

The Return and Restoration of the Jews.

Isaiah 11.

With a prefatory note on: God's Past Dealings with the Nation of Israel.

Lecture 3 of 'Eight Lectures on Prophecy' from shorthand notes.

W. Trotter and T.S. (Smith?)

(New Edition, Broom & Rouse, 1890.)

God's Past Dealings with the Nation of Israel.

The importance of every thing connected with Israel's history and Israel's hopes, receives striking illustration and proof in a passage but little thought of in the present day. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. 32: 8, 9.) The distribution of mankind into nations took place more than one hundred years before the birth of Abraham, and Israel had no national existence for nearly five hundred years after this; and yet we are told in the passage before us, that Israel was so present then to the thoughts and purposes of God, and occupied in these purposes so central and important a place, that when he, the Most High, separated the sons of Adam, dividing to the nations their inheritance, he set the bounds of the people — that is, he arranged the situation and extent of their several empires — according to the number of the children of Israel. Israel's failure on trial has resulted in quite a different state of things — an arrangement of the nations which seems to have no regard whatever to Israel and their land. But it is only for a time. God has not relinquished his intention to make Israel the centre of the nations, and their beloved city the metropolis of the whole earth. The testimony which Scripture renders to this is the subject of the two following lectures. My present object is rapidly to sketch the process by which they have reached their present abject, scattered state. Their future prophetic history is so linked with all that is recorded of them in the past, that we cannot so well consider the subject of their future restoration without glancing, however briefly, at what has occurred to them in times gone by.

It was the abandonment by mankind of the worship of the true God, and the success of Satan in leading them into idolatry, that formed the occasion on which God called Abraham the father of this people; thus separating to himself both Abraham and his posterity for ever. We learn from Romans 1 how men, "when they knew God, glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Because of this, we are told, God gave them up to uncleanness — to vile affections, — in a word, to all the unmeasured horrors of paganism in its various forms. "Even as they did not like

to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate (or undiscerning) mind, to do those things which are not convenient." They gave God up for idols, and God gave them up in consequence, to dishonour themselves and one another. But while thus for a time abandoning the nations to the fruit of their own ways, he would not leave himself without a testimony on earth to his supreme Godhead, and to the happiness of those who, blest with his immediate presence and government, were obedient to his laws. "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him through all the land of Canaan ' and multiplied his seed," etc. (Joshua 24: 2, 3.) By the call of God, Abraham was thus separated from the guilty, idolatrous mass, to be the depository of God's promises, and the witness to his title and his claims.

The promises made to Abraham were unconditional and absolute. They included a great deal besides the possession of the land of Canaan; but they certainly embraced this in the most explicit terms. "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land." (Gen. 12: 7.) "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. (Gen. 13: 14-17.) Abraham was apprised indeed that it was not immediate possession of the land which was to be given him. "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." (Gen. 15: 13, 14.) The land is then given to Abraham by covenant, and its boundaries most accurately defined. "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Gergashites, and the Jebusites." (Verses 18-21.) The promise of the land was repeated to Isaac (Gen. 26: 3), and to Jacob (Gen. 28: 13, 14).

Such were the promises made to the patriarchs. How touching is the first reference afterwards made to them in Exodus 2: 24. All had come to pass according to God's Word. They had gone down into Egypt, and been afflicted there in a land that was not their own. The four hundred years were expiring, and their affliction was at its height. "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." So surely will God yet remember the same covenant, on behalf of the same people, amid the far deeper afflictions which yet await them.

It was in pure goodness, and on the ground of this unconditional covenant with their fathers, that God delivered Israel out of Egypt. They were a wicked and gainsaying, and, withal, a self-righteous people; and they manifested this both in Egypt and immediately after their deliverance from it. But God wrought for his own name's sake. He bore with all their waywardness; each time they murmured, he manifested "himself in fuller grace; and all this continued till they reached the foot of Sinai. There Moses was directed of God to propose to

them that they should be placed under law, and enjoy their promised blessings conditionally on their obedience. We are not told what the result would have been, had they humbly confessed their inability to keep God's law, and entreated that they might still have their blessing on the tenure of the unconditional covenant long before made with their fathers. Had there been in them a heart for this, they would not have needed to be put to the test of the law given on Sinai: God knew well the pride and self-sufficiency of their hearts; though they, alas! knew it not. The fact was, they undertook to keep the law, promising and vowing, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." (Ex. 19: 8, Ex. 24: 3; see also verse 7 of the same chapter.) It was thus with their full consent that they were placed under a covenant of works.

The result is well known. Before the words had well passed their lips, they were defiling themselves with idols at the foot of that mount of terror, at the sight of which they had but lately so feared and quaked. I do not enter into the particulars of what passed. God's relations with them were restored through the mediation of Moses; and they were again, with certain modifications, placed under a covenant of works. It was under such a covenant that they entered the land of Canaan. Deuteronomy 28 gives us the terms of it very plainly. Continuance in the land, with all kinds of temporal blessings there, are promised in the case of their obedience. Visitations of wrath, one after another, the inflictions becoming heavier and heavier, till they should be rooted out of the land, are threatened in case of their disobedience and obstinate rebellion. How accurately and minutely have all these predictions been fulfilled! it is after all this has been spread out before them, in this chapter and the next, that we read, "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that when the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee." (Deut. 30: 1-3.) We have a similar promise in Leviticus 26: 40-45.

