingdom form, as we see in Revelation 13, Rev. 17 and Rev. 18. The nations controlled by Satan, will produce "the beast."

Apostate Jewry will produce Antichrist, the false prophet, the second beast.

Apostate Christendom will produce in its full corruption the harlot, who rides the beast — "Mystery, Babylon the Great."

The political beast in league with the religious beast will enter into a covenant with the Jews for seven years — the seventieth week of years, predicted in Daniel 9. In the midst of this week he causes

sacrifice to cease by claiming divine honours for himself, bringing in thus the overspreading of abominations and consequent desolation. Then shall burst forth the time of "Jacob's trouble," the great tribulation, which rages for the last half of the week.

We must note that the great tribulation, whilst having particular bearing against Israel in the land, will be world-wide in its effects. It shall come "upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth;" or "the earth-dwellers." It is these and not the Church that are thus to be brought into trial.

Israel had refused their Messiah when He came in His Father's name. Now they believe the devil's lie, and receive him who comes in his own name, with dreadful results. But, on the other hand, the time has come for a godly remnant to cry, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Then Messiah shall come. Scriptures which tell of His coming "to His holy temple" shall be fulfilled. "The Deliverer" shall come out of Zion. "Shiloh" arrives, "and to Him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. 49: 10). At His coming in power and great glory this unparalleled trouble shall be cut short for the elects' sake, for, had it not been, no flesh should have been saved.

At His coming the "beasts" will be destroyed. But just before this the Roman beast with his confederate kings will have unseated and destroyed Babylon, "the whore." All heaven will rejoice at the overthrow in "one hour" of this religious corruption of the ages. The spurious "church," the counterfeit "bride," is thus overthrown.

Meanwhile in heaven Satan, the "accuser of the brethren," is discomfited by seeing the triumph of Christ in His saints, the judgment seat having taken place, and their fidelity having been recognized in spite of his seductions and opposition to them. He is now cast out from the heavens to the earth, and soon to be banished into the abyss.

All heaven is now moved for the marriage of the Lamb is come. Then Christ with His Church, united to Him, rides forth triumphantly through the opened heavens; and hence the overthrow of all the antagonistic powers, whether the Roman, or the Assyrian, or Gog and Magog.

The glory of the Millennial age will commence by the Son of Man purging out of His Kingdom, by angelic means, all offences and those who practice lawlessness, as indicated in Matthew 13. Then His angels will "gather together His elect . . . from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24: 31). Moreover the two houses of Israel, Judah and Ephraim, shall be united. Instead of being two sticks they shall be "one stick, and they shall be one in Mine hand" (Ezek. 37: 19). Then, "The Lord of Hosts shall reign . . . before His ancients gloriously" (Isa. 24: 23).

The Son of Man will have received from the "Ancient of days" an "everlasting dominion" (Dan. 7: 13, 14). The holy temple will have been built according to the Divine plan given in Ezekiel, and it will be filled with His glory, while His vice-regent, a prince of the house of David, will act for Him in Jerusalem — see, Ezekiel 44: 3.

Then, "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea " (Hab. 2: 14). His people shall be "willing" in the "day of His power" (Ps. 110: 3), and the scripture will be fulfilled which says "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3: 17).