Israel's history in the land, all are familiar with. The book of Judges shows how soon they began to depart from the Lord, and how, by one enemy after another, he chastened them for their iniquities. In the days of Samuel, their sin, and especially that of the priesthood, brought on a dreadful crisis, in which God suffered his own ark to be taken captive by the enemy. After its restoration, they desired a king, and God granted them their request. He first gave them a king after *their* own hearts, who ended his days in disgrace on the mountains of Gilboa. Then God placed over them the man after His own heart, David, of whose seed, according to the flesh, Christ is, who is God over all blessed for ever. With David, God made another covenant, in part conditional, and in part unconditional. (2 Samuel 7: 10-16.) As to his offspring who immediately succeeded him on the throne, their retention of the throne, and the blessing of the nation under their sway, depended on their obedience; and if they disobeyed, they were to be chastised. But the covenant was so far unconditional, that God's mercy was never to be finally removed from David's house. There was to be one proceeding from his bowels, who was, without fail, to sit upon his throne; and in him was to be accomplished the faithful word, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever." We need not be told who is this blessed Son of David — the heir of God's throne and kingdom.

The times of David and Solomon form the brightest period in the past history of Israel. Each constitutes a striking type of the future reign of Christ. David's conquests depict to us the triumphs of Jesus when he comes as the Lion of the tribe of Judah: while the peaceful reign of Solomon is, perhaps, the liveliest type of the millennial reign of Christ which Scripture anywhere affords. But it was only for a brief space. Solomon was corrupted by his wives, and fell into idolatry. Ten tribes revolted from his son, and became a separate kingdom, of which Jeroboam was king; and of which afterwards Samaria was the capital. The history of this kingdom was one of uninterrupted and increasing wickedness, down to the end: when, in Hosea's day, they were carried away captive by the Assyrians, and have never been restored.

The patience of God waited still with the kingdom of Judah, until the iniquity of David's house made it impossible for him any longer to bear with either. Jerusalem was taken; the temple was destroyed; and the Jews were carried away captive to Babylon. The throne of God no longer existed at Jerusalem, power was given into the hands of the Gentiles, and has remained with them till now. With Nebuchadnezzar, the times of the Gentiles and the captivity and dispersion of the Jews alike commenced. A remnant indeed returned in the days of Cyrus: for what end, and with what result, we shall soon see. But as to the nation at large, dispersion and captivity have been their lot, from Shalmaneser's and Nebuchadnezzar's days down to the present time.

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I would remark at the outset, that there are two grand objects which God has had in view in separating Israel to himself as his peculiar people. One was, that there might be a testimony to the unity of God, and that he was the alone object of worship. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord." (Deut. 6: 4.) "Therefore ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord, "that I am God." (Isaiah 43: 12.) His other object was, that by the prosperity of this people, under his own immediate government, his character might be manifested; so manifested, that all men might understand, that "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." (Psalm 144: 15.) I need hardly say that it is in the future reign of Christ that this purpose of God will be accomplished. Israel will then be a sample, a specimen, before all nations, of the happiness of a people under the immediate government of God.

With regard to the past, both objects that God had in view in separating Israel to himself, have entirely failed. It is not meant by this that God has failed; but that God having placed Israel under responsibility to himself, in a position where, had they been faithful, these objects would have been accomplished, they have, through Israel's unfaithfulness, entirely failed of their accomplishment. Israel failed to bear witness to the unity of God; for they fell into idolatry like the nations around. They could not then be a sample of the happiness flowing from God's

government. for that government can never make rebels and idolators happy. Their captivity and dispersion formed the final expression of God's disapproval of their ways. He disowned them and their land, and gave both up into the hands of their enemies, the kings of Assyria and Babylon. There, for a season, terminated Israel's responsibility in the land. It issued in utter, total apostasy and rebellion on their part; in their judgment, dispersion, and captivity to the Gentiles, on the part of God.

I am not forgetting what you all doubtless recollect, that at the end of seventy years, a small remnant were permitted by Cyrus to return. But though permitted by him to rebuild their temple and their city, they were never again an independent nation in their own land. At their best estate, after this, they were mere tributaries, first to the Persians, then to the Greeks, and last of all to the Romans, under whose iron yoke they were when the Lord Jesus Christ, their long-promised Messiah, was born. And indeed it would appear to have been the chief object for which this remnant was restored, that Christ might be born amongst them, that according to the Scriptures he might be presented to them as their king. This was done, and you know the result. They stumbled at that stumbling-stone. They entreated, or rather demanded, that Barabbas, a murderer, should be released to them by Pilate, in preference to their king — to him who had been acknowledged, even by the wise men from the east, as the "one born king of the Jews." Israel said, "We have no king but Caesar;" and they consummated their national guilt by crucifying their king. The one of whom God says, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion," was crucified by his own people. Do I say by his own people? Yes, by their wish, by their entreaty; though they were so far vassals to the Gentiles, that they had to gain the consent of the Roman Governor, ere they could accomplish their murderous intentions. "Therefore," as our Lord said to Pilate, "he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Yes, they joined hands with their Gentile oppressors to crucify the Lord of glory. Between two thieves on Calvary was he nailed to the cross, with a superscription written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS**. The long-suffering of God, however, still lingered over them. They had consummated their iniquity, but there was to be a little longer patience; and when God had raised from the dead him whom they had crucified, mercy was afresh proclaimed to them in his name. As we noticed on a previous occasion, Peter in Acts 3 preached repentance and remission of sins in his name to Jerusalem and the Jewish people, calling them to repent and be converted, and assuring them that even then God would send Jesus, whom the heaven had received until the times of restitution of all things. But they would not hearken. There was no relenting in their proud, stubborn, unbelieving hearts. Peter they imprisoned, James they slew, Stephen they stoned. Their rejection of Christ in every way, as preached to them by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, as well as presented to them in humiliation on earth, being completed, God gave them up; their city was again destroyed; their temple was burned to the ground; myriads of them perished by the sword, and the miserable remnant that escaped were scattered over all the earth. And they have been thus scattered, they and their posterity, from that day to this. And yet, beloved friends, though it is for their sin in crucifying Jesus that they thus suffer, it was in that very transaction that the basis was laid, yea, the only basis, for their future restoration and blessing. When Caiaphas said, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not," he little knew the meaning of his own words. "This spake he not of himself; but being high Priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation." Yes, it was for that nation that Jesus died. True, there were other objects — the expression of God's love to the world, the

salvation of the church, the display of the whole character of God, the vindication and accomplishment of his glory in every way. Yet, amid all these, it was "for that nation" that he died. The nation that crucified him, that exulted in his death, that said, "His blood be on us and on our children;" for that nation his blood, as an atonement, was shed. And it is when their eyes are open to see this; when their heart turns to the Lord; when, no longer stumbling at that stumbling-stone, they see in the long-despised blood of sprinkling their only resting-place and hope; it is then that they will find what, in the purposes of God, and in the intrinsic efficacy of the work, is true already — that the blood of Jesus is the sure and only basis of all that joy and prosperity, and exaltation and blessing, which are yet in store for them in their own land. Oh! the wonders of that precious blood! Dear friends, have not our consciences felt its power? We who through grace have believed in it, have not we realised that it cleanseth from all sin? There is efficacy in it to wash away the sin of shedding it. And when Israel shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son, and be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn, then shall his blood be upon them in another sense than that of their dreadful imprecation. It shall be upon them, not as it has been, for judgment, and scattering, and a curse, but for deliverance, and restoration, and blessing. And throughout the millennial age, yea, throughout all ages, they will trace all their joy, all their blessedness, to the efficacy of that blood of which their fathers said, His blood be on us and on our children! Truly, it will thus be manifested, that where sin hath abounded, grace much more abounds.

And now, in turning to the testimony of Holy Scripture to the return and restoration of Israel — their return to their own land, and their restoration to blessing there — there are two points of view in which I am anxious to place it before you. First, the Scripture evidence of the fact; and, then, the light which Scripture sheds upon the order in which the event will be accomplished.

In considering the Scripture evidence of the fact, there are two objections which I would anticipate. First, it is alleged that many of the predictions we shall have to bring forward have been already accomplished in the return of the Jews from Babylon in the days of Cyrus. And, secondly, it is affirmed as to those predictions, which cannot be thus explained, that they are to be understood in a spiritual sense, as foretelling, in figurative language, the prosperity of the Christian church. As to this last objection, you will have to judge, the Lord helping you, as the passages are placed before you, whether they can be thus spiritualized. You will have to judge whether it is of the Christian church, or of the literal city Jerusalem, and the literal land of Palestine, and nation of the Jews, that they speak.

As to the former objection, that many of these predictions were fulfilled in the return from Babylon, there are several marks by which you may easily test whether this be the case. Such as,

1. Where the restoration of Israel, as well as of Judah — the ten tribes as well as the two — is foretold, you may be sure the passage does not speak of the return from Babylon. Scarcely any but the Jews, properly so called, that is, persons belonging to the kingdom of Judah, and but a small part of these, returned at that time.

2. Where it is foretold that the nation shall be *converted* as well as *restored*, it must be a future restoration that is spoken of. The nation was not converted at the return from Babylon.

3. Where it is declared that after the predicted restoration, they shall not fall into sin or see trouble any more, it must be a future restoration. Their greatest sin, and their heaviest sufferings, have been since their return from Babylon. Under the guilt of the one, and the pressure of the other, they lie to this day.

4. Where their restoration is connected with the utter and final overthrow of their enemies — of those who have trodden them down and persecuted them — it must be to a future event that such predictions point. No such overthrow attended their return from Babylon.

5. Where the coming of the Lord is connected with their deliverance and restoration, it must be the second coming of Christ which is spoken of. We know that his first coming did not deliver them nationally. And it must be evident to all, that it is not of the return from Babylon that such passages treat, as neither the first coming of Christ, nor the second, occurred at that time.

6. Where the prophecies themselves were written after the return from Babylon, it is impossible that it can be of that event they speak as still future.

The first passage I quote is from the chapter we have read; and it has another mark to distinguish the event it foretells from the restoration in Ezra's day. That mark is no other than the express statement that it is a *second* restoration. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." (Isa. 11: 11) Now if you should account the return from Babylon, in Ezra's and Nehemiah's day, the first restoration, for that very reason it cannot be the one here foretold, for this is declared to be the *second*. Then, besides, see how many of the marks already enumerated this passage bears. It embraces the whole nation. "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of *Israel*, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (ver. 12.) They are converted as well as restored; for it is at the time when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (ver. 9.) Their enemies are subdued and overthrown. "The adversaries of Judah shall be cut off." (ver. 13.) "They shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them." (ver. 14.) Did any thing like this occur in connection with the return from Babylon? Besides, there are events of a miraculous character predicted here, which have had no parallel since Israel's exodus from Egypt. "And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came out of the land of Egypt." (ver. 15, 16.) Who can evade the conclusion, that it is a future restoration of Israel that is here foretold? And as to whether this passage can be spiritualized so as to make it mean the Christian

church, to ask the question is sufficient. There is hardly a verse or a statement in the chapter which does not bid defiance to all attempts to interpret it thus.

The next passage I ask you to consider is Isa. 14: 1, 2. "For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land; and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors." Surely this was not fulfilled in Ezra's and Nehemiah's day! What was Nehemiah's estimate of their condition then? "Behold, we are servants this day; and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruits thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: and it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins; also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." (Neh. 9: 36, 37.) Surely this was not the fulfilment of the prediction we are considering. "They (the children of Israel) shall take them captives, whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors." No; it must be a future restoration that is here foretold.

Isaiah 66: 8-11, foretells a restoration of Jerusalem and of Israel manifestly future. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord; shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her, that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." I know well how continually this has been applied to the Christian church, and how it has been said that when she travails in birth for souls multitudes are born, — that is converted. But it is Jerusalem, not the church, of which we are reading here. And it is the birth of a nation — Israel's re-appearance as such — that excites universal wonder and delight not the regeneration of souls. And when is it this takes place? "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies! For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many." (ver. 13-16.) How evident that the restoration of Israel and Jerusalem here treated of is at the era of the second coming of our Lord, and connected with the great day of his righteous indignation. Then further: "For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come that I will gather all nations and tongues: and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord." (ver. 18-20.) Could any one apply this to the return from Babylon in the days of Cyrus?

Could this passage, by any ingenuity, be spiritualized so as to apply it to the prosperity of the Christian church? Can the subject of it be anything but that future restoration of Israel to their own land, with which the coming of the Lord, and the introduction of the millennium are inseparably connected?

"To proceed: in Jer. 16: 14-16, we have these words. "Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought up 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. 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." Here you have a restoration of Israel, with which even the deliverance out of Egypt is to bear no comparison. A restoration so marvellous, that that deliverance shall cease to be spoken of. And who are they, let me ask, that have been scattered and driven into all lands? Who were they that were brought up out of the land of Egypt? Does the expression, "children of Israel," in ver. 15, mean something different from the same expression in ver. 14? Impossible! How can there be the shadow of a doubt, that the literal nation of Israel is meant throughout?

We have a similar passage in Jer. 23. Verses 7, 8, give almost the exact words of the passage we have just cited. But in verse 3, we have the same event foretold in other words.. "And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase." And what coincident events have we foretold in this passage, by which to distinguish the period when it will receive its fulfilment? "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Ver. 5, 6.) Clearly, then, the restoration here foretold is connected with the conversion of the nation, Israel shall yet acknowledge what they have ever refused to own thus far — that "in the Lord they have righteousness and strength." They have always, hitherto, stumbled at this. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." But they shall do so in days to come. They shall yet say, — "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." And then he will return. And in his days, as we have been hearing, Israel shall be saved, and Judah dwell safely. The Lord our Righteousness, the name by which they shall know him then, even as it is the name by which we know him now.

Jer. 30 is full of instruction on our present subject. The importance of what is about to be communicated may be judged from the opening words, "Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book." (ver. 2.) Why were they to be thus permanently recorded? "For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." (ver. 3.) We then hear of a time of terrible, wide-spread consternation. "We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?"

(ver. 5, 6.) What is the cause of the alarm and anguish thus graphically described? "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." (ver. 7.) Thus we find that the deliverance and restoration here foretold are at the epoch of Israel's utmost extremity of trouble — a day to which none is like. Surely this has not yet been. The next verse, too, demonstrates the futurity of the event. "For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him; but they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king,* whom I will raise up unto them." Has anything like this ever been accomplished yet? Then, as to whether these predictions can be understood spiritually of Christianity, let us examine ver. 17, 18: "For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord, because they called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after." Is it not the literal Zion, the actual city Jerusalem which has been so despised? "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tent, and have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof." It is as though God had foreseen that people would try to wrest these promises from Israel, and apply them to something else, and provided the antidote here to such a mode of interpretation. It is upon her own heap that the city is again to be built. The "heap" of ruins left by the desolation of the former city is where the city has again to be built in those brighter days to come.

*This, no doubt, refers to Christ, as heir and representative of David. "Now see to thine own house, David," was language addressed to Rehoboam, Solomon's son. (See 1 Kings 12: 11.)

The subject is continued in Jer. 31. It is connected at the beginning with the close of Jer. 30. Read ver. 23, 24 of the one chapter, and ver. 1 of the other, and you have a statement of the most definite character as to the period at which this restoration takes place. It is at the consummation of the predicted judgments on the wicked, both in Israel and among the Gentiles, which are so largely treated of in prophecy. "Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind; it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked. The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: *in the latter days ye shall consider* it. At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people." Can anything be more explicit and decisive than this?

Let us look on to verse 27, 28. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord." Now who are they over whom the Lord has watched, to pluck up, to break down, to afflict, and to destroy? Are they not the same people he here promises to watch over, to build, and to plant? And can there be any question that it is of the literal Israel that both are said? Then, further. With whose fathers did the Lord make a covenant when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt? With the same people does he here promise to make a new covenant. (See ver. 31-34.) This new covenant is to be made with "the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah;" "not according to the covenant," says the Lord, "that I made with their fathers." How can any but the literal nation of Israel be here meant? Precious, indeed, it is for our souls to know

that the blessings of the new covenant are ours; that as to the enjoyment of the spiritual blessings of that covenant, we have, so to speak, forestalled them. But is that to set aside the fulfilment of the promise to those to whom it strictly, and properly, and primarily applies? And a part of this promise is, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Surely this is a yet unaccomplished prophecy.

Verses 36, 37, are very affecting — "If those ordinances (sun, moon, and stars,) depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord." The Lord grant us to learn here something of the heights and depths of his grace; heights more impossible to be scanned, and depths more impossible to be fathomed, than those of heaven above or of the sea beneath. The remainder of the chapter demonstrates, if further demonstration were needed, that it is the literal city Jerusalem, and the literal nation of Israel, to which the prophecy relates. How can we spiritualize "the tower of Hananeel?" What mystic meaning could we attach to "the hill Gareb," or to the city being compassed "about to Goath?" Why we read here of "the valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields, unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate toward the east?" If the literal, actual Jerusalem be not here intended, what language could give expression to that idea? And of this city it is said, it "shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

In Jer. 32: 37-44, we have another beautiful prediction of similar import to the last. I only quote verses 40, 41; the latter being to my own soul one of the most affecting passages in God's Word. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good; and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul." People ask us sometimes for the reasons we have for looking into these subjects. "What have we to do with the Jews, or with Jerusalem?" they say. My brethren, Is God our Father? Do we know him as such? And can we bear him say of the restoration of his ancient people, "I will plant them in this land *assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul,*" and not feel interested in the subject? Is he so interested in it as to speak of doing this *with his whole heart, and with his whole soul,* and has the subject no interest for us? Surely we do not but proclaim our own shame if we say so. Can we need any other inducement to study these precious testimonies of God's Word, than to see all that is in the Lord's heart thus expressed, when he speaks of accomplishing this triumph of his mercy and grace with his whole heart, and with his whole soul?

Ezekiel 37 is a well-known portion. In the former part of it we have the vision of the valley of dry bones. The prophet witnesses their resurrection. The vision is thus explained to him — "Son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." (verses 11, 12.) Now here is figurative language; plainly so. The dry bones are explained by the Lord himself to be living people, even

the whole house of Israel, who say, Our bones are dried, etc. The graves out of which these dried bones are raised are evidently the places or countries from whence the Israelites are gathered. If the dry bones represent living Israelites — dead nationally, but alive as individuals — their graves must surely represent the countries in which, as to any national existence, they have been buried. And then we are told in plain terms, that it is into their own land that they are brought, when they are thus as a nation raised from their graves. The parable or symbol of the two sticks is what follows; the prophet is commanded to take two sticks, one for Judah, and the children of Israel, his companions; the other for Joseph, and for all the house of Israel, his companions. He was to join them together, and they were to become one stick in his hand. The explanation is in verses 20-23: "And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before thine eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so shall they be my people, and I will be their God." In this passage we have the restoration of both kingdoms, Judah and Israel, and their fusion into one foretold; their conversion is predicted as well as their restoration; it is in connection with the reign of Christ — one king shall be king over them all; and when thus converted and restored, they are not any more to defile themselves, or fall into sin. "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever." (ver. 25.) The meaning of this last expression has been already explained. (See the last footnote.)

From the book of Daniel I quote but one passage; but it is a passage which, when connected with our Lord's words in Matt. 24, becomes of the deepest possible interest. "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." (Daniel 12: 1) We have already seen in Jeremiah 30 that Israel's restoration is immediately preceded by the time of their greatest distress. "It is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be delivered out of it." Here, too, we find that there is to be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; and it is at this time that the Jews — the children of Daniel's people — are to be delivered. Now turn to Matthew 24: 15-21. Our Lord refers to the abomination of desolation spoken of by the Prophet Daniel, thus showing that Daniel's prophecy was in his mind when he uttered this discourse. It is clear that Daniel's prophecy had not then been fulfilled, for our Lord speaks of the fulfilment of it as yet to take place. Besides, Daniel's people were not then delivered, nor are they yet: so that the time of unparalleled trouble of which Daniel speaks, was future then, and is future still. Our Lord speaks of it also. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." According to Daniel there had not been, and was not to be, such a time of trouble, till the time when the children of his people should be delivered. According to our Lord, there never will be such a time afterwards. He adds this to Daniel's prophecy. It is evident, then, that there can be but one such time of tribulation, unequalled by any before it, or by any following after it. It could

not be at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, as some say; for then Daniel's people were dispersed and destroyed, not delivered. It is a time still to come. A time so dreadful, that our Lord says, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." And what do we find connected with this time of trouble in this prophecy of our Lord? Daniel connects it with the deliverance of his people, the Jews. Our Lord connects it with his own coming. "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." I could not conceive a more perfect demonstration of the futurity of these events, and of the inseparable connection between them, than that which a comparison of these passages affords. This time of trouble — the deliverance of the Jews — and the second coming of Christ, are all future, and inseparably connected with each other. "Whoso readeth, let him understand."

Zechariah's prophecy was written after the return from Babylon; so that there can be no question as to the predictions it contains of a then future restoration of the Jews, applying to one already at that time accomplished. What had been accomplished would not be foretold as still future. Yet in this book we have some of the most full, blessed, affecting predictions of Israel's restoration, anywhere to be met with in Scripture. For instance: "Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. Thus saith the Lord of hosts,

There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." (Zech. 8: 3-5.) I suppose this is the literal city, at all events. And oh! the marvellous condescension of God, to present such a picture of what that favoured city is yet to be! That city, so long deserted and without inhabitant, save the Gentile oppressors and a few trodden — under-foot Jews, who are there as the witnesses and memorial of their own shame! That city is presented to us here, inhabited by its own people — on the one hand, their backs bowed, and staff in hand for very age — on the other, the streets full of girls and boys, in their childish simplicity and happiness, playing in the streets of the city! "Yes," it may be said, "but was not this what was occurring in Zechariah's day, and to be perpetuated in the ages which succeeded?" I answer first, by asking, Was Jerusalem, either in that day or in any which succeeded, "a city of truth — the holy mountain?" But, secondly, look on a verse or two, and you will find that it is not of what was then existing that the prophet speaks, but of a restoration which was still to be accomplished. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness." (ver. 7, 8.) Was this the character of the Jews in Jerusalem at any time between Zechariah's day, and their final dispersion? You know that it was after this that their national guilt was consummated. But further, the close of the chapter places the matter beyond question. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those

days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." (verses 20-23.) Surely this is what has never been fulfilled. But so surely must it be accomplished in days yet to come. Does any one ask, How do you know this? The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, is the only and the sufficient answer. It is a simple question of faith in God's Word. Men may deem it improbable. Was it probable, in man's eye, that Israel would be redeemed from Egypt in Pharaoh's day? Was it probable that the Red Sea and the Jordan would open to let them pass on dry land? It is no question of probability or improbability when God hath spoken. Hath he spoken, and will he not bring it to pass? Hear what he says in this very chapter, "If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts." (ver. 6.) If it seems improbable or impossible to you, should it therefore be either the one or the other to me? No, dear friends, God will accomplish his own word; and when he has spoken so plainly as on this subject, to talk of probabilities, or the reverse, does but betray the infidelity of the heart. Ages may roll on; century after century may elapse; there may appear no signs of anything like the fulfilment of God's Word; but when the hour fixed in his counsels arrives, it will be seen that nothing is impossible with him. And, oh! to think of this people, whose course has been one of such consummate wickedness, and whose present condition is one of such degradation and ruin — to think of them restored to favour, and blessing, and supremacy among the nations; and that the certainty of all this is secured to them by the Word of God! Does it not do our hearts good, my brethren, to think of these things? It is in a very different relation to God that we stand, as his children, his heavenly people. But to see all the character of God, whom we know as our Father, thus manifested in his dealings with the earthly people of his choice, is it not refreshing to the soul?

It remains for us to take a hasty glance at the light shed by Scripture on the order in which Israel's restoration, and the events connected with it, are to take place. But ere doing so, I would remind you of what has already been stated, that what we Christians wait for is the coming of the Son of God from heaven. This is an event independent of all the details of our present subject, and for anything that any one can tell to the contrary, may take place ere the dissolution of this assembly. It would be madness to affirm that this will be so, or to fix any time for the event. But everything connected with Israel's restoration may transpire, and all the more important events will do so, I believe, after the Lord Jesus has descended into the air, and received the church to himself in glory. The heavenly mystery, the church, being fulfilled, God's eye will be turned toward his earthly people Israel, who will be called to remembrance, and brought back.

First, it is clear, from several passages, that many of the Jews will return to their own land in unbelief. In Isa. 17: 10, 11, we find them there, still forgetting the God of their salvation, and unmindful of the Rock of their strength, planting pleasant plants, and setting it with strange slips; but the issue of their husbandry is thus described: "In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." it is evidently the time of trouble we have been hearing of already — the time when the nations and multitude of many people shall rush like the rushing of many waters; but it is to their destruction. and to the deliverance of Israel. "God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like thistle-down (see margin) before the whirlwind." (ver. 13.) It is the last great crisis

— the shortened period of unequalled tribulation. How suddenly it closes! "Behold, at evening-tide trouble, and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us." (ver. 14.) The next chapter speaks of some maritime country which, it appears, is to take a prominent part in these transactions. Its messengers are to go to "a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible (or wonderful) from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled!" Who can fail to discern that Israel is here spoken of? Universal attention is demanded whenever these things begin to occur. (See ver. 3.) It is not, indeed, that God is yet acting in the scene himself, save as he always acts in providence. Verse 4 represents him as looking on, taking his rest and considering in his dwelling-place. The verse is somewhat differently rendered by scholars,* and is understood to suggest the idea of that awful season of deathly stillness and oppressive heat which precedes the bursting of some dreadful storm of thunder and lightning. "Not a gleam of sunshine breaks for a moment through the sullen gloom; not a breath stirs; not a leaf wags; not a blade of grass is shaken; nature seems to be numbed;" all seems at a stand-still, and in suspense. But it is only for a few moments, and then the storm bursts upon an affrighted earth. Such is the figure used to illustrate the character of that short period

*Faber translates it thus: "For thus saith the Lord unto me: I will sit still (but I will keep my eye upon my prepared habitation) as the parching heat just before lightning, as the dewy cloud in the heat of harvest." Lowth's translation is —

"For thus hath Jehovah said unto me,
I will sit still, and regard my fixed habitation,
Like the clear heat after rain,
Like the dewy cloud in the day of harvest."

in which the Jews, aided by some great maritime country, are returning to their own land, and resettling there in unbelief. They are represented in ver. 5, 6, as sour grapes ripening in the flower, thus showing that morally they are unchanged since that day when God complained of them as his vineyard which brought forth nothing but wild grapes. They are not suffered, however, to come to maturity — the sprigs are to be cut off with pruning-hooks, the branches are to be cut down, and left for the fowls of the mountains to summer upon them, and the beasts of the earth to winter upon them. Still, though this be the end, as always, of their own self-righteous, self-willed, self-sufficient endeavours, it is the last time they attempt thus to accomplish their own deliverance. God takes up their cause; and the last verse of this chapter speaks of this same people — the Jews — being brought "as a present to the Lord of hosts — to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts — the Mount Zion."

From Isa. 28: 14, 15, it would appear that the rulers of those who return to Jerusalem in unbelief will enter into covenant with the great anti-Christian head of the Gentiles, who will then be bearing sway. Having refused the foundation which God has laid in Zion, they will seek shelter under the wing of him to whom Satan will then have given his seat, and his authority, and his great power. (See Rev. 13: 2.) But their covenant with death will be "disannulled, and their

agreement with hell will not stand." Dan. 9: 27 seems to refer to this. It says of this great enemy of God, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (of years, of course); and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and upon the battlements (see margin) shall be the idols of the desolator, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." This, there can be little doubt, is what our Lord terms "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place."* Thus will be fulfilled that solemn word of our Lord's as to the unclean spirit, who having left his house to wander into dry places, at last returns to it, and, finding it swept and garnished, takes seven others more wicked than himself, and comes and dwells there; and so the last end of such an one is worse than the first. "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." (Matt. 12: 45.) The unclean spirit of idolatry having abandoned the Jewish nation from the time of the Babylonish captivity, returns and takes possession of them at the end; and many of them will be found subject to and in league with him of whom we read (Rev. 13: 15), "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." "I am come in my Father's name," said the blessed Jesus, "and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John 5: 43.)

*[The passage more probably means, — "on account of the wings, i.e., protection of idols (shall be), a desolator, even until," etc. The Lord refers not to this passage, but to Dan. 12: 2. Ed.]

Secondly, the whole of those that return to their own land in unbelief will not be involved in these abominations, and in the judgments consequent upon them. There will be a remnant who will hear God's voice, and tremble at his word. Repenting deeply of their own and of their nation's sins, they will cry to the Lord in their distress, and be preserved from the paths of the destroyer. Instructed by the words of our Lord, when they see the abomination of desolation, they will flee into the mountains, and so neither worship the beast nor perish by his wrath. Still, they will suffer tremendous afflictions, while many others, as we know, will submit to be slain, rather than worship the idols of the desolator. It is the cry of this godly remnant of Israel that we hear in so many of the Psalms, and in Isa. 63 (latter part) and Isa. 64. The Lord answers them in Isa. 65, roughly at the first, as representing the whole nation in their sins; but in ver. 8-15 he distinguishes between them and the nation at large. All are not to be destroyed. This elect remnant are to be preserved to inherit the land. (Ver. 8-10) For the elect's sake, as we have seen, those days of trouble are to be shortened. In verses 11, 12, the bulk of the nation are addressed, who prepare a table for that troop (of Antichrist, it would appear), and furnish the drink-offering to that number. They are to be numbered to the sword, and to bow down to the slaughter. We then have the portion of the remnant and the nation alternately stated, 13-16, while the following verses exhibit the state of rest and blessedness which succeeds, when "the former troubles are forgotten, and hid from the eyes." The first five verses of Isa. 66 afford a similar contrast between the remnant and their unbelieving brethren.*

*For further inquiry into this subject, see a tract entitled, *The Jewish Remnant in the latter day.*"

But Zechariah gives us the most definite instruction as to the lot of those who first return to the land. Zech. 12: 9-13: 1, announces the conversion *in the land*, about the time of their last

tribulation (see ver. 9), of the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Zech. 13: 8, 9, we read, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." From Zech. 14: 1, 2, we find that this third part, who are brought through the fire, are reduced to the last extremity of distress. But in this last extremity the Lord interposes. (ver. 3-5.) The church — the saints — having been, as we before remarked, previously caught up to meet the Lord in the air, now return with him: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." The poor, oppressed, perishing remnant of Jews, are delivered by his coming. The Lord fights against all those nations that fought against Jerusalem. The Jews, delivered by his coming, become themselves instruments in destroying their adversaries. (See Zech. 12: 2, 3, and 6; Zech. 14: 14.) We have the blessed result of all this in verses 8-11, and 16-21, the reign of Christ over all the earth, with Jerusalem for the centre of worship and of blessing.

But, thirdly, the restoration of the ten tribes seems to be in a different manner. We have just seen how the Jews pass through the last tribulation *in the land*, the wicked being thus purged from amongst them. They are the progeny of those who crucified their Messiah, and they suffer the consequences to the very end of this age. The ten tribes having gone into captivity long before the first coming of Christ, have not to suffer for the sin of crucifying him, and so are not involved in these final troubles *in the land*. The wicked are purged from amongst *them* before they reach the land. "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you; and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they *shall not enter into the land of Israel*; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. 20: 33-38.) It would seem to be to this part of the nation that Amos 9: 9, 10, and Jer. 31: 8, 9, refer. The return of the ten tribes would appear to be in progress at the time the Jews, properly so called, are undergoing their final sifting in the land: the arrival of the ten tribes occurring soon after this sifting has been completed. In Isaiah 49 we have their arrival predicted, and a most touching picture of the effect produced by it on the poor heartbroken remnant, who survive the desolations at Jerusalem. We have a view (verses 9-13) of the return of the ten tribes, guided by the out-stretched arm of God, while heaven and earth are called on to rejoice in his mercy to them. Then in verse 14 we are led back to the moment when Zion said: "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." God himself addresses Zion in verses 15-17. And then, as though calling her attention to something on which his eye had been fixed, but which she had not yet noticed, he says: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold; all these gather themselves together and come to thee," etc. (verses 18, 19) Nothing can exceed the beauty of verses 20, 21. "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?"

Finally, there are several passages which appear to foretell a still further process of restoration. We have noticed the return of many of the Jews in unbelief, with their sin and judgment, and the preservation from both of a remnant amongst them, who are delivered out of their extreme distress by the coming of the Lord with all his saints. We have seen this remnant joined by the multitude of the ten tribes brought back by the hand of God, who has purged out all the rebels from among them ere they arrive at the land of Israel. But it would seem that besides all this, messengers will be despatched from the place where the Lord has appeared in glory and destroyed the enemies of his people, to bring back any Israelites who may yet be found among the nations. "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord." (Isaiah 66: 20.) It appears to be to this part of the subject that Isaiah 60: 4-9, Isaiah 52: 10-12, and Isaiah 49: 22, 23, refer.

I would only beg, in conclusion, that you will consult the passages which have been quoted or referred to. It is in personally examining and comparing them, with prayer to the Lord for his guidance, that we shall, by his blessing, gain acquaintance with his mind. May his blessing be vouchsafed. Amen. W. T.